

Political Communication
POS 6933
Spring 2011

Professor: Beth Rosenson
Anderson Hall 202, Email: rosenson@ufl.edu
Office Hours Mondays 10:30 am-2 pm, Tuesdays 6:15 pm-8:00 pm, Thursdays 7:15 pm-8:00 pm.

This course addresses the history, development, nature, power, and influence of the media, with a focus on the coverage of politics. "Media" includes traditional forms of political communication such as the New York Times, Washington Post, and network news, but also newer, less mainstream/alternative forms of media such as the Internet, blogs, talk radio, and "soft news" TV. The course will examine the major questions that have been addressed by political communications scholars; in so doing, we will read texts written not only by political scientists but also by sociologists and by journalists themselves. The questions we will address are both empirical and normative. They include: How does the media cover government and campaigns? How has the conception of the media's role in American democracy changed over time? What factors have driven changes in how the media covers politics? What impact does the media have on the political opinions and behavior of citizens and public officials? What are the differences across types of media in terms of how they shape the formation of political opinions and knowledge and other political behavior? How powerful is the media, and what are the limits to this power? Is the media biased, and if so, in what way? What are the similarities and differences with regard to coverage of domestic politics versus foreign affairs? How does the media cover war and what are the implications for democracy of this coverage?

This course will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. You must come to class 1) having read the assigned materials and 2) ready to discuss the arguments in the readings (both the specific details of the research you will be reading, and its broader implications). Each student must do THREE in-class presentations of at least 10-15 minutes each. Each presentation will be on a particular reading, and you will be able to choose the readings you present on. I will clarify what the expectations are for the presentations at the beginning of the semester. Participation, including presentations, will be worth a total of 30% of your grade. You must also complete three short essays of 6-9 pages each, worth a total of 30% of your grade (10% each). Essay topics will be mailed out shortly after the semester starts. Finally, you must complete a research project worth 40%. I will discuss the expectations for the essays and research project in class.

Readings will come from 1) books required for purchase, 2) a coursepack, 3) from articles available via the UF Library website, and 4) handouts from the professor. The required textbooks are available at UF bookstores and the coursepack is available through Orange and Blue Textbooks (309 NW 13th Street, ph 375-2707).

Required Textbooks

- 1) Karen Callaghan, ed., Framing American Politics (U of Pittsburgh Press, 2005)
- 2) W. Russell Neumann, Marion R. Just and Ann N. Crigler, Common Knowledge: News and the Construction of Political Meaning (University of Chicago Press, 1992)
- 3) Stephen Farnsworth and S. Robert Lichter, The Nightly News Nightmare: Network Television's Coverage of U.S. Presidential Elections, 1988-2000 (Rowman and Littlefield, 2010)
- 4) John Maltese, Spin Control: The White House Office of Communications and the Management of Presidential News (University of North Carolina: 1994)
- 5) W. Lance Bennett and David Paletz, eds., Taken By Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (University of Chicago, 1994)
- 6) Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (Basic Books, 1981)
- 7) Eric Alterman, What Liberal Media? (Basic Books, 2003)
- 8) Bernard Goldberg, Bias (Regnery Publishing, 2003)
- 9) Timothy Cook, Governing with the News (University of Chicago, 2005)
- 10) Noam Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent (Pantheon, 2002)
- 11) Robert Entman, Projections of Power (University of Chicago, 2003)
- 12) Shanto Iyengar, News That Matters: Television and American Opinion (University of Chicago, 2010)
- 13) Mark Rozell, Media Power, Media Politics (Rowman and Littlefield, 2008)
- 14) Richard Kaplan, Politics and the American Press (Cambridge University Press, 2002)

January 11: Session I

Introduction and Overview

January 18: Session II

The Historical Development of the Media in American Politics

Questions to think about while reading: How has the media changed since the colonial era, in terms of how it covers politics? How has journalists' conception of their role in a democracy, and the public's perception of this role, evolved over time? What factors explain the changes we have seen in the media over time, for example the rise of the "penny press" and the transition to the norm of "journalistic objectivity"? Are these shifts in the nature of the media explained by technology, economic developments, growth in literacy and other social developments, political choices, or what? TO NEXT PAGE

Readings:

1. Paul Starr, Creation of the Media (Basic Books: 2004), pps. 47-96, 107-111, 123-130 (Item #2 in coursepack)
2. Darrell West, Rise and Fall of the Media Establishment (Bedford St-Martin's, 2001), pp. 8-49 (Item #1 in coursepack)
3. Timothy Cook, Governing with the News, Ch. 3 (required text)
4. Michael Schudson, Discovering the News, Chs. 1-4 (required text)

