



# AN OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

**Dr. Gunjan Agarwal**



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## CHAPTER 1

### PANOPLY OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The Panoply of Political Communication is a term used to describe the wide variety of tactics used by political players to spread their views, sway public opinion, and win support. The numerous facets of political discourse in the digital age are explored in this chapter, along with the interaction between conventional media, social media, and developing technology. The research explores how this changing environment may affect democracy, government, and public participation. This study aims to clarify the intricacies, difficulties, and implications of political communication on modern societies via a thorough investigation. Promoting media literacy and critical thinking among the populace will aid in helping people distinguish between manipulative material and true information as they traverse this difficult landscape. Furthermore, to stop the propagation of negative narratives and promote positive online discourse, clear and responsible content moderation techniques are crucial. Emerging technologies like AI-driven deep fakes and tailored advertising pose ethical questions about how they may be used for political benefit as the lines between politics and technology become hazier.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Communication, Media, Political, Social.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The field of communication is crucial in establishing narratives, swaying public opinion, and impacting the results of elections and policy choices in today's dynamic political environment. The Panoply of Political Communication refers to the wide range of tactics, platforms, and resources used by political players to communicate with the public and mobilize support. Political communication has undergone a fundamental transformation from conventional media sources to the pervasive world of social media and the advent of developing technology, having a significant influence on how individuals engage with their governments and the larger political debate. Political communication has always been a crucial tool for anyone looking to exercise authority, mobilize the populace, or overthrow established institutions and conventions. Political leaders used oratory skills and written statements to connect with their followers in the past. The invention of the printing press transformed the way ideas were communicated, ushering in an era of pamphlets and newspapers that aided in the spread of political movements and ideologies [1]–[3].

When we go back in time to the digital era, we discover that we are living in a time of incredible connection. The expansion of social media and the development of the internet have democratized information access and given people the ability to communicate in real time with people beyond national boundaries, including political leaders. The Panoply of Political Communication today includes a complex network of viral videos, memes, hashtags, and multimedia material that may instantly and widely affect public opinion. The ramifications of political communication go well beyond election campaigns and legislative discussions in this complicated and quickly evolving environment. It influences citizen



engagement, promotes transparency, and affects the general wellbeing of public debate, hence altering the basic basis of democratic society. The dissemination of false information, echo chambers, and the possibility for the manipulation of public opinion via algorithmic targeting are just a few of the new problems that this democratization of communication also brings about.

The goal of this study is to dive into The Panoply of Political Communication's many facets while examining its historical development, present condition, and possible future paths. We strive to comprehend how political actors use these tools to further their objectives and affect the masses by examining the interaction between conventional media and digital platforms, as well as the function of developing technologies like artificial intelligence and data analytics. Additionally, this research will look at how democracy, governance, and public involvement are affected by the shifting dynamics of political communication. The need of responsible content management to preserve the integrity of political dialogue will also be highlighted, along with the significance of media literacy and critical thinking in navigating the informational tsunami. In the end, understanding The Panoply of Political Communication is crucial for everyone who wants to be an educated and engaged citizen in the democratic process, including politicians, political strategists, and journalists. We can enhance the democratic fabric of our communities and make sure that the voices of the people stay at the center of the political conversation by understanding the complexity, difficulties, and possibilities given by political communication.

As rumors about Sarah Palin announcing her campaign for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination grew, she traveled from city to city throughout the Eastern Seaboard. Even though the 2012 presidential race was more than a year away in the spring of 2011, Palin and her team were in high gear. Palin was a study in political motion as she had just begun her One Nation bus tour of American historical sites. In a black leather jacket, she was seen speeding through Washington, D.C. on the back of a Harley Davidson, arriving just in time for the annual Memorial Day weekend motorcycle ride from the Pentagon to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The 2008 Republican vice-presidential candidate, Sarah Palin, was accompanied, as usual, by a throng of reporters, photographers, bloggers, and other members of the mainstream media elite who hung on her every word, parsing, dicing, analyzing, and frequently criticizing what she said or what they heard her say. She was speaking in an aw-shucks, small-town, good ol' American dialect that won over supporters but incensed opponents to the point of apoplexy there in historic Boston. She spoke casually and with a lilt in her voice as she described Paul Revere's legendary trip while standing outside his house: By ringing those bells and making sure as he rode his horse through town to convey those warning shots and bells that we would be safe and free, he ensured that the British wouldn't be taking away our weapons[4]–[6].

Chris Wallace, a Fox News presenter, took the chance to capitalize on the error right away. During a televised appearance, he admitted to her that she made a mistake on Paul Revere. And she had in a lot of ways. Revere had alerted the British, she said. But as every schoolchild who had memorized the legendary Longfellow poem, Paul Revere's Ride, knew, Revere sallied from town to town to alert the American colonists that the British Army was moving forward and ready to assault! Palin claims that Revere also want to prevent the British from taking the colonists' firearms and infringing upon their liberties. She changed Revere into a Second Amendment pro-gun fanatic more than ten years before the U.S. Constitution entrenched the right to carry weapons, according to many observers.

Nevertheless, Palin stuck to her tale during the TV interview with the always confrontational Wallace, claiming that Revere had forewarned the British by ringing bells to inform them that

they had no right to seize American weapons. It turns out that there was some truth to her story. Revere did give the British notice that colonial forces were waiting for them as the British were heading to Concord, Massachusetts, to collect weaponry that colonists had stocked up. However, Revere gave his warning after being caught by British troops and as a ruse to distract them from finding American revolutionaries Sam Adams and John Hancock.

Truth was still less significant than how Palin's remarks were received by the political communication environment. She said that Revere had rang bells and fired warning shots, and immediately their modern-day electronic analogues rumbled throughout the countryside. The news quickly spread to newspapers and network newscasts. It was used as material for radio discussion programs. Nowhere was the debate more heated than online, where it gave rise to Palin-supporting and anti-Palin websites, innumerable tweets, YouTube videos, and a ton of comments. Some people insulted Palin, while others stood up for her. One anti-Palin supporter questioned, is she drunk or just a total idiot? These smug liberals in the media make the same kind of slip of the tongue as Palin, a pro-Palin activist observed. They understood her meaning. But they had to act immediately. And the media questions why people are losing faith in them.

On Wikipedia, the bombardment was especially ferocious. In the ten days that followed her statements, the Revere entry in the online encyclopedia received half a million page visits. The Revere Wikipedia page was updated by Palin's followers with phrases that supported her retelling of his legendary ride. With so many people adding their opinions, traffic was so high that Wikipedia had to freeze the site to stop future updates. The Palin incident is a compelling illustration of modern political communication in action, demonstrating the indissoluble link between media and politics, the media's propensity to obsess over a fascinating but ultimately insignificant gaffe, and the Internet's propensity for symbolic interpretations of events. And, for better or worse, it shows how a politician with strong opinions and a polarizing message, bolstered by celebrity wattage, can control the media environment. The drama's main character was Sarah Palin, whose ascent to political prominence in the United States says volumes about the craft of political discourse in the twenty-first century.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Political Media and Palin**

In August 2008, when John McCain, the Republican presidential contender, chose Sarah Palin as his running mate, she quickly gained widespread recognition. McCain, who was down in the polls, thought he needed a vice presidential boost to enthruse the electorate and kick-start his campaign. The campaign appeared to require Palin, the 44-year-old governor of Alaska with solid conservative credentials and an inspiring life narrative. She was a beauty queen who married her high school boyfriend and gave birth to five children three girls, a son who was born with Down syndrome, and three daughters. She campaigned for city council in the tiny Alaskan town of Wasilla because she was interested in politics, won, and was twice elected mayor. As Alaska's first female governor, she took on the oil industry, battled for an oil tax, and helped the state generate a \$12 billion surplus after being elected in 2006. Pro-life, pro-gun, and against stem cell research, she was her own woman.

She also proved to be an effective political orator, captivating the audience at the Republican National Convention with a mesmerizing blend of charm, astute attack lines, and rhetorical zingers, exemplified by an adlib that elicited a hearty laugh from the partisan audience: You know, what they say is the difference between a hockey mom and a pit bull? Her speech was a startling success, helping to raise McCain's poll ratings among important demographic groups thanks to its folksy vocabulary and down-home delivery. Political communication had

been crucial in improving her reputation. However, it would soon cause her to lose her shine and set off a string of issues that would follow her throughout the 2008 campaign and the years that followed. She began by saying that her 18-year-old daughter Bristol was unmarried and pregnant. A media firestorm ensued as a result. Her family's stories started to dominate the conversation. They took on the characteristics of a Rorschach that touched into several ideals. Conservatives applauded Palin's bravery in parenting a kid with Down syndrome, respected her support of her daughter's choice to get pregnant, and valued the Christian principles that shaped her life. Liberals disapproved of Palin's stance on abortion and said it was hypocritical that she had raised a daughter who had indulged in premarital sex while advocating for education that exclusively encouraged abstinence[7].

