

Graduate Seminar in Media and Politics
Prof. David Greenberg
Fall 2012

Class Time: Monday
Email: davidgr[at]rutgers.edu
Office Hours: Mon. 6.00-8.30
Course No.: 16:194:665:01

Room: Huntington House, 184 College Ave.
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Syllabus

Description. The course examines relationship between the news media and presidential politics. This year, because of the presidential campaign, we will focus in particular on media and the election. We'll follow the ups and downs and twists and turns of the election season. But we'll also try to understand how campaigns have come to take the form that they do by looking at these issues historically. Topics include the rise of mass-media politics; presidential debates; TV advertising; journalistic objectivity; and the role of the internet in today's campaigns.



Course Requirements.

- **Short Paper. Due September 24.** There will be an initial 15-page essay, designed to evaluate facility with the readings, ability to frame an argument, and writing skill.
- **Term Paper. Due December 12.** The final piece of writing for the course is a 25-page paper that explores some aspect of presidential elections in depth. Topics will be given out in class.
- **Readings.**
Each week there will be assigned readings on the given topic. Usually it will consist of a single book, but some weeks it will be a collection of articles.
- **Watching campaign events.** Students are expected to watch the conventions, debates and other major political events of the campaign season. They are also expected to read the New York Times and other political publications to stay abreast of campaign news and developments.

Reading List.

1. Jeffrey Alexander, *The Performance of Politics*. Yale University Press, 2010.
2. Stephen Ansolabehere and Shanto Iyengar, *Going Negative: How Political Advertisements Shrink and Polarize the Electorate*. Free Press, 1995.
3. Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*. Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003.
4. John G. Geer, *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*. University of Chicago Press, 2006.
5. Susan Herbst, *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*.
6. Harold Holzer, ed. *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete, Unexpurgated Text*. Fordham University Press, 2004.
7. Robert Mann, *Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds: LBJ, Barry Goldwater, and the Ad That Changed American Politics*. Louisiana State University Press, 2011.
8. Michael McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics*. Oxford University Press, 1986.
9. Thomas Patterson, *Out of Order*. Vintage, 1994.
10. Stephen Ponder, *Managing the Press: Origins of the Media Presidency*. St. Martin's Press, 1998.
11. Samuel Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter*. University of Chicago Press, 1994.

Weekly Assignments.

-  Book available at Rutgers University Bookstore or in Alexander library reserves.
-  Article available on the class website at the Sakai site.

- Sep. 10 **Introduction**
 ☞ Alexis de Tocqueville, "Election of the President" and "Re-Election of the President," in *Democracy in America*.
 ☞ James Bryce, "The President" and "Why Great Men Are Not Chosen President" in *The American Commonwealth*.
 ☞ Hans Noel, "Ten Things Political Scientists Know That You Don't" *The Forum* 8:3 (2010).
 ☞ Gil Troy, "The Campaign Triumphant," *Wilson Quarterly* 36:3 June 2012.
- Sep. 17 **The Old System**
 ☞ Michael McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics*.
- Sep. 24 **Media and the Transformation of Presidential Politics**
 ☞ Stephen Ponder, *Origins of the Media Presidency*.
 ☞ Jeffrey Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*. Introduction, Chs. 4 & 5.
 ★ **First Paper Due**
- Oct. 1 **Presidential Spin, Then and Now**
 ☞ Richard Jensen, "Armies, Admen and Crusaders: Types of Presidential Election Campaigns," *The History Teacher*, 2 (1969): 33-50.
 ☞ Robert Westbrook, "Politics as Consumption," Chapter V in Richard Fox & Jackson Lears, *The Culture of Consumption*, pp. 145-173.
 ☞ Sidney Blumenthal, "Introduction," and "Edward Bernays," in *The Permanent Campaign* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1982), pp. 17-26, 27-43.
 ☞ Kerry W. Buckley, "A President for the 'Great Silent Majority': Bruce Barton's Construction of Calvin Coolidge," *New England Quarterly* 76:4 (December 2003), pp. 593-626.
 ☞ Fred Barnes, "The Myth of Political Consultants," *The New Republic*, June 16, 1986, pp. 16-19.
- Oct. 3 WATCH: 1ST PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Oct. 8 **The Debates, Then and Now**
 ☞ Harold Holzer, ed. *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates: The First Complete, Unexpurgated Text*.
 ☞ Michael Schudson, "The Informed Citizen in Historical Context," *Research in the Teaching of English*, 30:3, (October 1996), 361-369.
 ☞ David Greenberg, "Torchlight Parades for the Television Age: The Presidential Debates as Political Ritual," *Daedalus*, Spring 2009, pp. 6-19.
 ☞ excerpts from Daniel Boorstin, *The Image*, pp. 36-44; Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, 44-50.
- Oct. 11 WATCH: VICE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Oct. 16 WATCH: 2ND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE**
- Oct. 15 **Television I: The Rise of the Image**
 ☞ Daniel Boorstin, *The Image*, Ch. 1, "From News Gathering to News Making: A Flood of Pseudo-Events," pp. 7-44.
 ☞ Samuel Becker, "Presidential Power: The Influence of Broadcasting," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 47 (February 1961): 10-18.
 ☞ Daniel C. Hallin, *We Keep America on Top of the World*, Ch. 7., "Sound-Bite News: Television Coverage of Elections, 1968-1988," pp. 133-152.
 ☞ Kiku Adatto, *Picture Perfect*, Ch.2, "The Rise of Image-Conscious Television Coverage," pp. 24-60.