5. Richard Kaplan, Politics and the American Press, Chs. 2, 4 and 5 (required text)
6. Larry Sabato, Feeding Frenzy (Lanahan: 2000), pp. 18-31 (coursepack)
7. Thomas E. Patterson, "Political Roles of the Journalist," in The Politics of News: The News of Politics, ed. Doris Graber, Denis McQuail and Pippa Norris (Congressional Quarterly Press, 1998), pp. 17-32 (coursepack)

January 25: Session III

Media Effects Part I:

Agenda Setting, Priming and Framing

Questions to think about while reading: How does the media set the agenda? What is priming and how does it work? How does framing work? Who is most "susceptible" to these media effects?

Readings

Agenda Setting:

1. Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder, News That Matters, Chs 1-4, 7-10 (required text)
- *2. Fay Lomax Cook et al, "Media and Agenda Setting: Effects on the Public, Interest Group Leaders, Policy Makers, and Policy," Public Opinion Quarterly (1983), Vol. 47 (1): pp. 16-35 (available through UF Library website)

Priming:

3. Joanne Miller and Jon A. Krosnick, "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Trusted Citizens are Guided by a Trusted Source," American Journal of Political Science (April 2000), Vol. 44, No. 2, pp. 295-309 (J-STOR)

Framing:

4. Karen Callaghan, ed., Framing American Politics, Introduction, Chs 4, 5, 7 and Conclusion (required text)

February 1: Session IV

Media Effects II:

The Constructionist Perspective and Limits on Media Effects;

The Media Malaise Hypothesis and Differences Across Types of Media

Questions to think about while reading: What are the limits on media framing and other limits on media effects? What is the constructivist perspective? How does the research design of Neumann et. al differ from the research design of Iyengar and Kinder and others? How do the differing research designs, and different questions asked, lead to different conclusions about media effects? Does TV viewing have negative political effects such as political cynicism and a sense of political inefficacy? What are the differences between TV and newspapers in terms of their effects on the public?

Readings

1. Karen Callaghan, ed., Framing American Politics, ch. 3 (required text)
2. Russell Neumann et al., Common Knowledge, chs. 1-5 (required text)

3. Michael Robinson, "Public Affairs Television and the Growth of Political Malaise," American Political Science Review (June 1976), Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 409-432 (UF Library website)

*4. Pippa Norris, "Does Television Erode Social Capital? A Reply to Putnam," PS: Political Science and Politics (September 1996), Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 474-480 (Available through UF Library website)

*5. Kenneth Newton, "Mass Media Effects: Mobilization or Media Malaise?" British Journal of Political Science (October 1999), Vol. 29, pp. 577-599 (UF Library website)

*6. James Druckman, "Media Matter: How Newspapers and Television Cover Campaigns and Influence Voters," (Oct-Dec 2005), Political Communication, Vol. 22, pp. 463-481 (available through UF library website)

February 8: Session V Media Bias

Questions to think about while reading: Is the media biased in a liberal or conservative direction, or in a different way? How, if at all, does bias manifest itself on social issues, on economic issues, and on coverage of international affairs? How has the question of media bias been addressed by scholars and journalists? How *should* the question of media bias best be approached in order to arrive at a convincing conclusion? Which research on the subject do you find most compelling in terms of research design?

Readings

*1. Bernard Goldberg, Bias, chs. 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 (required text) – assigned ch 4 and 5

2. Eric Alterman, What Liberal Media?, chs. 1-3, 5, 7-8 (required text)

*3. Jim Kuypers, Press Bias and Politics (Praeger: 2002), pp.27-52, 119-46 (coursepack)

*4. Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent, pp. 1-35 (required text)

5. Tim Cook, Governing With The News, Ch. 5 (required text)

*6. David Niven, "Bias in the News: Partisanship and Negativity in Media Coverage of Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton," Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics, July 2001, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 31-46 (UF library website)

7. **David Niven**, "Partisan Bias in the Media? A New Test." Social Science Quarterly (December 1999), Vol. 80, No. 2, pp. 847-858 (UF library website)

February 15: Session VI Media Coverage of the President

334 1899 Questions to think about while reading: How does the media cover the president and how has this coverage evolved and changed over time? How has the president tried to control the media coverage he receives? How successful have recent presidents been in this regard? What are the implications for democracy of presidential attempts at "spin control" of the media?

