

Public Opinion and Voting Behavior

Spring 2011

Wednesdays 6:30-9:15

Instructor: Bethany Albertson

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Office Hours: Monday 10 – 11:30, Wednesday 1 – 2:30

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This class is a graduate seminar on public opinion and voting behavior. We will examine such topics as the meaning of public opinion, the distribution of public opinion major issues, and factors related to vote turnout and vote choice.

This class has two major assignments. The first is a paper (15-20 pages) which can take on of two forms; either a research design proposal or a full-fledged research project. The second major assignment will be an in class exam, designed to help students prepare for the public opinion/voting behavior portion of comprehensive exams.

Requirements:

Your course grade is based on the following components:

Seminar Participation: 20%

Written Assignments: 20%

Class Presentation: 5%

Final Paper: 35%

Final Exam: 25%

Seminar Participation: I expect that you show up to class ready to participate. While you're reading you should take notes: highlight ideas that you find interesting or questionable and be ready to discuss them in class.

Written assignments: During the course of the term, I will expect you to submit five two-page (double-spaced) reaction papers. Each of these reaction papers should be a critical, research-based reaction to one or more of the readings and end with two thought questions for class discussion. These are due by the Tuesday prior to the relevant day's readings, by midnight.

Readings: The majority of reading for this class will be articles, but we'll rely heavily on the following books:

Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock. 1991. *Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Course Timeline

January 19th: Introduction

January 26th: Meaning and Measurement of Public Opinion

Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*, Ch. 1, pp 3-20.

Key, V.O. 1961. *Public Opinion and American Democracy*. New York: Knopf. pp 3-17.

Verba, Sidney. 1996. The Citizen as Respondent: Sample Surveys and American Democracy. *American Political Science Review*, 90: 1-7.

Zaller, Ch. 1-3

February 2nd: Ignorance

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row. Chapter 11-13.

Delli Carpini, Michael X. and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know about Politics and Why it Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Introduction and Chapter 4.

Lupia 1994. Shortcuts Versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections. *American Political Science Review*, 63-76.

Hutchings, Vincent. 2001. Political Context, Issue Salience, and Selective Attentiveness: Constituent Knowledge of the Clarence Thomas Confirmation Vote.

February 9th: Ideology and Political Reasoning

Converse, Philip. 1964. The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics. In David Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*.

Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 10.

Kinder, Donald R. 1983. Diversity and Complexity in American Public Opinion. In *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, ed. Ada Finifter. Washington, DC: APSA Press.

Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock. *Reasoning and Choice*. ch. 1-2, 8-10.

February 16th: Self Interest and Symbolic Politics

Kinder, Donald and Roderick Kiewiet. 1981. Sociotropic Politics: The American Case. *British Journal of Political Science*.

Kramer. 1983. The Ecological Fallacy Revisited: Aggregate versus Individual Level Finding on Economics and Elections, and Sociotropic Voting. *American Political Science Review*.

Sears, David O., Carl P. Hensler, and Leslie K. Speer. 1979. Whites' Opposition to Busing: Self-Interest or Symbolic Politics? *American Political Science Review* 73: 369-384.

Green, Donald Philip and Jonathan A. Cowden. 1992. Who Protests: Self-Interest and White Opposition to Busing. *The Journal of Politics*. 54: 471-496.

Chong, Dennis, Jack Citrin and Patricia Conley. 2001. When Self-Interest Matters. *Political Psychology*. 22(3): 541-570.

February 23th: Values

Feldman, Stanley. 1988. Structure and Consistency in Public Opinion: The Role of Core Beliefs and Values. *American Journal of Political Science*, 32: 416-440.

Chong, Dennis. 1993. How People Think, Reason, and Feel about Rights and Liberties. *American Journal of Political Science*, 36: 268-307.

Layman, Geoffrey C. and Edward G. Carmines. 1997. Cultural Conflict in American Politics: Religious Traditionalism, Postmaterialism, and U.S. Political Behavior. *Journal of Politics*, 59: 751-777.

Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock. 1991. Reasoning and Choice. Chapter 7.

Dawson, Michael. 1994. Behind the Mule. Chapters 3, 6.

March 2nd: Persuasion

Mutz, Diana, Richard A. Brody and Paul M. Sniderman. Political Persuasion and Attitude Change. University of Michigan Press. Chapter 1.

Perloff, Richard. 2002. The Dynamics of Persuasion. Mahwah, NJ. Laurence Erlbaum Associates. Chapter 5, Chapter 6, Chapter 7.

Mutz, Diana C. 1998. Impersonal Influence: How Perceptions of Mass Collectives Affect Political Attitudes. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 4, 8, 9.

Zaller, John. 1992. The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion. Ch. 6-9.

March 9th: Media

Iyengar, S. 1981. "Television News and Citizens Explanations of National Affairs." *American Political Science Review*, 81: 815-831.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, Shanto Iyengar, Adam Simon, and Nicholas Valentino. "Does Attack Advertising Demobilize the Electorate?" *American Political Science Review* 88, 4: 829-838.