Palin still got a lot of air time on television news even after she and McCain lost to Obama-Biden in 2008. The news media monitored her arrivals and departures, even when they seemed unimportant, since they were enamored with her star power and curious about the potential that she would run for president at some point in the future. Her participation or lack thereof at political gatherings obscured the events' true content. In the end, she and her daughter shifted their focus from journalism to sports and entertainment. Palin went one step farther than the long-standing practice of politicians using appearances on entertainment television to boost their electoral chances. She did more than merely play her saxophone on late-night television like Bill Clinton or appear on a prime-time variety program like Richard Nixon. With a theme song and a marquee listing of the major actors and actresses her husband and children, listed by first name only since, hey, everyone knew who they were, right? she debuted her own reality TV show, blatantly titled Sarah Palin's Alaska. Not to be outdone, her daughter Bristol entered the Dancing with the Stars competition and made it to the final round. This sparked a flurry of heated debates, with some arguing that Bristol's sunny optimism helped her win over the audience, while others claimed that conservative Tea Party activists flooded the phone lines and sent a flood of text messages.

She appeared on Family Guy as expected, either in a funny or rude fashion as usual with Palin, depending on your perspective. Chris, the uncomfortable and unintelligent character in the program, went on a date with Ellen, a character who has Down syndrome, in one episode. So, what do your parents do? Chris queried. My mom is the former governor of Alaska, and my dad is an accountant, Ellen deadpanned. The remark was described by Palin as another kick in the gut. The authors, according to her daughter Bristol, were heartless jerks who lacked empathy. You could see how the Palins would react. On the other side, Seth MacFarlane, the show's creator, loves to make fun of people. The Down syndrome actor who portrayed Ellen expressed disappointment in Palin's lack of humor. Others said that in America, sarcasm should be directed at political officials and their families and that using sarcasm is just as American as, say, eating baked Alaska.

When Palin stated with much excitement that she will not be running for president in 2012, her will she or won't she? examination of a presidential candidacy came to an end a year before the election in November 2012. Reporters suspected there were other significant determinants, such as fierce competition from candidates already in the race, difficulty of starting a campaign late in the game without any infrastructure, and Palin's obvious satisfaction with her success as an author and a star on reality television, even though she claimed that her decision was motivated by worry about the effect a presidential campaign would have on her family. Unfortunately, stars in the political cosmos come and go, eventually losing their brilliance. Palin exhibited the same traits. Her \$1 million yearly contract with Fox News as a pundit was not renewed in January 2013, maybe because she was no longer providing a timely or original political viewpoint. But nothing was lost. One of

Palin's more than 3 million Facebook followers inquired, Sarah, where are you? undoubtedly wanting to watch another episode of her particular, handcrafted brand of political conservatism.

Sarah Palin is an American original, whether you like her or not. Her story is an expansive Rorschach on American politics. It illustrates the ascent of a politically active lady who made it on her own by standing up for what she believes in and expressing her opinion. Her story movingly portrayed a female vice presidential candidate who made history by embracing her femininity and ardently supporting Republican causes. The Palin story serves as an example of a vibrant media system that challenges power as well as a populace that delights in following its leaders in the media and taking part vicariously in their family extravaganzas. There are also unsettling issues with the Palin story. We have a leader once a candidate for the presidency who chose to intentionally spread unfavorable information rather than appeal to the public by outlining a course for political reform. Palin was slavishly followed by a procession of journalists, a vibrant mix of bloggers, and entertainment reporters, giving her views a lot of airtime. Her tales regularly overshadowed news of important political developments.

Welcome to American politics in the twenty-first century, where the symbols of communication, technology, and the media take center stage. In today's world, politics is mostly mediated, or Facebooked, or Twittered, or whatever name you want to use to refer to social media. Which political leader a candidate, an elected official, or the president have you met or talked with in person? No is the common response. Aren't your opinions on politicians dependent on what you have learned from the various media outlets? On that subject, conservatives, liberals, radicals, and even fervent conspiracy theorists may all agree. According to a wide definition, the media serves as the center of gravity for the conduct of politics in society. Communication researchers remind us that politics is conducted today in a multimedia environment that operates 24/7 and includes online and traditional media supplemented by entertainment shows as well as more conventional venues like news and political talk programs.

The importance of social media has increased significantly. Reporters gauge deadlines in minutes rather than hours, and they routinely tweet updates on the tactical developments of campaigns throughout the day. Political candidates now quickly submit attack advertisements and amusing retorts on YouTube, where political advertising air battles no longer just take place on television. Candidates insert themselves into the edgy dialogues on Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr in an effort to connect with young people, who are never without their mobile phones and constantly on social media sites. Today, it is impossible to discuss politics without mentioning the media, and it is impossible to comprehend modern media without acknowledging their influence on the political system. This book provides an introduction to the methods, results, benefits, drawbacks, and perplexing puzzles of modern political communication. Political communication is the study of how politics are expressed, the function of language and symbols, and the effects of political communications on the general political system as well as on the general public.

### **A Contemporary Approach**

It is easier for you to understand a topic that can seem far away: how the media portrays the ego-driven, high-adrenaline world of modern politics. The goal of the book is to educate students to the many components of political communication as well as the various viewpoints on modern politics and media. The essay uses alternative glasses than those we often use to see the political sphere to examine the realm of political media. Politics are often

seen through the lens of our own values and ideologies. The perspectives offered by social science ideas, research, and political philosophy are applied in this work after taking a step back. Our goal is to comprehend political communication processes, the impact of mediated communication on voters and elections, as well as more general philosophical questions like whether the news promotes democracy, whether political persuasion primarily misleads rather than informs, and the degree to which the public is adequately informed. When political communication falls short of upholding democratic norms, we want to condemn it, and when it inspires people to act in concert to alter the current situation, we want to applaud it.

But let's be clear about something right now. Politics tends to make many people's eyes glaze over. They reflect on the inaction of Congress and the deadlock in Washington. Or maybe they grin when they think of *Family Guy* by Seth MacFarlane, Jon Stewart, or Stephen Colbert. They don't believe politics has much to do with them in either scenario. They're incorrect. One of the topics of this novel. Whether you like it or not, politics and political communication have an impact on you. Politics had an impact on you if you had to dig deeper into your wallet or purse to pay for education. Your university decided to increase your tuition because they are receiving less funding from the state due to the state receiving less funding from the federal government as a result of the national recession and all the issues brought on by the financial crisis of 2008 aftershocks, which you don't understand but may now think you should learn more about [8], [9].

Politics touched you, even if you are almost out with college and exhale in relief that you will continue to be covered by your parents' health insurance until you are 26. That clause was implemented by Obama's health care package, which was fiercely disputed and unavoidably political. Politics also influenced you if you are graduating college but are enraged that the government would fine you if you decide not to get health insurance when you are 27. Politics has also touched you if a friend just returned from a spell in Afghanistan and told you the sad tale of how a comrade died when a roadside bomb detonated close to his car. To combat terrorists who, in their opinion, pose a danger to American security, two American presidents sent soldiers to Afghanistan. You could wholeheartedly agree with their analysis. Or you can think that the advantages weren't worth the cost in human lives. In any instance, you become politically inclined as a result of world events.

Perhaps you have strong opinions on these kinds of things. You could be quite interested in politics. Perhaps you believe that politics in our country is excessively divisive and that politicians' gaffes dominate the headlines rather than stressing its benefits. Alternately, maybe you think elected officials put up a lot of effort to assist residents in navigating a bureaucratic system and that people enter politics with humanitarian intentions. Or maybe you've seen how cut off from reality political communicators both pundits and politicians are. Democracy depends on opinions; therefore, we should value and celebrate them. But there is always a but when we speak about politics! we also want to know whether the beliefs expressed above are supported by evidence and to what extent they reflect an informed assessment of political discourse.

