

Bachelorproject: Media Systems and Politics

Credits: 12 EC
Location: OMHP EK.01
Time: Thursday 12-15
Lecturer: Dr. Laura Sudulich
Office location: Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences,
OZ Achterburgwal 237, room 2.54

Objectives

- To explore the relationship between politics and the media system through the comparative investigation of media systems in Europe and the United States.
- To investigate the underlying mechanism that strictly connects politics and media, by exploring cross-country differences.
- To understand the effects of political communication in relation to electoral campaigns.
- To explain real world political events in light of different media systems

Your Bachelor Project (BP) will address at least one of the aforementioned issues, by analyzing empirical data on subjects of your choice. The BP will comprise a theoretical argument posing your research question, and an analytical component, attempting to provide an answer to the question.

Contents

This course looks at the complicated relationship between politics and the media. A number of theoretical models will guide the exploration of such a relationship. The course will have a strong empirical orientation and it will guide you to the process of BP writing. We will investigate the issues of media freedom and pluralism and the threat of media concentration to democratic pluralism (e.g. the case of Italy). This involves the analysis of public regulation and control of the mass media, the relation between market (commercial TV for instance) and publicly controlled media. We will dedicate a substantial component of the course to the understanding of the media's role in election campaigns, by looking at both historical cases and current political events. Finally, we will give certain attention to the rise of new media and web 2.0 platforms and their political implications. Your BP should shed some light on the relationship between media and politics and you are encouraged to discuss your own interests and ideas.

The literature in use looks at Western Europe and the United States, but you are welcome to broaden the object of your study to other areas of the world.

Contact

I don't hold office hours, so if you want to make sure I am at my office, please send me an email at m.l.sudulich@uva.nl and arrange an appointment.

My office is Room 2.54, second floor of Politicologie.

Format

The BP will take the form of 8 classes addressing substantial issues on the relationship between Media and Politics and one session of students' presentations, to be held in December. Each class will also have a 'Research Design and Methodology' component, which will help you in the process of writing a Bachelor thesis. I can suggest literature on that, and I'll be happy to discuss research design issues as they come. The general reading section of this syllabus contains a book that you may find helpful, but there are other texts that you may want to look at. At the end of the thought component of the course you will have some time to do your own research and write your thesis. Individual meetings will be arranged. The students' presentation session will give you the opportunity of showing your work in progress and getting feedback from the lecturer and your course mates. You are required to submit a first draft of your thesis in early January 2012, so that you can then be ready to hand in the final version at the end of January.

Attendance

You are required not to miss more than 1 class. Penalties will apply. Deadlines have to be respected by everybody. You are required to do weekly readings, please make sure you have done them so that you can participate in the discussion. The format of discussion can take the form of subgroups' presentations and there will be in-class assignments targeted to help you coming up with research ideas. 30% your final grade depends on attendance and participation, failing to attend class, participate in class activities and submitting assignment will dramatically lower your chances of successfully completing your BP.

List of assignments:

ASSIGNMENT 1: At this stage you are not required to have a clear research plan, but you should start thinking about possible topics of interest. Make a list of these, and attempt to identify potentially relevant questions. Even if you will change your mind this exercise will help you structuring your thoughts. Hand in one day in advance.

ASSIGNMENT 2 IN CLASS: This exercise is meant to give you better idea of what you may be interested in. On the basis of the raw ideas you outlined in Assignment 1 you are asked to:

Identify: (a) what are the implications of your research idea/s (b) its/their relevance to the discipline and the real world.

List possible challenges and difficulties as you see them now.

Be prepared to discuss you ideas with course mates and exchanged feedback.

ASSIGNMENT 3: You should have a literature plan and list of relevant readings in the appropriate format. By now you will have some knowledge on the literature relevant to your interests. You should be able to summarize those theories and specify what your own theory is and what your research would add to the existing literature. Hand in one day in advance.

ASSIGNMENT 4: Now it's time for you to address the question you want to answer by proposing a coherent theory to be tested. Outline your theory and state the research hypothesis/es to be tested. What motivates your theory? What is the linkage between theory and hypothesis/es? This is a tricky assignment. Hand in one day in advance and expect to have to re-write in class.

ASSIGNMENT 5: Write a brief note on what types of methods you are thinking of using. Identify pros and cons, be prepared for a discussion and exchange of opinion with your course mates. Hand in one day in advance.

ASSIGNMENT 6: On the basis of last week discussion you will have a better idea of data and methods. Clarify how you will collect and use your data. If you are collecting data yourself explain how; if you are using existing datasets explain what innovative use of them you will make and how suitable they are to your project. Hand in one day in advance.