Wattenberg, Martin P. and Craig Leonard Brians. 1999. "Negative Campaign Advertising: Demobilizer or Mobilizer?" *American Political Science Review* 93: 891-900.

Lau, Richard, Lee Sigelman, Caroline Heldman and Paul Babbitt. The Effectiveness of Negative Political Advertisements: A Meta-analytic Review. *American Political Science Review*, 93.

Berinsky, Adam J. and Donald R. Kinder. 2006. Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis. *Journal of Politics*. 640-656.

Prior, Markus. 2005. News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49: 577-592.

March 23rd: Race and Racial Attitudes

Kinder, Donald R. and Lynn M. Sanders. 1996. Divided by Color. Chicago: University of Chicago. Ch. 7, 9, 10.

Sniderman, Paul M. & Philip E. Tetlock. 1986. Symbolic Racism: Problems of Motive Attribution in Political Analysis. *Journal of Social Issues*, 42: 129-150.

Mendelberg, Tali. The Race Card, Chapters 1, 6, 7.

Alvarez, R. Michael and John Brehm 1997. Are Americans Ambivalent about Racial Attitudes? *American Journal of Political Science*, 41: 345-374.

Correll, Park, Judd and Wittenbrink. The Police Officer's Dilemma: Using Ethnicity to Disambiguate Potentially Threatening Individuals.

March 30th: Issues and Candidates

Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk. 1986. Schematic Assessments of Presidential Candidates. *American Political Science Review*. 521-540.

Rahn, Wendy M, John H. Aldrich and Eugene Borgida. 1994. Individual and Contextual Variations in Political Candidate Appraisal. *American Political Science Review*, 88: 193-199.

MacKuen, Michael B., Robert Erikson, and James Stimson. 1992. Peasants or Bankers?: The

American Electorate and the U.S. Economy, *American Political Science Review* 87, 3: 597-611.

Bartels, Larry M. 2005. Homer Gets a Tax Cut: Inequality and Public Policy in the Public Mind. *Perspectives on Politics*. 15-31.

Aldrich, John H., John L. Sullivan, and Eugene Borgida. 1989. Foreign Affairs and Issue Voting: Do Presidential Candidates Waltz Before A Blind Audience?, *American Political Science Review*, 83: 123-141.

Baum, Matthew. 2002. Sex, Lies, and War: How Soft News Brings Foreign Policy to an Inattentive Public. *American Political Science Review*, 96: 91-109.

April 6th: Campaigns

Lodge, Milton, Marco Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation. *American Political Science Review* 89, 2: 309-326.

Marcus, George E. and Michael B. MacKuen 1993. Anxiety, Enthusiasm, and the Vote The Emotional Underpinnings of Learning and Involvement during Presidential Campaigns, *American Political Science Review* 87, 3: 672-685.

Petrocik, John R. 1996. Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study. *American Journal of Political Science* 40, 3: 825-850.

Shaw, Daron R. 1999. A Study of Presidential Campaign Event Effects from 1952 to 1992. *Journal of Politics*, 61, 2: 387-422.

Hillygus, Sunshine and Todd Shields. 2008. The Persuadable Voter. Chapters 2, 3, and 4.

April 13th: Political Participation

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, and Norman Nie. 1993. Citizen Activity: Who Participates? What Do They Say? *American Political Science Review*, 87: 303-18.

Putnam, Robert D. 2001. Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America. In Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg (eds.) *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Participation. *American Political Science Review*, 89: 271-94.

Timpone, Richard J. 1998. Structure, Behavior, and Voter Turnout in the United States. *American Political Science Review*, 92: 145-58.

Han, Hahrie. Moved to Action. Chapter 5.

April 20th: Mobilization and Turnout

Rosenstone, Stephen J. and Mark Hansen. 2001. Solving the Puzzle of Participation in Electoral Politics. In Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg (eds.) *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Niemi, Richard and Herbert Weisberg. 2001. Why is Voter Turnout Low (And Why is it Declining)? In Richard Niemi and Herbert Weisberg (eds.) *Controversies in Voting Behavior*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Aldrich, John H. 1993. Rational Choice and Turnout. *American Journal of Political Science*, 37: 246-78.

G. Bingham Powell, Jr. 1986. American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective.” *American Political Science Review*, 80: 17-44.

Gerber, Alan S. and Donald P. Green. 2000. The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 94: 653-663.

April 27th: Representation

Lippmann, Walter. 1922. Public Opinion. New York: Free Press. Ch. 27-28.

Miller, Warren E. and Donald Stokes. 1963. Constituency Influence in Congress. *American Political Science Review* 57: 45-56.

Page, Benjamin & Robert Y. Shapiro. 1992. The Rational Public. Chicago: University of Chicago. Ch 8-10.

Bartels, Larry M. 1991. Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Build-Up. *American Political Science Review*, 85: 457-474.

Hacker, Jacob S. and Paul Pierson. 2005. Abandoning the Middle: The Bush Tax Cuts and the Limits of Democratic Control. *Perspectives on Politics*, 3: 33-53.

May 4th: Class Presentations