We need to start by considering what we want the system to achieve in order to provide answers to these issues and assess if our political discourse lives up to our objectives. We must look at what makes for the ideal democratic system and what function communication should serve in democratic politics. People routinely criticize the function of political media in democracies, but how can we respond to these critiques without a functioning understanding of democracy or a view of the proper function of communication in the process of self-government? Ideals must come first in order to understand current political



communication properly. We need to debate the ideals of democracy as envisioned by great philosophers. In order to do this, it is necessary to go back in time to the period of ancient Greece. From there, we must go chronologically forward to examine the fundamental conceptions of the democratic state.

It examines they should concern as well, determining whether the political system will benefit or suffer from the consequences of political communication and defining what is meant by the phrases good and bad. These topics are often discussed in modern society, including at water coolers, coffee shops, on the omnipresent media, and on the open-forum Internet. Some individuals particularly those who watch Fox News assert that news is biased against the left; others like MSNBC viewers assert that journalism serves to support the conservative Establishment; while yet others assert that news is generally impartial. Politicians are sold during campaigns as soap is sold during advertisements, according to some detractors. Other academics draw attention to the ways that internet technology skew's public opinion. Others, on the other hand, vehemently defend political campaigns, insisting that they provide supporters of various policy stances the opportunity to present their argument to the voters. The work explores these problems and introduces students to a variety of ideas, facts, and viewpoints. You can discover that you vehemently disagree with certain activists' positions while vehemently agreeing with others. You can discover that you are conflicted and view things from both perspectives. In light of what you read; you could find yourself reevaluating some of your beliefs on political communication.

The goal is to improve your comprehension of the highly heated, unstable, and sometimes inscrutable world of political communication. It aims to increase your understanding of political communication, including what it is, how it functions, and how the media and the Internet affect politics. The book aims to deepen your understanding of why politics is communicated in the way it is, how this differs from historical precedent, what is problematic about today's communication, and which aspects are admirable. It will introduce you to contemporary academic perspectives on political communication. Applications of technology, which are covered in several chapters and are examined throughout the book, are becoming more and more important in modern politics. Recognizing how technical advancements develop through time and how to comprehend them requires understanding the environment in which they take place.

## **CONCLUSION**

Technology breakthroughs and shifting social norms are driving a significant transition in the Panoply of Political Communication. Digital platforms have replaced conventional media, democratizing information access and amplifying the voices of many groups. But this new environment also brings with it significant difficulties, such as the propagation of false information, echo chambers, and the swaying of public opinion. Unprecedented levels of connection between voters and politicians have been made possible by social media, which is a key component of contemporary political communication. However, the ease with which unverified material may be spread has given birth to misinformation efforts, which have undermined the credibility of public debate and damaged faith in institutions. Governments, digital corporations, and civil society must work together to promote democratic ideals and preserve the integrity of political communication in the face of these obstacles. In the digital era, the Panoply of Political Communication presents both opportunities and risks. Democratic processes may be strengthened by embracing its ability to empower individuals, encourage civic involvement, and advance transparency. The foundations of democratic societies must be protected while also tackling the problems caused by false information and technological abuse. We may create a way to a political discourse that is more educated,

inclusive, and resilient by acknowledging the transformational potential of political communication.

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## CHAPTER 2

### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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#### ABSTRACT:

By facilitating the interchange of ideas, information, and views between political players and people, political communication plays a critical role in determining the dynamics of contemporary societies. In the framework of democratic systems, this study examines the importance of political communication and how it affects public opinion, political conduct, and policy-making. This research intends to shed light on how political messages are transmitted, absorbed, and perceived by investigating several communication routes, including conventional media, social media, and interpersonal encounters. The study also explores the benefits and problems brought about by the digital era and the development of new communication technologies, as well as the moral ramifications and the dangers of information manipulation and misinformation campaigns. In the end, maintaining the democratic process and cultivating educated and involved people need a grasp of the complexity of political communication.

#### KEYWORDS:

Communication, Democracy, Media, Political, Social.

#### INTRODUCTION

Politics and government-related information, ideas, and messages are shared and traded between people, organizations, and institutions within a community via a process known as political communication. It is a fundamental component of every democratic system because it makes it easier for political players including politicians, political parties, and government officials to communicate with the general population. Political communication is essential for influencing political conduct, forming public opinion, and directing societal decision-making [1]–[3]. Political communication's essential facets and components include:

- 1.I nformation Dissemination:** Political communication is the dissemination of political information using a variety of media, including conventional media like newspapers, television, and radio, as well as contemporary digital platforms like social media, websites, and online news sources. The media is crucial in covering political events and offering analysis and opinion, while politicians and governments utilize these platforms to communicate their policies, stances, and accomplishments.
- 2.P ersuasion and Messaging:** A common goal of political communication is to influence and convince audiences. To win over the public to their ideas, programs, and candidates, political players use a variety of message techniques, rhetorical tactics, and emotional appeals. Election campaigns, lobbying activities, and policy discussions all depend heavily on persuasion.
- 3.P ublic Opinion Formation:** Public opinion is substantially influenced by effective political communication. Citizens base their opinions and attitudes toward political problems and actors on the information they are given. Election results and policy choices are influenced by public opinion.



4. **Political Participation:** Political communication has the power to promote or deter public involvement in politics. People are more inclined to vote, take part in politics, and hold their leaders responsible when they are educated and engaged.
5. **Agenda-setting:** Political communication and media work in tandem to shape the public's perception of problems by emphasizing some and downplaying others. Political players often seek for media attention to highlight their agendas and policy recommendations.
6. **Public Dialogue and Discourse:** Political communication encourages the discussion of many points of view. In order to promote democratic discourse and pluralism, it offers a forum for discussions and debates on significant social topics.
7. **Crisis communication:** Political communication that is successful in times of crisis is even more crucial. To address public concerns and preserve confidence, governments must communicate facts in a precise and open manner.
8. **Spin and image management:** Strategic public impression molding, sometimes known as spin, may be a part of political communication. In order to project a positive or attractive image to the public, political actors and their teams may engage in image management.

Political communication is always changing as communication technology develop. The way political information is shared and received has significantly changed as a result of the emergence of social media. It has made it possible for individuals and politicians to interact directly, made it possible for political messages to spread quickly, and strengthened the power of individual citizens on politics. But there are obstacles to political communication as well, including the propagation of false and misleading information, the existence of belief-reinforcing echo chambers, and the possibility for public opinion manipulation. Maintaining the integrity and efficacy of political communication in fostering open, informed, and participatory democracies depends heavily on ethical issues.

Candidates posing for photos and flashing smarmy, slimy smiles? Talk programs on Fox or MSNBC where the guests discuss the problems in Washington soberly and everyone has an opposite opinion of everyone else? Politicians are mocked mercilessly by Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert. Endless tweets, blogs, and online discussions on how Democrats or Republicans are really stupid? You'll note that I said nothing encouraging. That's because the term politics often causes sighs, blame, and sometimes even revulsion among individuals. When asked to characterize their political beliefs, people respond, It's just words, to pollsters. According to one voter, politics involves such a control of government by the wealthy that whatever happens, it's working for a few of the people; it's not working for all the people. We use the phrase it's just politics to mock the deeds of elected officials. Samuel Popkin, a political scientist, disagrees, stating that it is the saddest phrase in America, as if 'just politics' means that there was no stake. Think about this One of the most astute professional politicians the country has produced was one of the United States' greatest presidents, according to Blumenthal (2012).

In order to convince Congressmen to support the Thirteenth Amendment, which removed slavery from the U.S. Constitution, Abraham Lincoln struck bargains, bestowed political favors, and used cunning strategic techniques. The president appointed one member of Congress to the position of minister to Denmark after he signaled his support for the amendment. According to Blumenthal (2012), Lincoln understood that great change required a thousand small political acts. Lincoln, a film by Stephen Spielberg, honors Lincoln's moral and political accomplishments in getting Congress to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment. Politics has negative connotations, yet it may also be used to achieve both beneficial and

harmful results. The minimum wage, Medicare, tax reform, and health care reform laws would never have been passed without politics. Contrarily, political favoritism and backstabbing contribute to explain why Congress was unable to pass strict gun control legislation in the aftermath of the Newtown atrocity. Politics, according to political scientists, is the study of determining who gets what, when, and why. According to Miller, politics is a process whereby a group of people, whose opinions or interests are initially divergent, reach collective decisions which are generally regarded as binding on the group, and enforced as common policy. Democracy is inherently political.

