

Instructor : Elio DI PAOLANTONIO

Class type : Lecture

Title : *Politics, Media and the Public*

Language of Instruction : English

Program : DU English Track

Mutualized : 2A

Year : 2024-2025 Winter Term (S2)

In-class hours: 20

ECTS : 5 ECTS

Syllabus

Sciences Po Toulouse

2A/DU Anglophone

Politics, Media and the Public

COURSE SUMMARY:

With the pervasive influence of media today, the public has unprecedented access to political information. However, the overwhelming quantity and varying quality of media content have raised concerns about the public's ability to process this information effectively. The rise of 24-hour news cycles, social media, and digital platforms has led to an era of media saturation, complicating how the public interacts with both political figures and policies.

This course examines the evolving dynamics between the news media, U.S. politics, and the public. We will explore how the media shapes public perception of political issues and elections, as well as how politicians and interest groups use media to sway public opinion. The course will also address the declining trust in mainstream media and political institutions and consider how these trends impact democratic engagement and public discourse.

The intersection of politics and media will be explored through various lenses, including election campaigns, policy debates, and public opinion formation. In the digital age, media coverage extends well beyond elections, influencing both policy-making and the broader political landscape. As such, we will analyze the strategies used by politicians and media outlets to shape narratives and maintain influence between election cycles. Occasional comparative analysis with other democracies will highlight both common challenges and the unique characteristics of the U.S. political-media ecosystem.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Describe the evolving relationship between U.S. political institutions, the media, and the public.
- Analyze the unique characteristics of the American media system in comparison with other democracies, focusing on its impact on public opinion and political discourse.
- Examine political strategies that use both traditional and digital media to influence voters during election campaigns, but also in between election cycles.
- Explore the role of the Internet and social media in shaping public perception of political issues and engagement in the political process.
- Introduce key concepts in media literacy to critically analyze the communication techniques used in political campaigns, policy debates, and news reporting.
- Foster critical thinking on how media and political communication practices influence democratic participation and public trust.
- Reflect on the pervasive role of advertising and its cultural and political implications in U.S. media and politics, beyond just election campaigns.

GRADING AND EVALUATION:

FINAL EXAM

STUDENTS WILL SIT FOR A **2-HOUR EXAM** DURING THE EXAM PERIOD*. THIS WILL CONSIST OF A COMBINATION OF MULTIPLE CHOICE AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE COURSE (TWENTY MCQS AND ONE SHORT ESSAY).

COURSE MATERIALS:

ALL MATERIALS IN CONNECTION WITH THE COURSE WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE SCIENCES PO TOULOUSE **MOODLE PLATFORM** – THIS INCLUDES **POWERPOINT SLIDES, MANDATORY READINGS AND REVISION SUMMARIES.**

CALENDAR:

CLASSES HELD DURING WINTER TERM - **10-WEEK PERIOD (2-HOUR LECTURES).**

SESSION 1

INTRODUCTION – PRELIMINARY REMARKS AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

BERGMAN, TABE. “THE PROBLEM OR THE SOLUTION? REFLECTIONS ON ‘THE PUBLIC’ IN THE WORKS OF NOAM CHOMSKY AND WALTER LIPPMANN.” *SYNAESTHESIA: COMMUNICATION ACROSS CULTURES* 1, NO. 4 (MARCH 2019): **PAGES 159-166**

GURRI, MARTIN. (2014) “THE REVOLT OF THE PUBLIC AND THE CRISIS OF AUTHORITY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM.” *STRIPE PRESS: KINDLE EDITION* (PAGES 66-93) - ADAPTED PDF TEXT, **PAGES 1-14**

SESSION 2

DEMOCRACY, CAMPAIGNS AND THE NEWS MEDIA

HALLIN, D. C., & MANCINI, P. (2004). COMPARING MEDIA SYSTEMS: THREE MODELS OF MEDIA AND POLITICS. CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS **PAGES 1-32**

SESSION 3

EVOLUTION OF NEWS MEDIA PRODUCTION

HAMILTON, J. T. (2003). ALL THE NEWS THAT’S FIT TO SELL: HOW THE MARKET TRANSFORMS INFORMATION INTO NEWS. PRINCETON, NJ: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS. **PAGES 17-49**

*AS THIS IS A MUTUALISED COURSE, THE EXAM PERIOD FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS MAY DIFFER FROM THE ONE SET FOR DOMESTIC SCIENCES PO STUDENTS

SESSION 4

NEW VS OLD (LEGACY) MEDIA

ALCOTT, H., & GENTZKOW, M. (2017). SOCIAL MEDIA AND FAKE NEWS IN THE 2016 ELECTION. JOURNAL OF ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES, 31, **PAGES 211–233**

SESSION 5

THE MEDIA AS A PLATFORM FOR POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

ERIKA FRANKLIN FOWLER, MICHAEL M. FRANZ, GREGORY J. MARTIN, ZACHARY PESKOWITZ, AND TRAVIS N. RIDOUT POLITICAL ADVERTISING ONLINE AND OFFLINE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE REVIEW, 115, **PAGES 1-59**

