

PO8036 Media and International Politics

M.Sc. Political Science Module

Hilary Term 2018

Draft Syllabus: November 2017

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Overview

The mass media is the primary means by which citizens learn about political issues, events and actors. While the media plays a key role in domestic politics, we should expect that the media are particularly important in informing citizens and shaping their opinions regarding issues complex international matters where direct experience may be somewhat limited. For this reason, we investigate the effects of differential media coverage on public opinion of major contemporary global issues namely foreign policy and war, terrorism, climate change, and migration. However, many contend that the media are not simply the means by which information is transferred but constitute political actors themselves. We therefore also explore the causal factors that may shape media coverage of global affairs and how this varies across media organisations and across time and space. Combining theoretical work, content analysis and experimental research, we seek to understand how and under what conditions media coverage is produced, the implications for how citizens perceive global affairs, and the effects this has on policy.

Learning Objectives

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Engage with different empirical and theoretical approaches to the analysis of mass media and public opinion
- Identify causal mechanisms by which media coverage can (and cannot) shape public opinion on global issues and foreign policy
- Compare and analyse the sources of influence on media coverage of international politics
- Understand and articulate the effects of media framing and agenda-setting on contemporary climate change and immigration debates

Course Structure and Contact Hours

There will be 5 weekly seminars of 1h50mins and the module is worth 5 ECTS credits. Attendance at these seminars is compulsory. Please contact me in advance by email if you

cannot make a seminar. I am happy to meet with students to discuss course materials, research papers, and other matters. Please let me know by email and we will set up an appointment.

Requirements

Seminar Participation: (15%). Everyone is expected to attend every seminar ready to participate and having completed the readings. Students are expected to carry the discussion forward. As course instructor, I will chair and, where necessary, focus the debate and pose questions (see below). Your grade will depend not just on attendance, but **actual participation**. Learning to lucidly articulate an argument about a complex topic amongst a group of your peers *and* learning to listen to and engage with one another (not just waiting for your turn to speak) are some of the key skills you'll develop in graduate school. Practice makes perfect, so speak up and be attentive!

Discussion Points/Questions (15%)

By 7.00 pm on Tuesday (i.e. the day before the seminar) every week, students should submit **3 discussion points or questions** to me **by email**. Here you are **not** asked to provide a detailed discussion or analysis. You are simply required to raise some interesting points or questions about the week's readings that will form the basis of in-class discussion. These should be in the form of 3 numbered points/questions; each should be **a paragraph or two in length**. I will be looking for originality in your insights, reference to theoretical debates you have engaged with elsewhere, sharp critiques of the evidence or theory employed, etc. Consider what points/questions will make for an interesting discussion in the seminar. Think of applying questions like: Are the arguments logically coherent? How do the authors defend their cases? Do the papers use qualitative or quantitative evidence and how well executed are the empirical analysis? How do the results/theories of one paper challenge another? Outline your own critical assessment and the avenues you believe are open for further interrogation.

Final Assignment (70%):

1. Select one of the five major topics from the five weeks below.
2. Outline **two** critical questions on the broad topic of media, international politics and public opinion that follow from these readings. Explain why these questions emerge from the literature and why you think they merit further investigation (500 words).
3. Choose **one** of these questions and detail how you would answer it? Provide all the details found in a good research proposal. (2,000 words)

You should demonstrate not just a critical appreciation of the material below, but also an understanding of the various scholarly works to which you feel it is related. Thus, you should refer to additional works or evidence in your answers.

The assignment should be approximately 2,500 words in length (+/- 10%) including notes/bibliography. Exceeding the limit will result in deduction of marks.

Due Date: April 13 2018 12pm. All late work, unless excused beforehand, will have 5 marks deducted for each day beyond the deadline.

Turnitin.com. The assignment must be submitted using turnitin.com. This is an online system that enables us to manage the module efficiently. Note that there is also a plagiarism detector on

turnitin.com. You need to register yourself with turnitin.com. The course number for this module is **16720845** and the password is **PO8036**.

Academic Dishonesty and Citations

Needless to say, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who attempts to represent some else's work as her/hers own will be subject to the disciplinary proceedings of the University. This includes plagiarizing the work of others, using an essay writing service, or any similar activity. All written assignments will pass through an electronic plagiarism checker.

Of course, in your work, you are expected to draw on existing theoretical and empirical research. All scholarly and journalistic material should be appropriately cited. You may use any citation style you wish, but be consistent in your work. See <http://uncg.libguides.com/content.php?pid=100907&sid=757621>. Chicago (footnote) or APSR (in-text) are the most commonly used styles in political science. Wikipedia, blogs, and other such online sources might be useful as a first step but they should not be relied upon alone when writing essays.