## DISCUSSION

A few of centuries ago, explaining American politics could be done mostly without mentioning the media. Bosses of political parties controlled everything in the 19th century. There was sometimes a forced quid pro quo at play. Employers hired newly arrived voters in return for their loyal party support. Party leaders had a significant influence in choosing the party candidates while puffing on cigars and emitting smoke into the political atmosphere. That's altered. The New York Times, Fox News, CNN, Facebook, Twitter, and a plethora of blogs are all stops along the path to the White House. Instead of using more widely used terminology like political media or media and politics, we prefer the term political communication because it encompasses a larger, symbolic process by which individuals communicate and interpret information and provide meaning to the world in which power is exercised. An extensive introduction to political communication is provided in this chapter. It discusses the many elements and provides examples as it outlines the key characteristics of political communication.

Political communication is the process through which politicians, the media, or citizens use language and symbols to exert planned or unforeseen impacts on people's political cognitions, attitudes, or actions or on results that have an impact on a nation's, state's, or community's public policy. The definition has a number of components [4]–[6].

### **First, Political communication is foremost emphasized in the definition as a process.**

It doesn't happen when a wrist is flicked or a lever is flipped. A president may suggest a specific initiative, but to make an idea into a credible bill and a bill into a law, the chief executive must convince Congress. This requires several efforts to influence lawmakers, which are mediated by numerous public communications. A media expose of corporate misconduct that results in a change in policy does not just happen to have an effect. Instead, it releases a number of dynamics, such as shifts in public opinion, which have an impact on policymakers via poll results. These politicians then have to think about the most efficient and politically beneficial methods to modify policy.

### **Second, language and symbols play a crucial role in political communication.**

According to Ball, political communication is the practice of using language to move people to think and act in ways that they might not otherwise think and act. Language has the ability to influence others, and leaders use it to change attitudes and motivate followers. Presidents have captured the nation's attention using speech to fascinate, language to organize, and analogies to inspire support for their programs, from Franklin Delano Roosevelt through Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama. As families snuggled around radios during the chilly, depressing days of the Great Depression in the 1930s, FDR's words, the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, brought up hope and optimism, igniting a nation's collective confidence. After the nation's schoolchildren saw the space shuttle Challenger explode during takeoff in January 1986, Ronald Reagan gave kind words to them.

The future is not for the weak-willed. It is theirs to own. Reagan used the finest of presidential rhetoric to assist a mourning country deal with sorrow, using words to comfort and language to change sadness into optimism for the future. The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future, and we'll continue to follow them, he added. Barack Obama inflamed emotions with his persuasive speech. Four years before he announced his candidacy for president, Obama used a number of verbal allusions in his speech at the Democratic National Convention in 2004, warning those who are preparing to divide us that there is not a liberal America and a conservative America; there is the United States of America. There is only one country called the United States of America; there is no Black America, White America, Latino America, or Asian America.

Political communication uses symbol-heavy vocabulary. A symbol is a kind of language in which a single thing communicates a complex psychological and cultural meaning by standing in for an idea or concept. Words like justice, freedom, and equality as well as nonverbal cues like the flag or a religious cross are examples of symbols. Invoking the American flag, the Founding Fathers, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, freedom, liberty, and equality is a common practice among elected politicians in our country. Political communication include the exchange of symbolic meanings as well as the use of emotionally charged language that may excite, agitate, and disgust. To various communities, words have distinct connotations. Conservatives associate freedom with immigrants' aspirations to run their own businesses or practice their religion as they like.

For liberals and minorities, freedom is having the freedom to express one's beliefs in public without worrying about discrimination. It also expresses empowerment, showing how a group that has previously experienced persecution may do so and freely express its own deeply held beliefs. In democratic societies, political communications often evoke distinct interpretations for various groups, which is a cause of friction and conflict.

### **Third, the key actors in political communication are three.**

The first is the big group of decision-makers and influencers. These individuals make up the elites of politics, which also includes a wide range of Washington, D.C. opinion leaders, including members of the president's Cabinet, policy experts, and top officials in the sizable government bureaucracy. The media are the following player or players. The traditional news media, bloggers, citizen-journalists with a cell phone camera and an attitude, partisan website promoters, and the swarm of political entertainment presenters and comedians are all part of this increasingly diversified group. The public is the focal point of political communication. The political active, outspoken, and apathetic citizens coexist in cacophony with the sadly uninformed and uneducated. The citizenry comprises those who actively participate in civic organizations, such as pro- and anti-fur, vegan, and vehemently pro-red-meat groups, as well as evangelical Christians and outspoken atheists, Wall Street investors, and blue-collar unions.

### **Fourth, there are both planned and unexpected political communication impacts.**

A rush of supportive emails and text messages that the White House receives following a presidential address are instances of intended consequences. A presidential speech is meant to influence. A negative political advertising aims to make people think less positively of the targeted politician, and drops in the candidate's poll numbers show the communicative impact that was desired. However, not every political communication result is what the communicator intended.

In certain cases, communicators do not purposefully seek to alter a person's opinions. The news has had an effect, but not the one that the news media intended when a sexual scandal is exuberantly covered in the media and causes people to get upset to the point that they tell pollsters the offending politician should resign. Journalists are more concerned in exposing a behavior pattern of a politician that the public official would rather you not see than in trying to change people's opinions of the political figure. Reporters think it is their duty as members of the media to cast aspersions on those in positions of authority. Their other motivations are more egotistical and self-serving, such as wanting to get a huge headline, get a byline or on-air credit, or, in the case of network executives, show a story that draws viewers and increases ratings. However, they do not seek to influence the public to adopt a political stance.

In other instances, a news item that is broadcast on television or streamed online may have an effect that was neither planned nor expected. A covertly recorded video of comments Mitt Romney made at a fundraiser emerged during the 2012 election season. Romney generated controversy and lost support from people when he said that 47% of Americans do not pay income taxes, believe that they are victims, and do not take personal responsibility for their life. Of course, neither Romney nor the mainstream media that reported the incident meant to send a message that would damage Romney's reputation. However, in the current 24/7, no-holds-barred media climate, statements like this may have a wide range of unanticipated repercussions. Political communication in America reaches a large audience. Political communication comprises statements intended to persuade, such as presidential addresses, debates during elections, and public campaigns aimed at changing public opinion on a variety of issues, from health care to partial-birth abortion. This includes covert tactics, which aim to influence opinions by using the arsenal of current political marketing research [7]–[9].

In the 2012 presidential race, a number of political action organizations with billionaire funding created attack commercials without leaving a paper trail. In order to legally conceal the identities of the contributors who signed the checks, donations were channeled via tax-exempt advocacy organizations. Public ignorance about the campaign's financiers went against the transparency ideal. News that is broadcast on television and through the Internet is included in political communication as well. It also includes political talk radio, YouTube videos, Facebook postings, Homer Simpson, Peter Griffin from Family Guy, Stan Marsh from South Park, Michael Moore, and other media that addresses how people feel and think about politics e.g., Davis & Owen, 1998. More than only media is involved in political communication. It includes traditional political debates over dinner, persuading a friend to participate in a university demonstration, and door-to-door canvassing on chilly mornings to collect signatures for a state-wide petition.

**Effects may take place at many levels, which is the fifth feature of political communication.**

Political communication's range is what makes it so important. Political media has an impact on people's thinking, candidate evaluations, sentiments, attitudes, and conduct on a micro level. Obama's sluggish performance in the first presidential debate of 2012 had a micro-level effect if it caused an undecided voter to reconsider her support for him. Political advocacy, institutional reform or retrenchment, political activity, and public policy are all impacted by political communication on a macro level. For instance, The Washington Post's groundbreaking reporting on President Nixon's unethical behavior during the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s resulted in macro-level institutional changes, including the appointment of a special prosecutor and a series of Senate hearings, which eventually paved the way for Nixon's resignation. On a cultural level, influences that are even more extensive macro-level

occur. According to academic Michael Schudson, the news develops a symbolic universe that has a type of primacy, a certification of genuine significance. A piece of news is given public credibility when it is presented to the public by the media. They bring it to a shared public platform where a broad audience may debate it.

### **Three Crucial Players Are Involved in Political Communication:**

#### **1. Public, media, and leaders**

Various viewpoints exist on which of these groups has the most influence. According to academics, the public, media, and leaders all have varying degrees of influence. According to one theory, elite leaders have a significant influence on public opinion and public policy. As it often does in times of national crisis, the country turned to the president after the tragedy of September 11. On September 20, 2001, George W. Bush gave a stirring speech to a joint session of Congress and the country in which he spoke of a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom and detailed the threats terrorist organizations posed to the country. He also made a point to respect Muslims in America and around the world. Bush inspired the nation to join a new and scary war on terror by his words and deeds.