SESSION 6

DO CAMPAIGNS MATTER? QUESTIONS OF CIVIC EDUCATION AND VOTER BEHAVIOUR

GREEN, D., PALMQUIST, B., & SCHICKLER, E. (2002). PARTISAN HEARTS AND MINDS: POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE SOCIAL IDENTITIES OF VOTERS. NEW HAVEN, CT: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS **PAGES 1-23**

SESSION 7

EFFECTS OF NEWS MEDIA ON SOCIETY – PARADOX OF LIMITED PUBLIC IMPACT

KING, G., SCHNEER, B., & WHITE, A. (2017). HOW THE NEWS MEDIA ACTIVATE PUBLIC EXPRESSION AND INFLUENCE NATIONAL AGENDAS. SCIENCE, 358, **PAGES 776–780**

SESSION 8

THE NEVER-ENDING CAMPAIGN – USING THE NEWS MEDIA TO GOVERN

AULETTA, K. (2004, JANUARY 11TH). FORTRESS BUSH: HOW THE WHITE HOUSE KEEPS THE PRESS UNDER CONTROL THE NEW YORKER

SESSION 9

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE – ARE AMERICAN POLITICS DOOMED TO BEING “*OUT OF REACH, OUT OF SIGHT, AND OUT OF MIND*”?

LIPPMANN, W. (1925). THE PHANTOM PUBLIC. NEW YORK: TRANSACTION PUBLISHERS (EXCERPT IN THE LANAHAN READINGS IN AMERICAN POLITY 4TH EDITION) **PAGES 383-387**

SESSION 10

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS - THE CULTURE OF ADVERTISING IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

RECOMMENDED LEARNING RESOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY:

THE FOLLOWING **BIBLIOGRAPHY** IS INTENDED FOR THOSE STUDENTS WISHING TO DO FURTHER READINGS ABOUT THE SUBJECT.

ANSOLABEHERE, S., BEHR, R., & IYENGAR, S. (1991). *MASS MEDIA & ELECTIONS: AN OVERVIEW*. AMERICAN POLITICS QUARTERLY, 19, 109-139.

ARNOLD, R.D. (2004). *CONGRESS, THE PRESS, AND POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY*. PRINCETON, NJ: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS.

BAGDIKIAN, B.H. (2000), *THE MEDIA MONOPOLY* (6TH EDITION). BOSTON: BEACON.

BENNETT, W.L., LAWRENCE, R.G. & LIVINGSTON, S. (2008) *WHEN THE PRESS FAILS: POLITICAL POWER & THE NEWS MEDIA FROM IRAQ TO KATRINA*. CHICAGO: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

BERNAYS, E. (1928), *PROPAGANDA*. NEW YORK: IG PUBLISHING.

DELLI CARPINI, M.X. & KEETER, S. (1996), *WHAT AMERICANS KNOW ABOUT POLITICS & WHY IT MATTERS*. NEW HAVEN, CT: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

DIAMOND, E. & BATES, S. (1992) *THE SPOT: THE RISE OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING ON TELEVISION*. CAMBRIDGE, MA: MIT PRESS.

ESHBAUGH-SOHA, M. & PEAKE, J.S. (2011) *BREAKING THROUGH THE NOISE: PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC OPINION AND THE NEWS MEDIA*. STANFORD, CA: STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS.

GANS, HERBERT J. (2003) *DEMOCRACY & THE NEWS*. NEW YORK: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

HEDGES, C. (2009) *EMPIRE OF ILLUSION: THE END OF LITERACY AND THE TRIUMPH OF SPECTACLE*. NEW YORK: NATION BOOKS.

HERMAN, E. S., & CHOMSKY, N. (1988). *MANUFACTURING CONSENT: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE MASS MEDIA*. NEW YORK: PANTHEON BOOKS.

KLEIN, N. (1999) *NO LOGO*. TORONTO: KNOPF CANADA.

MCCHESNEY, R.W. (2004), *THE PROBLEM OF THE MEDIA*. MONTHLY REVIEW PRESS, Ch.2, Ch.3

MCCHESNEY, R.W. & NICHOLS, J. (2010), *THE DEATH & LIFE OF AMERICAN JOURNALISM*. NEW YORK: NATION BOOKS.

MILLER, C. (2008, NOVEMBER 7). *HOW OBAMA'S INTERNET CAMPAIGN CHANGED POLITICS*. FROM NEW YORK TIMES BLOG WEBSITE: <https://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/07/how-obamas-internet-campaign-changed-politics/>

MILLER, J.M. & KROSNICK, J.A. (2000). *NEWS MEDIA IMPACT ON THE INGREDIENTS OF PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATIONS: POLITICALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE CITIZENS ARE GUIDED BY A TRUSTED SOURCE*. AMERICAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, 44, 295-309

SPEAKES, L. (1988) *SPEAKING OUT: THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY FROM INSIDE THE WHITEHOUSE*. NEW YORK: SCRIBNER.
