Political Science 204 **Fall 2000**

Media and Politics Election 2000

Tues Thurs 12:30-2:15

Sayles Hill 252

Professor: Barbara Allen
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Office Hours

The Course

This course is an introductory research seminar in which we will study media effects in the 2000 elections for president and the U.S. Senate and House races in Minnesota. Research in political science, political psychology, and mass communications shows that campaign ad presentations use a number of cinematic and advertising techniques to sell candidates to voters. Depending on the truthfulness and tone of the ad, such mass market effects can be negative or position from the point of view of democratic theory. But researchers worry about the truth or fiction conveyed by images alone that may counter or distort accurate ad content presented aurally or in writing. Furthermore, we have a debate raging on the effects of "negative" ads - do they motivate or dampen participation? What is a negative ad? Ad to all of this the news coverage of the campaign and the "ad watches" that go along with it. How do the various news formats convey, limit, or even distort political learning in a democratic electorate? Together with the students from Professor John Sullivan's course, PS 312, Political Culture, we will see investigate what folks in Minnesota think about election 2000, using a variety of research methods, including content analysis of campaign ads and news stories, in-depth interviews with citizens, and focus group studies of citizen perceptions of the ads. Our studies will be based on readings covering such topics as public opinion analysis, political behavior and political psychology in which we will compare and contrast the various research methods used in the study of media and politics. Students must have access to a television and radio for nightly analysis of campaign new and will be required to subscribe to the *New York Times*.

The following books have been ordered for the course:

Dean E. Alger, 1996. *The Media and Politics* 2nd edition, New York:Wadsworth Publishing, 0534-23694-4.

Timothy Cook. 1998. *Governing With the News: the News Media as a Political Institution*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 0226115003.

Doris Graber. 2000. *Media Power in Politics*, 4th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.1568024169.

Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder. 1987. *News That Matters*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 0226-38857-3.

Marion Just, et. al. 1996 *Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates, and Media in a Presidential Campaign*, Chicago: Univeristy of Chicago Press, 0226-42021-3.

On reserve are:

Adler and Towne. "Listening v. Hearing"

Barbara Allen, "The Spiral of Silence and Institutional Design: Tocqueville's analysis of public opinion and democracy." *Polity,* 24:2 (winter), 1991, 243-267.

Barbara Allen, Paula O'Laughlin, Amy Jasperson, and John L. Sullivan "The Media and the Gulf War: Framing, Priming, and the Spiral of Silence," *Polity*, 27: 2 (winter) 1994, 255-284.

Dohaghy. "Asking and Answering Questions"

Marilyn Fife, 1987. "Promoting racial diversity in US broadcasting: federal policies versus social realities," *Media, Culture and Society*, 9: 481-504

Lynda Lee Kaid, et al. 1986. *New Perspectives on Political Advertising*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. 0-8093-1264-6 (The chapters that we are using)

Richard Krueger. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*.

David Stewart and Prem Shamdasani. *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice*.

James Madison, John Jay, and Alexader Hamilton, *The Federalist*, 1789. New York: Modern Library, 394-30961-8.

Shanto Iyengar, et al. "Running as a Woman: Gender Stereotyping in Women's Campaigns," in Pippa Norris, ed. *Women Media and Politics,* 1997. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 77-98

Shanto Iyengar. 1989. "How Citizens Think about National Issues: A Matter of Responsibility." *American Journal of Political Sceince*. 33: 4 (Nov). 878-900.

Montague Kern and Marion Just, "A Gender Gap Among Viewers," in Norris, ed. *Women Media and Politics*. 99-112.

Andrew Kohut and Kimberly Parker, "Talk Radio and Gender Politics," in Norris, ed. Women Media and Politics. 221-234.

Kathleen Knight and David Barker, "'Talk Radio Turns the Tide'? The Limbaugh Effect: 1993-1995." Paper presented at the 1996 American Political Science Association Annual Meeting

James M. Carlson and Rebecca Trichtinger, "Perspectives on Entertainment Television's Portrayal of a Racial Incident."1998 American Political Science Association Meeting.

Course Requirements

Below are the readings and general topics for each of our meetings. In addition to coming to class prepared to discuss the readings you will take part in three meetings with PS 312 students to learn about the various research methods that we will be using. Your research activities will include viewing and analyzing the content of campaign ads and news stories, working in teams to conduct a series of interviews with Northfield citizens and conducting focus group research in Northfield and in the Twin Cities. Grades will be based on these assignments and on the final paper in which you will write about the results of one area of your research. Papers are due in class November 14; no late papers will be accepted. In the case of a verified family crisis or your own incapacitating illness, you must notify me in writing (a letter delivered to my office) or by voice mail before the paper is due. An email message does not constitute notification.