- ☞ Michael Schudson, *The Power of News*, Ch. 5, "Trout or Hamburger: Politics and Telemythology," pp. 113-123.

Oct. 22

Television II: Advertising

- 📖 Robert Mann, *Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds: LBJ, Barry Goldwater, and the Ad That Changed American Politics* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2011).
- ☞ David Greenberg, "A New Way of Campaigning: Eisenhower, Stevenson, and the Anxieties of Television Politics," in *Liberty and Justice for All: Rethinking Politics in Cold War America, 1945-1965*, Kathleen Donohue, ed., (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012).

Oct. 22

WATCH: 3RD PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

Oct. 29

Advertising, For and Against

- 📖 John Geer, *In Defense of Negativity*.
- 📖 Stephen Ansolabehere and Shanto Iyengar, *Going Negative*.

Nov. 5

Polling

- 📖 Susan Herbst, *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*.
- ☞ J. Michael Hogan, "George Gallup and the Rhetoric of Scientific Democracy," *Communication Monographs* 64 (1997): 161-179.
- ☞ Lawrence Jacobs and Robert Y. Shapiro, "The Rise of Presidential Polling: The Nixon White House in Historical Perspective," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 59 (Summer, 1995): 163-195.
- ☞ June Woong Rhee, "How Polls Drive Campaign Coverage: The Gallup/CNN/USA Today Tracking Poll and USA Today's Coverage of the 1992 Presidential Campaign," *Political Communication* (1996): 213-229.

Nov. 6

WATCH: ELECTION DAY RETURNS

Nov. 12

Objectivity and Its Discontents

- ☞ Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News*, Chs. 4 & 5, pp. 121-194 [74]
- ☞ Brent Cunningham, "Rethinking Objectivity," *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August 2003, pp. 24-32. [9]
- ☞ Thomas Haskell, "Objectivity Is Not Neutrality," *History and Theory* 19 (1990), 129-157. [29]
- ☞ Eric Alterman, *What Liberal Media?: The Truth About Bias and the News*, Chs. 1 & 3.
- ☞ Gaye Tuchman, "Objectivity as Strategic Ritual: An Examination of Newsmen's Notions of Objectivity," *American Journal of Sociology* 77:4 (1972), 660-679. [20]
- ☞ David Greenberg, "The Idea of 'The Liberal Media' and Its Roots in the Civil Rights Movement," *The Sixties*, Winter 2008, 167-186.[20]
- ☞ Albert C. Gunther, "Biased Press or Biased Public?: Attitudes Toward Media Coverage of Social Groups," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 56:2 Summer 1992, 147-167 [20]

Nov. 19

How Reporters Cover the Campaign

- 📖 Timothy Crouse, *The Boys on the Bus*

Nov. 26

The Internet and Presidential Politics

- 📖 Jeffrey C. Alexander, *The Performance of Politics*

Dec. 3

Does the System Work?—Part I

- 📖 Thomas Patterson, *Out of Order*

Dec. 10

Does the System Work? —Part II

📖 Samuel Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter*

🗳️ **Second Paper Due**