More than a year later, the same president was under fire for allegedly exploiting his position's communication privileges to start a needless war with Iraq. Critics advanced the serious and plausible theory that the Bush administration 'manipulated' the country into war [with Iraq] through a variety of techniques, including controlled leaks to the press, exploitation of jingoistic sentiment, cherry-picking of crucial intelligence, persecution or ostracism of war critics, and a campaign of image management and stagecraft designed to reinforce the government's daily message at the expense of a full public dialogue, according to two scholars.

This assessment of Bush's behavior is not shared by all political analysts. But there is no question that he actively promoted his belief that the Iraq war was necessary to preserve American security via political rhetoric, news manipulation, and public appearances. Bush exemplified how a political figure may utilize their communication skills to control the national agenda in this manner. From a different angle, the media are responsible. It underlines how the media both news and entertainment have a significant impact on how politics are conducted. According to this point of view, the news media's selection of stories and reporting style may have an impact on public opinion and political decision-makers. For instance, some commentators assert that Barack Obama's nomination in 2008 was facilitated by the news media, sometimes known as the press.

Obama had the kind of charm and appeal that can enthrall a television audience. He started off as the underdog. The media enjoys championing underdogs who question the established quo. He acquired political clout as he began to rise in the polls and win primaries, which led to a bandwagon effect that resulted in even more positive press coverage. Obama also got far more favorable news coverage than Hillary Clinton, his rival for the Democratic candidacy. Some academics argued that Obama received superior press coverage because he mobilized an unstoppable political juggernaut that enthralled so many young voters, while others cited suggestive evidence of journalistic prejudice [10].

In any scenario, the positive publicity gave him momentum, a crucial element in primary elections that aids in candidates' ascent to victory. A third point of view asserts that the people make the decisions. Leaders must execute policies that are supported by the majority of voters in order to win election and reelection. For instance, in the 2012 election, the



public's top concern was the health of the economy, namely the unceasingly high unemployment rate. This was given prime time in the media's attention.

It served as the focal point of Republican assaults on Obama and served as the setting for Obama's tactic of accusing Republicans for obstructing his legislative initiatives to strengthen the country's economy. The electorate, or voting public, contributed to making the issue a top priority for politicians and the media. All three influence agents' elites, media, and public interact intricately in the majority of political circumstances. Leaders, the media, and people all symbolically spar with one another and present issues in various ways in the drama of political communication. The key, of course, is power: In order to acquire and hold onto power, leaders use language, symbols, and the accoutrements of their positions. The exercise of power is reflected, interpreted, contested, or reinforced by the media. Citizens become active in politics, some more than others, the wealthy and well-connected more than the impoverished and less educated. They utilize contemporary communications to promote causes and politicians, sometimes wisely and other times stupidly.

## **2. On a media platform, politics is played**

Political communication expert Shanto Iyengar (2004) observes that American politics is almost exclusively a mediated experience. However, the media are not objective, lifeless intermediaries. They implement their own standards and guidelines, changing politics in the process. Politicians in the United States and other western democracies conform their conduct to the standards of newsworthiness since the media has become such a crucial aspect of governance. Who has access to the electorate is decided by journalists and a group of political media entertainers. Candidates are thus very aware of the kind of messages and approaches that make for entertaining television and colorful YouTube videos. Observe how Jones discusses the consequences of political communication using a range of mediums. There are several mediums.

The media is often referred to by pundits as a single, all-powerful phrase, conjuring up images of other strong, monolithic institutions like the Vatican or the Establishment. They either say the word media in a mocking manner, as when they refer to the liberal media, or they do it in a dry, stentorian manner. In reality, there are several media outlets, including local newspapers, talk radio, television networks, and a wide variety of blogs with differing political viewpoints. Blogs, websites, and political talk programs on cable TV are examples of genres that are rife with opinion. They are not intended to provide an unbiased account of what happened that day. Some blogs and op-ed pieces provide intelligent political perspectives that are really perceptive. A relatively new kind of weapon journalism, politics, and public policy are often combined into a powerful combination by internet authors who spew insults and scandalous facts to undermine their opponents.

## **3. The Heart of Political Communication Is Technology**

Although technology has always had an impact on politics, it now has a greater impact than before. More political information is available, leaders and followers may communicate instantly, and voters have more power to influence the message. There have been two significant effects of the technology revolution. It has significantly enhanced the availability of information, with traditional media, many websites, blogs, and politically charged social media postings providing a wealth of information and viewpoints on politics. The availability of a wide range of sources and channels has substantially increased options thanks to technology. The era of political campaign dominance by television networks is over; it is now history. Candidates these days are quite active on social networking platforms. Obama used the social news platform Reddit during the 2012 campaign to increase support among young

people. I'm the president of the United States, Barack Obama. He said in the colloquial jargon of social media, Ask me anything. Attack commercials for campaigns are instantly uploaded on YouTube, receiving millions of clicks. Both the population and the political elite have quickly adopted Twitter as their platform of choice. In order to persuade lawmakers to embrace a bipartisan compromise during the 2011 national debt limit crisis, Obama invited voters to tweet their politicians. According to Palin, tweeting often is just how she rolls. President Obama's performance received harsh criticism from political insiders and journalists within the first seven minutes of the first presidential debate in 2012, prompting an Obama campaign manager to declare, we are getting bombed on Twitter.

## CONCLUSION

Political communication acts as a link between people and their elected officials and is essential to democratic societies. It has changed dramatically over time, with the introduction of new technology playing a crucial part in altering the political discourse environment. The fast growth of social media platforms has joined and sometimes surpassed traditional media, including television and newspapers.

These developments have improved public involvement and increased access to information, but they have also created new difficulties. The spread of false and misleading information, which may sway public opinion and threaten the democratic process, is one of the main causes for worry. As time goes on, it will be vital for governments, media outlets, and internet firms to work together to put in place reliable fact-checking systems and encourage media literacy among the populace.

Additionally, ethical issues are inextricably linked to political communication. Political communications must be based on transparency, honesty, and justice in order to prevent public misinformation and deceit. To make educated choices and to promote a pluralistic and inclusive democratic environment, citizens must have access to a range of opinions and viewpoints. Political actors have a duty to communicate effectively and ethically given how political communication affects political behavior and policy-making. It is important to actually understand and solve the interests and problems of the general population rather than just focusing on winning elections.

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### CHAPTER 3

## A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: NORMATIVE THEORIES OF DEMOCRACY

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### ABSTRACT:

The main goals of normative theories of democracy are to outline the values and tenets that ought to govern democratic institutions. This chapter provides a summary of numerous normative theories of democracy, emphasizing their main ideas and examining how they could apply to contemporary nations. This research evaluates the benefits and drawbacks of each strategy for fostering successful government, public participation, and the defence of individual rights by looking at ideas like deliberative democracy, participatory democracy, and representative democracy. In the end, developing strong democratic institutions and increasing the general welfare of individuals need a knowledge of normative conceptions of democracy. The successful application of normative theories demands a sophisticated and adaptable strategy that synthesizes components from several theories and adapts the system to the particulars of each country. All theories should continue to place a high priority on ensuring the protection of individual rights, encouraging public involvement, and advancing open and accountable government.

### KEYWORDS:

Deliberative Democracy, Democracy, Liberal, Political.

### INTRODUCTION

Normative models are theoretical descriptions that dictate or imply what ought to be. The chapter's next parts examine the normative tenets of liberal democracy, deliberative democracy, and ancient Greek democracy. I then list four flaws in our modern media-centered democracy and provide a broader defense of democratic governance, all guided by these philosophical viewpoints. A schedule for the next chapters is provided in this portion of the chapter [1]–[3].

### A Critical Approach to Political Communication

The three philosophical perspectives on democracy each give communication a significant role. Strong discussion and the creation of persuasive rhetorical arguments were essential components of direct democracy to the ancient Greeks. Liberal democracy proponents believe that the greatest method to ensure the truth and promote many political viewpoints is via free and unrestricted access to a variety of media. Deliberative Democrats believe that civic culture and commitment to citizenship are developed via intellectual, reasoned discourse, which supports democratic life. All three theories' proponents agree that strong communication is essential to a healthy democracy. According to James Madison, free communication among the people is a crucial component of democratic self-government and the only effective guardian of every other right. Madison noted that the inverse is also true. He said that a democracy that fails to educate its members of crucial facts is but a prelude to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both. Therefore, political communication is a crucial component of a healthy democracy. Now let's shift gears and go from normative theory to the

descriptive facts that really exist. This begs the issue of how democratic ideals compare to political realities. Many modern reviewers believe it falls short in comparison. Critics point out four significant flaws in modern American democracy that deviate from accepted norms.