Readings

- *1. Mark Rozell, Media Power, Media Politics, Ch. 1 (required text)
2. Timothy Cook, Governing With The News, Ch. 6 (required text)
3. John Maltese, Spin Control, Chs. 2, 3, 7, and pp. 232-39 (required text)
- *4. Steven E. Clayman et al., "A Watershed in White House Journalism: Explaining the Post-1968 Rise of Aggressive Presidential News," Political Communication (2010), Vol. 3, pp. 229-247 (UF Library Website)
5. Marvin Kalb, One Scandalous Story (Free Press: 2001), pp. 18-35 (coursepack)
6. Michael Isikoff, Uncovering Clinton (Crown: 1999), pp. 260-275 (coursepack)
- *7. Matthew Baum and Samuel Kernell, "Has Cable Ended The Golden Age of Presidential Television?" American Political Science Review (March 1999), Vol. 93, No. 1, pp. 99-114

February 22: Session VII

Media Coverage of Congress and the Court

Questions to think about while reading: How does the media cover Congress and the Supreme Court? Who and what gets the lion's share of coverage in Congress? How do legislators try to influence coverage? What effects does this coverage have on what citizens know and think about these branches of government?

Readings:

1. Mark Rozell, Media Power, Media Politics, Chs. 2 and 3 (required text)
2. Timothy Cook, Governing With The News, pp. 149-163 (required text)
- *3. Charles Tidmarch and John J. Pitney, Jr., "Covering Congress," Polity (Spring 1985), Vol. 17, pp. 463-483 (UF Library website)
4. Jonathan Morris and Rosalee Clawson, "Media Coverage of Congress in the 1990s: Scandals, Personalities, and the Prevalence of Policy and Process," Political Communication (July-Sept. 2005), Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 297-313 (via UF library website; type in journal name)
- *5. R. Douglas Arnold, Congress, the Press and Political Accountability (Russell Sage Foundation, 2004), pp. 64-91 (coursepack)
- *6. Daniel Lipinski, "Using "New" Media to Get "Old" Media Coverage," Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics (January 2004), Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 7-21 (UF library website)
- *7. John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse, "The Media's Role in Public Negativity Toward Congress," American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 475-498 (UF library website)

Rosenson handout on media coverage of state legislatures

March 1: Session VIII

Alternative or Non-Mainstream Media

Questions to think about while reading: How does the alternative media differ from the mainstream media? What effects does it have on public opinion, political efficacy, and

other outcomes? What are the implications of the growth in non-mainstream media for the functioning of democracy; is the explosion of new forms of media such as blogs good or bad for democracy?

Readings

- *1. David Barker and Kathleen Knight, "Political Talk Radio and Public Opinion," Public Opinion Quarterly, (Summer 2000), Vol. 64, No. 2, pp. 149-170 (on J-STOR through U of F library webpage)
- *2. David Niven, "The Political Content of Late Night Comedy," Harvard International Journal of Press/Policy (July 2003), Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 118-133 (via UF website; enter journal name)
- *3. Geoffrey Baym. "The Daily Show: Discursive Integration and the Reinvention of Political Journalism," Political Communication (July 2005), Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 259-276 (UF library website)
- *4. Matthew Baum and Angela Jamison, "The *Oprah* Effect: How Soft News Helps Inattentive Citizens Vote Consistently", Journal of Politics (Nov 2006), Vol. 68, No. 4 (UF website)
- *5. Jody Baumgartner and Jonathan Morris, "The Daily Show Effect: Candidate Evaluations, Efficacy, and American Youth," (May 2006), American Politics Research, Vol. 34, pp. 341-367 (via UF library website; type in journal name)
- *6. Young Mie Kim and John Vishak, "Just Laugh! You Don't Need to Remember: The Effects of Entertainment Media on Political Information Acquisition and Information Processing in Political Judgment." Journal of Communication, June 2008, pp. 338-60 (UF Library website).
- *7. Matthew Kerbel and David Bloom, "Blog for America and Civic Involvement," Harvard International Journal of Press/Policy (October 2005), Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 3-27 (UF Library website)
8. Diana Cohen, chapter on conservative blogosphere (handout)

NO CLASS MARCH 8: SPRING BREAK

March 15: Session IX

Media and Elections

Questions to think about while reading:

How does the media cover presidential and congressional elections? What does it focus on? What is wrong with this coverage, according to critics, and are these criticisms valid? What do citizens learn from campaign coverage and how do they process it? How has campaign coverage changed in recent decades, or has it?

