

**Case Western University
News Media and Politics
POSC 321**

Class Meeting: Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Clark Hall 110

Visiting Professor Girma Parris

Email: Girma.Parris@case.edu

Office Hours Wednesday, 3:30 -4:30 or by appointment, Mather 222

Course Description: This course takes a broad view assessment of the historic interaction between the US news media and the American political system. After looking at the theoretical role of the media in the American democracy, the course will also address the following themes: how the media influences politics; the American media in comparative perspective; the historical development of the American media with special focus on its influence on iconic historic moments; the political economy of the media; party polarization and the media; the media and foreign policy; the new media and politics; fake news and the future of the media in 21st century politics.

Highly Recommended: Daily reading of one of the following: on the left: *New York Times*, *Washington Post*; on the right *Wall Street Journal*, *Fox News*, *Breitbart*. Also highly recommended is *any political comedy you can find*.

Attendance: All students are permitted 2 unexcused absences. Unexcused absences in excess of the two allotted will result in failure of the course. The course is a seminar course and thus will focus around class discussion. Attendance subsequently is crucial to the functioning of the class.

Class Participation: Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to discuss the assigned readings. Students will not be docked for their lack of participation but will be rewarded for their thoughtful and active contributions to class discussion. Class participation will make up 10% of your grade.

Course Requirements: In order to attain a passing grade for the class, all students must attend class regularly; participate in class discussion; complete one 5-7 page paper on the media's influence on a particular issue (of your choice); and complete two take home exams.

Grade Breakdown

Paper (detailed instructions forthcoming) – 20%

First Take Home Exam 30%

Second Take Home Exam 40%

Class Participation 10%

Course Schedule/ Reading Assignments:

Week 1 – Definitions and Concepts

Monday, August 28 - Introduction – Go over syllabus/ expectations

Wednesday, August 30

Schudson, Michael. *The News Media as Political Institutions* (2002)

Friday, September 1 – Class Canceled – Attending Conference

Week 2 – Definitions/ Concepts continued

Monday, September 4 – Labor Day – No Class

Wednesday, September 6

Bennett, Lance, *The Politics of Illusion*; University of Chicago Press, 2016; Chapter 1 – “News in a Changing Information Age.”

Iyengar, Shanto, *Media Politics: A Citizen’s Guide*; W.W. Norton & Co: Introduction

W. Lance Bennett and William Serrin “The Watch Dog Role,” Chapter 10 in *The Press*; ed. Geneva Overholser

Week 2 (cont’d) – How Media Influences Politics

-

What the media choose and how they choose to report it

Friday, September 8 –

Bennett, “Ch. 5: How Journalists Report the News”

Week 3 - Agenda setting and Selection Bias and Priming

Monday, September 11 –

McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176–187

Wednesday, September 13-

Bennett, “Ch. 6: Inside the Profession: Objectivity and the Political Authority Bias”

Friday, September 15

Iyengar, S., & Kinder, D. R. (1987/2010 updated ed.). News that matters: Television and American opinion – Chapter 7 – The Priming Effect

Week 4- News Media in Comparative Perspective

Monday, September 18 –

Daniel Hallin and Robert Giles, “Presses and Democracies” – Chapter 1 in The Press – Geneva Overholser

Wednesday, September 20

Anthony Mughan and Richard Gunther. “The Media in Democratic and Non-Democratic Regimes: A Multilevel Perspective” in Democracy and the Media: A Comparative Perspective

Friday, September 22 (Paper Assignment Due)

Miklos Sukosd. “Democratic Transformation and the Mass Media in Hungary: From Stalinism to Democratic Consolidation” in Democracy and the Media: A Comparative Perspective

Week 4- Government and Media

Monday September 25 –

Bruce Sanford and Jane E. Kirley, “The First Amendment Tradition and its Critics,” in The Press; ed. Geneva Overholser

Wednesday, September 27

Timothy E. Cook, “Public Policy towards the Press: What Government Does For the News Media,” in The Press ed. Geneva Overholser

Friday, September 29

Daniel Schorr, “Journalism and the Public Interest,” in The Press ed. Geneva Overholser

Week 5 – Political Economy of the media and does it matter

Monday, October 2

Bennett, The Political Economy of the News – Chapter 7 in The Politics of Illusion

Wednesday, October 4

Ben Compaine, “Domination Fantasies: Does Rupert Murdoch Control the Media? Does Anyone?” <http://reason.com/archives/2004/01/01/domination-fantasies/>

Recommended: Tim Dickinson, “How Roger Ailes Built the Fox News Fear Factory” available online at <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/how-roger-ailes-built-the-fox-news-fear-factory-20110525>

Friday, October 6

Markus Prior, “News v. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout”