1. The public lacks the ability or desire to participate in politics. Since Plato, philosophers have bemoaned the fact that people lack the mental capacity and drive to participate in democratic democracy. Today, this is true in America. Many Americans are unaware, according to one academic, not just of the specialized details of government, but of the most basic political facts information so basic as to challenge the very foundation of democratic government itself. This statement is supported by evidence. Only about a third of the populace could correctly name a right that the First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees. However, according to Breyer (2010), two-thirds could identify one American Idol TV judge. American citizens are less knowledgeable about world issues than those living in other industrialized western democracies. The motivating lack exacerbates the competency issue. In important national elections, little over half of Americans participate, compared to three-fourths of their peers in Britain and Germany. The United States has one of the lowest voter participation rates among all democracies. How can the United States be considered in the pantheon of democracy in the world when its citizens are so uninformed and seldom participate?
2. There are no free or diversified media outlets. The marketplace of political ideas is not fully open and unrestricted, in contrast to the liberal democratic ethos. The wealthy and powerful dominate the media. The bulk of American newspapers, periodicals, movie studios, and broadcasting stations are owned by five multinational corporations. Critics claim that large firms like Google, Microsoft, and Time Warner control the internet. Furthermore, there is distressingly little variation in media content throughout the nation. Let's use a culinary example: If you want to have supper while traveling across the nation, the options are regrettably all the same. The Northeastern cities of Augusta and Anaheim both have the same Applebee's menu. In both Maine and California, Denny's serves the same cuisine and has almost comparable menus. No matter where you are, the news diet is the same: poll-driven election pieces in newspapers, celebrity celebrations in magazines, and brief political vignettes on television. Critics note that there are very few occasions when print, broadcast, or Internet channels produce stories that question the powers-that-be, in addition to the material being strikingly similar across regions.
3. There are plenty of dollars in politics. All people do not have equal access to the political system, which runs counter to democratic principles. Millionaires and billionaires have a disproportionate influence on politics. The record \$6 billion spent on the presidential election in 2012 by very rich Americans, political action committees, and other organizations will certainly be surpassed in 2016. Independent political organizations' expenditure has skyrocketed over the previous several years as a consequence of a contentious Supreme Court judgment from 2010. Major contributions are typically kept under wraps, and funds are smuggled via tax-exempt organizations where the contributors' identities may be kept a secret. Transparency standards in a democracy are violated by this.
4. Media coverage of politics is simple, shallow, and unfavorable, which is in odds with the principles of deliberative democracy. When political writer Joe Klein expressed

his frustration with the insulting welter of sterilized, speechifying insipid photo ops, and idiotic advertising that passes for public discourse these days in 2006, he was speaking for many Americans. Other opponents bemoan the media's tendency to provide airtime to vicious debates between liberals and conservatives on cable TV talk programs while placing a greater emphasis on scandals and candidates' personalities than on substantive political debates.

Add to this the shrill, biased viewpoints expressed on talk radio and the Internet, the gut-wrenching attack commercials, and the quick-witted politicians who prey on voter concerns to win elections. Voters may get discouraged as a result of political trickery and agitated, raucous conversation. According to one political figure, the public, and especially young people, today have less trust in democracy than before. The political class, as we collectively refer to ourselves, engages in politics in a manner that alienates voters, readers, listeners, and viewers. There are too many individuals who think that they are the victims of government[4]–[6].

## DISCUSSION

### Perspectives

Critics assert that American politics are in danger because of these issues. They insist that there is a crisis in our system. The opponents' concerns are unsettling, and the reasons are persuasive. Exists an other viewpoint? In fact, you may contest every one of the criticisms. The idea that several viewpoints on a topic might help to clarify difficult situations is a recurring one in this work. This raises the question of whether voters may forget part of the civics they studied in high school while still being able to assess the suitability of candidates for public office in answer to the first complaint about the lack of understanding of people. Second, given that the material in America's media system is so uniform and controlled by a small number of firms, why do new blogs keep appearing that oppose the establishment? Third, one may use First Amendment rights to argue that political parties should be allowed to spend as much money as they want on elections. You may defend them by claiming that persuasive appeals help voters stay informed of politicians' opinions on issues, in contrast to deliberative democrats who criticize political marketing and oversimplified persuasive arguments. And aren't there several instances of political figures like Reagan and Obama who have used effective language to inspire people to take action?

This epigram stresses how crucial it is to value other viewpoints. It emphasizes the value of seeing problems from several angles in order to develop insight. It honors the virtue of doing so. The Reflection boxes that occur here and in the next chapters are highlighted using this method. Each box presents a current issue and typically provides both a pro and a negative. It allows pupils to consider the complexity, concentrating on the benefits and drawbacks of each viewpoint or significant topic. Let's begin: Imagine you switch on the television or your computer during the presidential election season. What you will see is as follows: the most recent poll results, a reporter exhilaratedly describing the neck-and-neck race to the finish line between the candidates for the highest office in the land, a consultant for one candidate bemoaning the onslaught of negative advertising in the air wars, while a strategist for the opposing candidate elatedly boasts about how her side outmanoeuvred the opposition by mounting an unbeatable, high-tech ground game.

Some of the issues the United States faces are inherent to democracies. Democracy is a flawed system of governance. Decisions are made by people, and citizens have prejudices and pet peeves. Politicians are ambitious, therefore it depends on them to set aside their own interests and strive for the greater good. Democracy relies on cooperation between the many

departments of government, but the Constitution's power distribution among them makes it difficult to come up with consensus answers.

Democratic societies rely on the media to communicate important information and viewpoints, but in a capitalist and political society, the media may be swayed by those who stand to gain financially and by those who shout out loudly. A collection of philosophical frameworks and concepts that determine standards, values, and norms for what a democratic society should look like and how it should operate are referred to as normative theories of democracy. Normative theories are prescriptive in nature and aim to provide guidance on how democratic institutions should be designed and how political processes should be conducted to achieve certain democratic ideals, in contrast to empirical theories that seek to describe and explain how democracies operate in reality. These theories concentrate on the normative features of democracy and don't bother themselves with how people behave in real democratic societies. They answer issues like:

1. What basic beliefs and ideals need to guide democratic government?
2. What should the distribution and use of political power look like in a democratic society?
3. What role should the public have in governance and decision-making?
4. How can individual freedoms and rights be safeguarded in a democratic environment?
5. What connection exists between social justice and democracy?

Normative theories of democracy often suggest several models or methods, stressing various aspects of democratic practices and principles, such as deliberative democracy, participatory democracy, and representational democracy. These ideas are crucial resources for assessing and criticizing current democratic systems as well as for directing efforts to promote democratic governance in the quest for the ideal democratic society.

## **Normative Theories of Democracy**

### **1. Classical Direct Democracy**

The democracy at Athens was exceptional and unique for its time. Additionally, it established important tenets that have shaped later democratic ideologies and supported modern democratic regimes. The people of ancient Greece had power. An assembly with a quorum of 6,000 Athenians gathered more than 40 times a year in the fifth century B.C. to discuss, debate, and make decisions about taxation, foreign alliances, and declarations of war. The core of the polis, or city-state, was politics. The traditional democratic approach valued freedom and upheld equality, stressing that every citizen had the right to rule and be ruled in turn. The Greek model assumed that people actively took part in many routine judicial and legislative processes. Citizens were expected to engage in politics under the direct democratic system used by the Greeks. Pericles, a statesman, expressed it succinctly. We say that he has no business here at all, rather than we say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business.

Think of a politician saying such things now. She or he would be mocked on YouTube and labelled an elitist. However, political engagement was a natural component of citizenship for the ancient Greeks. This viewpoint was supported by the philosopher Aristotle, who contended that people were political creatures. He did not, however, imply that individuals were political in the way the word is commonly used in today's society that is, through networking and plotting to get an edge over others. According to Aristotle, leading a decent life included working together on projects and holding open discussions to decide what was best for the society at large[7], [8].

Greek civilization placed a strong emphasis on rhetoric, or what we would today refer to as persuasion. Policy choices, such as whether to attack a foreign country, were preceded by intense debates. Aristotle believed that people were more likely to join political communities where such problems might be debated and resolved if they were able to construct rational arguments about justice and injustice. A political community's identity is seen to have been established and shaped via communication. Although Greek democracy is often extolled in civics textbooks, it has drawbacks and subtle intricacies. The Athenian model upheld equality but restricted political participation to male citizens above the age of 20. Male slaves outnumbered free residents, but they were not allowed to take part. Women's political and civic rights were completely nonexistent. All Athenians were equal, but male Athenians were far more equal than other Athenians.