Readings

Week 1 – How the Media Cover International Affairs and Why It Matters

Druckman, James N. 2001. "The Implications of Framing Effects for Citizen Competence." *Political Behavior* 23:225-256.

Scheufele, D.A. and Tewksbury, D., 2007. Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), pp.9-20.

Zaller, John. 1999. A Theory of Media Politics: How the Interests of Politicians, Journalists, and Citizens Shape the News. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Unpublished Manuscript. Chapters 2-3, pp. 6-53. (Available at: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/zaller/media%20politics%20book%20.Pdf>)

Hamilton, James T. 2003 All the News That's Fit to Sell: How the Market Transforms Information into News. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1. (Available at: <http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/chapters/s7604.pdf>)

Seib, Phillip. 2004. Beyond the Front Lines: How the News Media Cover a World Shaped by War, Chapters 1-2, pp.1-42.

Week 2 – The Media and Foreign Policy (1) From Vietnam to Iraq

Hallin, D.C., 1984. The media, the war in Vietnam, and political support: A critique of the thesis of an oppositional media. *The Journal of Politics*, 46(1), pp.2-24.

Mermin, J., 1997. Television news and American intervention in Somalia: The myth of a media-driven foreign policy. *Political science quarterly*, 112(3), pp.385-403.

Robinson, P., Goddard, P., Parry, K. and Murray, C., 2009. Testing models of media performance in wartime: UK TV news and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. *Journal of Communication*, 59(3), pp.534-563.

Aday, S., Livingston, S. and Hebert, M., 2005. Embedding the truth: A cross-cultural analysis of objectivity and television coverage of the Iraq war. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 10(1), pp.3-21.

Robinson, P., 2001. Theorizing the influence of media on world politics: Models of media influence on foreign policy. *European Journal of Communication*, 16(4), pp.523-544.

Week 3 – The Media and Foreign Policy (2) – Soft News and ‘New’ Media effects

Baum, Matthew A. 2002. “Sex, Lies and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to the Inattentive Public.” *American Political Science Review* 96 (March): 1-19.

Patterson, Thomas E. 2000. *Doing Well and Doing Good: How Soft News and Critical Journalism Are Shrinking the News Audience and Weakening Democracy – And What News Outlets Can Do About It*. Report by the Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy. John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.
(<http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/presspol/publications/webpapers.htm>)

Gadarian, Shana Kushner. "The politics of threat: How terrorism news shapes foreign policy attitudes." *The Journal of Politics* 72.2 (2010): 469-483.

Caverley, J.D. and Krupnikov, Y., 2017. Aiming at Doves: Experimental Evidence of Military Images’ Political Effects. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 61(7), pp.1482-1509.

Aday, S., 2010. Leading the charge: Media, elites, and the use of emotion in stimulating rally effects in wartime. *Journal of Communication*, 60(3), pp.440-465.

Week 4 – The Media and Climate Change

Boykoff, M.T. and Boykoff, J.M., 2004. Balance as bias: global warming and the US prestige press. *Global environmental change*, 14(2), pp.125-136.

Boykoff, M.T., 2008. The cultural politics of climate change discourse in UK tabloids. *Political geography*, 27(5), pp.549-569.

Painter, J. and Ashe, T., 2012. Cross-national comparison of the presence of climate scepticism in the print media in six countries, 2007–10. *Environmental Research Letters*, 7(4), p.044005.

Boykoff, M.T., 2013. Public enemy no. 1? Understanding media representations of outlier views on climate change. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(6), pp.796-817.

Jones, M.D. and Song, G., 2014. Making sense of climate change: How story frames shape cognition. *Political Psychology*, 35(4), pp.447-476.

Week 5 – The Media and Migration

Merolla, J., Ramakrishnan, S.K. and Haynes, C., 2013. “Illegal,” “Undocumented,” or “Unauthorized”: Equivalency Frames, Issue Frames, and Public Opinion on Immigration. *Perspectives on Politics*, 11(3), pp.789-807.

Valentino NA, Brader T, Jardina AE. 2013. Immigration opposition among U.S. whites: general ethnocentrism or media priming of attitudes about Latinos? *Polit. Psychol.* 34:149–66

Lawlor, A., 2015. Framing Immigration in the Canadian and British News Media. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue canadienne de science politique*, 48(2), pp.329-355.

Georgiou, M. and Zaborowski, R., 2017. *Media coverage of the “refugee crisis”: A cross-European perspective*. Council of Europe.