Week 6: - History of Media

Monday, October 9

Michael Schudson and Susan E. Tift – “American Journalism in Historical Perspective,” in The Institutions of American Democracy; eds. Geneva Overholser and Kathleen Hail Jamieson

Wednesday, October 11

Schudson, Michael, The Power of News; Harvard University Press, 1995: Introduction

Friday, October 13

Alexis de Tocqueville in Key Readings in Journalism

Week 7 - Monday, October 16

The Legacy of Roosevelt’s Press Relations – Chapter 12 in FDR and the News Media

Wednesday, October 18

Aniko Bodroghkozy, “Network News in the Civil Rights Years. The Chosen Instrument of the Revolution” – Chapter 1 in Equal Time: Television and the Civil Rights Movement

Friday, October 20

Melvin Small, "The Media and Oppositional Movements" Chapter 2 in *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement*

Week 8 - Monday, October 23

David Weaver, Maxwell McCombs, and Charles Spellman. "Watergate and the Media: A Case Study of Agenda Setting."

Emergence of TV

Wednesday, October 25

Iyengar, Shanto - Is anyone responsible: how television frames political issues

Friday, October 27

[**News That Matters : Television And American Opinion / Shanto Iyengar And Donald R. Kinder**](#) Iyengar, Shanto Chapter 3: The Agenda Setting Effect

Week 9 - Party Polarization and the growth of partisan media

Monday, October 30

Mark Prior, "Media and Political Polarization" (2013)

Wednesday, November 1

Natalie Jomini Stroud, "Polarization and Partisan Selective Exposure"

Friday, November 3

Bryan Hardin Thrift, "Conservative bias: how Jesse Helms pioneered the rise of rightwing media and realigned the Republican Party"

Week 10 - Media and Foreign Policy

Monday, November 6

Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. "Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media" in *Key Readings in Journalism*

Recommended: Eric Herring and Piers Robinson, "Too Polemical or Too Critical? Chomsky on the study of the news media and US foreign policy"

Wednesday, November 8

Piers Robinson, "Theorizing the Influence of Media on World Politics: Models of Media Influence on Foreign Policy"

Friday, November 10

Sean Aday, Steven Livingston 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* 2005; 10; 3

Week 11 - Emergence new media –

Monday, November 13

Citizen journalism/ online journalism

Matthew Hindman, "Blogs: The New Media Elite"

Social Media

Wednesday, November 15

Cindy Vincent and Sarah Straub, "Redefining Politics: How are Social Media Changing the Political Game," in *Social Media and Politics: A New Way to Participate in the Political Process*; ed. Glen W. Richardson

Friday, November 17

Bernadette Barker-Plummer and David Barker-Plummer. "Hashtag feminism, digital media, and new dynamics of social change : a case study of #YesAllWomen" in *Social Media and Politics: A New Way to Participate in the Political Process*; ed. Glen W. Richardson

Week 12 - Monday, November 20

Juliet E. Carlisle and Robert C. Patton. "Is Social Media Changing How We Understand Political Engagement: An Analysis of Facebook and the 2008 Presidential Election"

Wednesday, November 22

Issie Lapowski, "Here's How Facebook Actually Won Trump the Presidency"
<https://www.wired.com/2016/11/facebook-won-trump-election-not-just-fake-news/>

Friday, November 24 – No Class – Thanksgiving

Week 13 - Monday, November 27

New Media v. Old Media

Natalie Fenton “Drowning or Waving? New Media, Journalism and Democracy”
https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/15016502/drowning_or_waving.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1503898387&Signature=Wtz4ir0yVRgUvKk9TNPF0RIJAiw%3D&response-content-disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DDrowning_or_waving_New_media_journalism.pdf

Sachin Kamdar. “5 Differences between Old and New Media”
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sachin-kamdar/5-differences-between-old-b_9670634.html

Wednesday, November 29

Fake News

Ellen Hunt. “What is Fake News? How to Spot It and What You Can Do to Stop It”
<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/dec/18/what-is-fake-news-pizzagate>

James Carson “What is Fake News: Its Origins and How it Grew in 2016”
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/0/fake-news-origins-grew-2016/>

Friday, December 1

Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow “Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election” Journal of Economic Perspectives; Vol. 31; No. 2; Spring 2017: 211-236
<https://web.stanford.edu/~gentzkow/research/fakenews.pdf>

Week 14 – Future of media and its role in the American democratic process

Monday December 4

Mazzoleni G, Schulz W. 1999. “Mediatization” of politics: a challenge for democracy?
Polit. Commun. 16:247–61

Wednesday, December 5

Norman Nie, Darwin Miller, Saar Golde, Daniel Butler, “The World Wide Web and the US Political News Market”

Friday, December 8

Review