Readings

1. Thomas E. Patterson, Out of Order, (Vintage: 1994), pp. 28-93 (coursepack)
- *2. Larry Sabato, Feeding Frenzy (Lanahan, 2000), pp. 97-132 (coursepack)
- *3. Farnsworth, The Nightly News Nightmare, Chs 2, 3, 5 and 6.
4. Callaghan, ed., Framing American Politics, ch. 2 (required text)
- *5. Kim Fridkin Kahn, "Senate Elections in the News: Examining Campaign Coverage," Legislative Studies Quarterly (August 1991), Vol. 16, No. 3 (UF website)

- *6. Marion R. Just et al., Crosstalk: Citizens, Candidates and the Media in a Presidential Campaign (University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 89-119, 151-176 (coursepack)
 7. Timothy Crouse, The Boys on the Bus (Random House, 2003), pp. 303-19, 348-71 (coursepack)

March 22: Session X
 Media Coverage of Foreign Policy I

Questions to think about while reading: What influence does the media's coverage of foreign policy have on the public and on political elites? Is it different from the impact with regard to domestic policy? What does the media report on, and what is the nature of this coverage, with regard to foreign policy?

Readings

Theories of Media Influence

1. Rozell, Media Power, Media Politics ch. 11
2. Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent, reread p. 3-35 (especially p. 18-31) and read pp. xix-xxix
3. Robert Entman, Projections of Power, pp. 1-17 (required text)
- *4. Donald Jordan and Benjamin Page, "Shaping Foreign Policy Opinions," Journal of Conflict Resolution (June 1992), Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 227-241 (Available through UF Library website)

Cases

- *5. Herman and Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent, Chs. 2 and 3 (required text)
6. Entman, Projections of Power Ch. 2 (required text)
- *7. Adam Berinsky and Donald Kinder, "Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis," Journal of Politics, (August 2006), Vol. 68, No. 3 (UF Library Website)

March 29
 Media Coverage of Foreign Policy II: Wars and Military Incursions: Session XI

Questions while reading

How does the media cover wars, and how has media coverage of wars changed over time? What are the changes and continuities that we see? Does the government successfully manage media coverage of war? What are the implications for democracy of these attempts at media management?

Readings

1. Doris A. Graber, "Terrorism, Censorship and the 1st Amendment: In Search of Policy Guidelines," in Pippa Norris et al., Framing Terrorism (Routledge, 2003), pp. 27-42 (coursepack)
2. Rozell, chapter 12
3. Herman and Chomsky, Manufacturing Consent, pp. xxix-xxxvi and ch. 5 (required text)
4. Entman, Projections of Power, chs. 3 and 5 (required text)

*5. Amy E. Jasperson and Mansour O. El-Kikhia, "CNN and al Jazeera's Media Coverage of America's War in Afghanistan," in Pippa Norris et al., Framing Terrorism (Routledge, 2003), pp. 113-132 (coursepack)
W. Lance Bennett, ed., Taken By Storm, Chs. 2, 4, 6- 9 (required text)

April 5: Session XII

Media Coverage of War III: The War in Iraq

Questions while reading: How did the media cover the conflict in Iraq? What are the continuities and changes compared to coverage of the first Gulf War? What difference does it make for public knowledge and opinion if citizens get their war news from one source or another?

Readings

1. W. Lance Bennett, Regina G. Lawrence and Steven Livingston, When The Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media From Iraq to Katrina (University of Chicago, 2007), Chapter 1 (pp. 13-45): Copy outside my door

2. Amy Fried, "Terrorism as a Context of Coverage before the Iraq War," The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics (July 2005), Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 125-1321 (on UF Library website)

*3. Michel M. Haigh, "A Comparison of Embedded and Nonembedded Print Coverage of the U.S. Invasion and Occupation of Iraq," Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics (April 2006), Vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 139-153 (UF Library Website)

*4. Steven Aday and Maeve Hebert, "Embedding the Truth: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Objectivity and Television Coverage of the Iraq War," The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics (January 2005), Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 3-21 (UF Library Website)

*5. Ravi Narasimhan, "Looking beyond Flawed Journalism: How National Interests, Patriotism, and Cultural Values Shaped the Coverage of the Iraq War," Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics (January 2005), Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 45-62 (UF Library Website)

6. Samuel J. Best, "Selective Exposure to Online Foreign News during the Conflict with Iraq," Harvard International Journal of Press and Politics (October 2005), Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 52-70 (UF Library Website)

APRIL 12: Discuss research projects

APRIL 19: NO CLASS SCHEDULED RIGHT NOW. BUT KEEP THE DATE AVAILABLE IN CASE WE NEED TO RESCHEDULE A CLASS FROM EARLIER IN THE SEMESTER.

APRIL 25: RESEARCH PROJECTS DUE BY 5 PM