ASSIGNMENT 7: By now you should have refined the research question you will be investigating. Prepare a brief proposal with your own research question, the way you will go about answering it and the contribution that will bring to the literature. You need to be concise here; if you have a simple and clear idea you will find this exercise fairly easy, about 300 words. Hand in one day in advance

Some general readings

- Oates Sarah, (2008). *Introduction to Media and Politics*, SAGE.
NOT available at the library, chapters will be posted on BB.
 - Bennett. L. (2001) *News : the politics of illusion*. Pearson/Longman
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/001886571>
 - Lilleker, D. (2006). *Key Concepts in Political Communication*. London: Sage.
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/002043842>
 - Hallin D. & Mancini P. (2004). *Comparing Media Systems, Communication Society and Politics*.
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/001786921>
 - Iyengar S. & McGrady J. (2007). *Media Politics: a citizen's guide*, W.W. Norton.
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/002071361>
 - Norris, P. et al. (1999) *On Message: Communicating the Campaign*, London: Sage
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/001365975>
 - Graber, D.A (2007). *Media Power in Politics*, CQ Press.
<http://permalink.opc.uva.nl/item/002070313>
- On Social Research Methods:
- Babbie, E. (2007). *The Practice of Social Research*. Thomson.

Weekly readings:**Class 1. Introduction.**

- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. Chapter 10. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS CHAPTER AND HAVE IT WITH YOU

Class 2. Media systems and politics

- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. Chapter 1 and 2.
- Holtz-Bacha, C. and Norris, P. (2001). "To entertain, inform and educate". Still the Role of Public Television in the 1990s? *Political Communication* 18(2) April, pp 123 - 140. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS ARTICLE AND HAVE IT WITH YOU
- Aarts, K. and Semetko, H. (2003). *The Divided Electorate: Media Use and Political Involvement*, *The Journal of Politics*, 65 : 759-784. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS ARTICLE AND HAVE IT WITH YOU

Class 3. Media systems, norms and special cases

- Graber, D. (2003) 'The Media and Democracy: Beyond Myths and Stereotypes' *Annual Review of Political Science* 6: 139-160.
- Hibberd, M. (2007). Conflicts of interest and media pluralism in Italian broadcasting, *West European Politics*, Volume 30, Issue 4 September 2007, pages 881 - 902.
- Toril Aalberg, Peter van Aelst and James Curran, Media Systems and the Political Information Environment: A Cross-National Comparison, *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 2010 15: 255.
- Padovani, C. (2007), 'Would we create it if it did not exist? The evolution of public broadcasting in Jamaica', *International Journal of Media and Cultural Politics* 3: 3, pp. 215-234. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS ARTICLE AND HAVE IT WITH YOU

Recommended

- D'Arma, A. (2009). Broadcasting policy in Italy's 'Second Republic': national politics and European influences, *Media Culture Society* 2009 31: 769.

Class 4. Media affect and effect

- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. Ch4
- De Vreese, C. H., & Kandyla, A. (2009). News framing and public support for a common foreign and security policy. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 47(3), 453-482.
- De Vreese, C. H., & Elenbaas, M. (2008). Media in the game of politics: Effects of strategic metacoverage on political cynicism. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 13(3), 285-309
- Stroud, N. J. (2007). Media effects, selective exposure, and Fahrenheit 9/11. *Political Communication*, 24, 415-432. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS ARTICLE AND HAVE IT WITH YOU

Class 5. New Media

- Gibson, R and Ward, S. (2000). Perfect Information, Perfect Democracy, Perfect Competition: Politics and the Impact of New ICTs, in *Reinvigorating Democracy? British politics and the Internet*, Ashgate (Chapter1).
- McNair B. (2009). The internet and the changing global environment, in *Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics*, edited by Andrew Chadwick and Philip N. Howard, Routledge.
- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. (Chapter 8)
- Gibson, R. and S. Ward (2000). "A proposed methodology for studying the function and effectiveness of party and candidate web sites." *Social Science Computer Review* 18(3): 301. PRINT OUT A COPY OF THIS ARTICLE AND HAVE IT WITH YOU

Class 6. Electoral campaigns and media (I)

- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. Chapter 5
- Druckman, JN (2008). The power of television images: The first Kennedy-Nixon debate revisited, - *The Journal of Politics*, 65 : 559-571.

- Norris, P. (2005). Developments in party communications. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI). Online @:
www.ndi.org/files/1950_polpart_norris_110105.pdf

Class 7. Electoral campaigns and media (II)

- Freedman, P and Goldstein, K. (1999). Measuring Media Exposure and the Effects of Negative Campaign Ads Author(s): American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp. 1189-1208.
- Wallsten, K. (2010) "Yes We Can": How Online Viewership, Blog Discussion, Campaign Statements, and Mainstream Media Coverage Produced a Viral Video Phenomenon, *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 7: 2, 163 – 181.
- Tari Renner, The dictator's daughter, manuscript.

Class 8. Media and War

- Oates, S. (2008). Introduction to Media and Politics, SAGE. (Chapter 6)
- Kolmer C. and Semetko, H. (2009). Framing the Iraq War: Perspectives from American, U.K., Czech, German South African, and Al-Jazeera News, *American Behavioral Scientist*, 52: 643.
- Aday s. (2007). The real war will never get on television: an analysis of causality imagery, in Graber, D.A (2007). *Media Power in Politics*, CQ Press, pp. 56-65.

Recommended

- Kalb, M. (2007). The Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006: The Media as a Weapon in Asymmetrical Conflict (February 2007). KSG Working Paper No. RWP07-012. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=963132>