Grades will be computed as:

Participation in field work	20
Graded Research Assignments	30
Research Paper	50
Total	100%

Topics for Discussion and Reading Assignments:

Part 1: Democratic Theory and the Power of Media

Tues Sept 12 Introduction to the course

Communication and Self-Government

Read: Graber Ch 2

Alger Ch 1

Thurs Sept 14 Studying Media: Research Design - Content Analysis

Professor Dean Alger "The Alliance for Better Campaigns Project"

Read: Just Ch 1-2

Tues Sept 19 Media as an Institution

Read: Cook Ch 4-5

Recommended: Alger 4-6

Part 2: Media and Politics: Public Opinion, Socialization, and Participation

Thurs Sept 21 Joint Session I: Interviewing techniques - Active Listening

Tom Skovholt, counseling psychologist, University of Minnesota

Read: Adler and Towne, "Listening v. Hearing" and Dohaghy,

"Asking and Answering Questions" (on reserve)

**********Interview data collection starts Sept 22**********

Tues Sept 26 Representation and Responsibility: Framing Effects

Read Iyengar "How Citizens Think" (on reserve)

Alger Ch 2

**********Content Analysis Part 1 due**********

Thurs Sept 28 Public Opinion 1: Definitions and Measurement

Read: Graber Ch 12

Iyengar and Kinder Ch 1-6

Allen "Tocqueville and Spiral of Silence" (on reserve)

Tues Oct 3 Joint Session II Leading Focus Groups; Coding for Cultural Values, framing and priming effects

Read: Iyengar and Kinder Ch 6-12

Krueger, *Focus Groups* Ch 4-6 (pp. 53-125) or Steward and Shamdasani, *Focus Groups* Ch 2-5 (33-101)

Guest: Kelly Smith, Account Planner, Fallon Agency, "Intro to use of focus groups in media research."

Thurs Oct 5 Public Opinion 2: Narrative and Symbolism in News Reporting

Read: Alger Ch 3

Graber Ch 6, 10

Tues Oct 10 Public Opinion 3: Agenda Setting

Graber Ch 7-8, 22, 36

********** Focus Group Protocol and Organizational Plan due**********

Thurs Oct 12 Public Opinion 4: Framing and Priming Effects, Participation

Review: Iyengar and Kinder Ch 3-4, 7, 11

Read: Cook Ch 6, Graber 13, 14, 24

Recommended (?): Allen et.al "Media and the Gulf War" (on reserve)

********** Start Focus Groups and conduct by Oct 19 **********

Part 3: Media and Electoral Politics

Tues Oct 17 Primaries, Conventions and General Elections

Covering Candidates and Campaigns

Read: Alger Ch 10, 11, 290-324; 334-338

Just, Ch 3;

Graber Ch 16

Kaid Ch 3, (Kolar "Fighting Back: American

Political Parties Take to the Airwaves") (on reserve)

********** Optional Joint Evening Session - TV and New Media **********

********** Looking Back at the 1960 Presidential Election **********

Read: Graber 15

View *Primary*; (*War Room* also on reserve)

Thurs Oct 19 Candidate Information 1: Speeches and Debates

Read: Alger Ch 12, 338-353

Tues Oct 24 Candidate Information 2: Campaign Advertising and Coverage

Read: Alger Ch 11 324-334, Just 4-6

Graber 13, 14

Kaid, Ch 1 (Jamieson, "The Evolution of Political Advertising in America") (on reserve)

**********Draft First Half of Paper due**********

Thurs Oct 26 Candidate Information 3: Campaign Advertising, Analysis

Read: Alger Ch 12, 353-378 and Kaid, Ch 2 (Devlin, "An Analysis of Presidential Television Commercials 1952-1982") (on reserve) and Ch 7 (Kaid and Davidson, "Elements of Videostyle")

Just 7

Tues Oct 31 Candidate Information 4: Campaign Advertising, Effects

Read: Alger Ch 13; Kaid, Ch 8, (Kundy, "Political Commercials and Candidate Image: The Effect Can Be Substantial") (on reserve)

Graber 17

Just 8

**********Focus Group Synopsis due**********

Thurs Nov 2 TV: racial attitudes and gender gap

Read: Carlson and Trichtinger, "Perspectives on Entertainment"

Kern and Just, "A Gender Gap Among Viewers,"

Fife, "Racial Diversity"

Iyengar, et al. "Running as a Woman" (on reserve)

**********Content Analysis Parts 2&3 due**********

Tues Nov 7 Talk Radio

Read: Kohut and Parker, "Talk Radio and Gender Politics"

Knight and Barker, "'Talk Radio Turns the Tide'?" (on reserve)

Election Party at Twin Cities News Stations, host Dean Alger

Thurs Nov 9 Interpreting Messages and Voting - Assessing the Election

Just 9

Tues Nov 14 Discourse and Decisions, Prospects for Change

Just Ch 10

Cook Ch 8

********** Research Papers Due in Class **********