## **2. Liberal Democracy**

Liberal democracy blends democratic ideals with the defense of personal liberties. It places a strong emphasis on the rule of law, the division of powers, and the preservation of minority rights, guaranteeing that the rights of minorities cannot be violated by the majority. Liberal democracies aim to achieve a compromise between the preservation of individual liberty and majority rule. Liberal democracy comes in a variety of forms rather than just one. Some of the most well-known democratic thinkers, like John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and James Madison, have developed the models. The ideas most often associated with democracy are liberal democratic ones, which place a strong emphasis on individual rights and representative governance. However, proponents of liberal democracy do not use the word liberal in the same way that we do today, such as when we speak about liberal Democrats. The name theoretically more nearly resembles libertarian, stressing a democratic system that protects individual liberty and rejects government involvement.

Liberal democratic views developed in the 17th and 18th centuries when people became disenchanted with the absolute authority of monarchs in Europe and the many ways that they hindered individual freedom. Democracy was created as a safeguard against the repressive use of political power. The inherent rights of people their right to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness are emphasized in liberal viewpoints on democracy, to integrate the ideas of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson. The idea that people possessed unalienable rights that the government could not violate was fascinating and vital. Liberal democratic ideologies placed a strong emphasis on the idea that everyone should be free to exercise their right to freedom of speech, press, religion, and economy. People need a realm of existence free from the influence of oppressive kings. Liberal ideologies thus accepted the private sector, such as private business and private property. However, there was an issue. What role should the government play if individuals have unalienable rights? How might the requirement for order, which the government upholds, be balanced with people's rights?

These are fundamental concerns that are still important today, and the original liberal democrats came up with a number of original solutions. They saw that the Athenian idea of direct democracy was untenable for mass society because it had become too huge and complex for everyone to participate. They supported representative government, in which voters choose others to represent them and their views on important policy issues. Elections offered a means of ensuring that people made decisions about how the government operated, turning public officials into servants rather than masters of the citizenry. Liberal democratic models emphasize communication as a critical component. Liberal democracy theorists see politics as a marketplace of ideas, where a range of media products good and poor, accurate and inaccurate compete for audience attention due to their focus on the private market. Political ideologies clash in the intellectual marketplace in a similar way that various goods



fight in the market for economic resources. Some thinkers believed that truth would ultimately prevail. Censorship is harmful and pointless. By pointing out that if the opinion is right, people are deprived of the opportunity to exchange error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error, John Stuart Mill famously identified the issues with media censorship [9]–[11].

Advocates of liberal democracy want a free, competitive press where a thousand flowers including roses, daisies, weeds, and underbrush bloom. Theorists in the 19th century supported partisan periodicals that took sides on issues and the penny press, which featured crime tales and cost one penny. In a similar vein, 21st-century libertarian thinkers contend that society need an unrestricted free press that encompasses traditional media, public television for educational purposes, cable television programs that incessantly discuss the sexual transgressions of famous politicians, blogs, and political websites. Liberal thinkers stress that although people are able and willing to put aside their social biases, the best way to guarantee truth in the public sphere is free, open, and unchecked debate in which both error and truth have equal access

### **3. Deliberative Democracy**

This approach emphasizes the need of reasoned debate and public deliberation as the cornerstones of democratic decision-making. Deliberative democracy promotes public venues that are welcoming and inclusive where people may respectfully and logically discuss various viewpoints and arguments. Finding well-founded and widely accepted judgments that represent the common good is the aim. The newest intellectuals on the democracy block, the proponents of deliberative democracy, disagree with liberal democracy theory. You may wonder what could possibly be wrong with liberal democracy. It is impossible to argue against freedom, liberty, and the marketplace of ideas in politics. Advocates of deliberative democracy have a distinct perspective on liberal democracy, pointing out that the market metaphor downplays the deeper role that politics should have in the lives of its people. Voters are not just consumers selecting among several political brands; rather, they are engaged citizens whose deliberate engagement in politics forms the cornerstone of democratic democracy. They highlight that politics should be concerned with advancing society as a whole rather than just safeguarding people's individual rights. They call for an imaginative rethinking of democracy offering a new kind of participation, one that gives citizens more power while also giving them more opportunities to exercise this power thoughtfully.

Theories of deliberative democracy are similar to other modern viewpoints that emphasize the value of the public rather than the private realm and urge for more citizen involvement in politics. Deliberative Democrats and other opponents contend that we must reclaim democracy from powerful institutions and wealthy interests. They advocate giving the people more authority, but let's ensure that people carefully consider how they want this power to be utilized. Deliberative democracy theorists lament the state of modern democracy and contend that our politics need a cognitive makeover. In order for there to be a healthy democracy, citizens must think deeply and broadly about political issues consider different viewpoints that go beyond their own narrow material interests and formulate sound arguments that can be convincingly justified in group settings and will ultimately affect public policy.

The catchphrases of liberal democracy, liberty, and equality may be pleasant, but to deliberative Democrats, politics is nothing more than a noisy cacophony of egotistical interests contending fruitlessly in public. Advocates for deliberation contend that we need more courteous and civil public discourse, such as community forums that may help establish

agendas and influence governmental policy. They advise media to lessen their emphasis on electoral polls and consultant methods in horse race coverage. Instead, proponents of deliberation contend that media professionals should embrace public journalism, which stresses methods for journalists to engage with the wider communities in which they operate and places the people's interests above those of political elites.

Deliberative Democrats support online forums like patch.com that let people talk about issues affecting their communities.

They support edemocracy initiatives like online public forums and group discussions on blogs like DailyKos on the Left and RedStateDiaries on the Right, where online participants post ideas, others comment, and individuals may modify their original thoughts in light of the conversation. Deliberative Democrats are influenced by the classical philosophers of ancient Greece in how they see communication and other issues, contending that a decent life is best lived within the framework of an active civic society that values citizenship.

#### **4. Pulling the Democratic Strands Together**

Each of the three viewpoints commends democracy while emphasizing various components. We may understand the fundamental elements of democratic governance by weaving together the many threads of these strategies. All adult citizens have the right to vote and run for office; there are free, fair elections with competition between different political parties; there is individual liberty and freedom of expression, including for those who disagree with the party in power; there is a civil society with the freedom to form associations, such as parties and interest groups, that try to influence public policy; and there is a democracy. These five characteristics define a democracy.

### **CONCLUSION**

Digital platforms and the use of technology may also strengthen democratic processes by enabling wider involvement and information sharing. Design and operation of democratic systems across the globe are significantly influenced by normative ideas of democracy. This examination makes it clear that each theory has strengths and weaknesses and that no one theory can adequately capture the intricacies of contemporary civilizations. Deliberative democracy has the potential to promote educated public conversation and inclusive decision-making, but it needs close attention to make sure minority perspectives are fully represented. Participatory democracy gives people more authority and makes them feel more invested in the democratic process, but it may be difficult to scale and is susceptible to manipulation. Representative democracy offers consistency and effective decision-making, but it needs ongoing watchfulness to prevent elites from seizing control. Understanding and rethinking normative theories of democracy are essential as we face modern concerns like the rise of populism and threats to democratic standards. To build democratic institutions and preserve democracy's core for future generations, policymakers, intellectuals, and people must work together in constant discussion.

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## CHAPTER 4

### EARLY HISTORY OF POLITICAL: COMMUNICATION SCHOLARSHIP

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The early history of political communication studies charts the development of the subject from its infancy to its present importance in influencing public opinion and political debate. With a focus on the creation of media technologies, theoretical frameworks, and methodological techniques that have affected the study of political communication, this chapter offers an overview of significant advancements and turning points in the field. It reveals the connections between political communication and social changes and examines the crucial role that early researcher had in creating the framework for modern research. This study illuminates how historical views continue to influence the present and future of political communication studies by looking back at the past. Early researchers in the discipline created the foundation for multidisciplinary partnerships and emphasized how political communication and larger social changes are intertwined. They emphasized how influential the media is in influencing public debate and taking part in political processes. These findings have proven crucial in guiding policy choices and influencing the way political campaigns are run.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Communication, Political, Public, Media.

### **INTRODUCTION**

You could believe that academic, critical concerns emerged in the 1800s. However, there were few people who believed that the daily newspaper had significant influence back then and there were no mass communication academics. It's true that much has been said about Kennedy's deft use of television, particularly during the presidential debates. The Simpsons was a popular television series that inspired copycats and prompted experts to theorize about its function in political socialization. The creation of a strong mass media and criticism of a U.S. communication effort to rally support for America's involvement in World War I, however, led to academic worries about the impact of political media in earnest in the 1920s. Therefore, despite common belief that the study of political communication started with television, it really predates television by over a century.

The American writer Walter Lippmann, who was writing in the 1920s, was the one who eloquently and significantly explained how the media might shape people's perceptions of a far-off world that was out of reach, out of sight, and out of mind. The history of political communication study is chronicled in this chapter along with all of its many currents, waves, and oscillating shifts. Lippmann assisted in the commencement of this trip. The chapter provides an overview of the essential ideas and approaches that have led the subject, as well as the developments and shifts in academic perspectives on political communication throughout the last century and the unexpected confrontations that have made the history of political communication so fascinating [1]–[3].

The early stages of academic inquiry and study aimed at comprehending the communication processes involved in politics and governance are referred to as the early history of political communication scholarship. The formation of theoretical frameworks and approaches for researching the connections between media, political players, and the general public occurs throughout this time period, which starts with the early advances of mass media and political communications. In this time period, academics started examining how political messages were communicated to the public and how they were received by them via different media, including print, radio, and television. They aimed to comprehend how the media affected political discourse generally as well as popular opinion and political action. Our knowledge of how communication affects political processes and results has been shaped by this era, which provided the foundation for the modern study of political communication.

Studying media effects, creating theoretical frameworks like agenda-setting and propaganda theory, and using research techniques like content analysis and surveys to study political communication phenomena are all important facets of the early history of political communication scholarship. The Early History of Political Communication Scholarship includes a number of significant elements that formed the cornerstone for the growth of the discipline. These features consist of:

1. **Emergence of Mass Media:** Print media, radio, and television all emerged at the same time as early political communication in history. The expansion of these communication pathways gave political players new ways to reach a larger audience, changing the dynamics of political communication.
2. **Media Effects:** During this time, academics were curious to know how the media affected the public's political attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Early research looked at how media messages affected public opinion, voter choice, and political participation.
3. **Propaganda and Persuasion:** Early political communication studies made extensive use of the study of propaganda and persuasion. The employment of communication methods by governments, political parties, and interest groups to influence public perception and attitudes was studied by academics.
4. **Theoretical Frameworks:** Early research on political communication relied heavily on the creation of theoretical frameworks. To explain how media messages were absorbed and digested by the public, scholars offered theories including the two-step flow theory and the hypodermic needle model, sometimes referred to as the magic bullet hypothesis.
5. **Agenda-Setting Theory:** The agenda-setting theory was one of the fundamental contributions to early political communication study. According to this idea, media had an impact on both the public's opinions and their perceptions of what was significant. It underlined how the media may shape the public's agenda by emphasizing certain problems and subjects.
6. **Political Campaign Communication:** In the beginning, political communication research mainly examined political campaigns and their communication tactics. Researchers looked at how politicians used digital channels to spread their views and win over people.
7. **Media Content Analysis:** Early political communication studies benefited greatly from methodological developments in media content analysis. For the purpose of examining the frequency and phrasing of political messages in various media channels, scholars undertook systematic assessments of media content.
8. **Public Opinion Research:** Early political communication researchers made significant contributions to the development of public opinion research. They aimed

to comprehend how popular opinion and preferences were influenced by political and media messaging.

9. **The Effect of New Technologies:** As media technologies advanced, researchers looked at how new communication tools will affect political discourse. For instance, the switch from radio to television had a huge impact on political message and campaigning.
10. **Interdisciplinary Approach:** To comprehend the complex interactions between media and politics, early political communication scholarship frequently adopted an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on insights from disciplines like sociology, psychology, political science, and communication studies [4]–[6].

## DISCUSSION

The history of mass communication study is not a calm tale of academics diligently collecting data and putting each nugget of wisdom into the knowledge vessel. Instead, it resembles a nautical adventure more, with rival explorers using various maps and diving gear. Another set of explorers, directed by their own maps, study a different area of the ocean's depths, unearthing fresh facts and beliefs about what forms the sea's underlying structure, challenging the results of the first group. All too often, we see the history of an academic field as a dull account of how simple-minded intellectuals created theories that were later disproved by their more sophisticated, astute, and modern pupils. This, however, underplays the thrill of intellectual discovery. I intend to engage readers by examining the ups and downs in the development of political communication research and outlining some of the personal experiences that went into the academic journey. This will allow readers to better understand the challenging ideas that drive researchers. The chapter is arranged in time order. The first segment discusses early classic scholarship, while the second half critically examines the early study, focusing on its relevance to the present. When, in your opinion, did American academics start to write on the impacts of political communication?

1. When the Simpsons started making fun of adult authority in the late 1980s.
2. In the 1920s, amid worries over brand-new media from the 20th century.
3. During the 1960s, after John F. Kennedy's smug control of television.
4. In the early 1800s, when newspapers with widespread distribution started to draw sizable audiences.

## Scholarship in the Early History of Political Communication

### 1. Lippmann's Perspectives

Ideas were exploding and crystallizing quickly. The old guard was being attacked. There was a shift toward a more sinister understanding of human conduct throughout Europe and the US. Gustave Le Bon (1896) issued a sobering warning about the illogical strength of a brand-new social force in France: the mob, a barbarian mass where passion trumped reason and endangered civilization. French academic Gabriel Tarde said that contemporary newspapers might set off a million tongues, carrying thoughts over great distances and forming ideas. Tarde was foretelling the strength of 20th century media. Similar to this, German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies cautioned that newspapers were packaging information like grocers' goods, producing and selling public opinion, and strongly influencing public feelings. Robert Park, a sociologist in America, shared similar opinions and expressed doubt about the ability of reason to overthrow popular opinion shaped by the use of catchphrases. These conflicting ideas were combined by Sigmund Freud, who claimed that the conformist group behavior that Le Bon and others had documented had its origins in the unconscious, psychodynamic processes of the individual.

Walter Lippmann now enters. Lippmann combined these concepts with his understanding of the dominant political ideologies of the period. T.S. Eliot, a poet, and radical journalist John Reed were classmates of Lippmann's at Harvard when he graduated in 1910. Reed would later be immortalized by Warren Beatty in the film *Reds*. Lippmann was the founding editor of *The New Republic*, the avant-garde political magazine of the 20th century. Additionally, he published works that received commendation from a Supreme Court judge and a U.S. president. At the request of President Woodrow Wilson's administration, Lippmann worked in Europe during World War I, bluntly attempting to use propaganda the buzzword of the day to support the American war effort. However, after the horrific war, which in the iconic words of a British foreign minister had darkened the lamps of Europe, Lippmann started to bemoan the abilities of the government to manipulate and control information in the sake of a wartime triumph. The White House went above and above to generate support for the war effort during World War I.

George Creel, a publicist, was selected by President Woodrow Wilson to lead the Committee on Public Information (CPI). The CPI distributed 100 million leaflets and posters, flooded schools with uncountable instructional resources, and covered streetcars and trains with war propaganda. The Espionage Act, approved by Congress in 1917, gave the government the power to penalize or jail persons who knowingly made false statements with the goal of obstructing military activities. The CPI sparked a firestorm of debate by raising the possibility of governmental information control. You might make the case that Creel had served the country well by persuading people that war was necessary and by unleashing American strength at a time when the country's military force was required to rescue the people of Europe. You may also argue that Wilson's use of political censorship combined with Creel's dishonest and manipulative actions reflected a worrying tendency in American history. One is surprised by the consistency between then and today when looking at same concerns a century later. The same issues were brought up in earlier deceptive mass communication operations, such as those launched during the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War of 1990–1991 and the contentious Iraq War of 2003.

The 1920s, back to Lippmann. Following the war, Lippmann was frustrated with Creel's use of compulsion and persuasion to sway the general populace. He disagreed with traditional liberal democratic ideas including the influence of reason and the press's capacity to report the truth. Instead, he came to the conclusion that humans were prone to informational bias and stereotyping. We define first and then see, he remarked, rather than the other way around. However, there was more. People nowadays are forced to make judgments about complicated situations that they cannot personally experience, in contrast to past times when people lived in small towns and had firsthand knowledge of community concerns. People had to depend on governments and the press for reliable information in a world that was out of reach, out of sight, out of mind, as Lippmann (1922) poetically put it. However, and this was the contemporary twist, governments could successfully use symbols to create agreement. Lippmann argued that deeper truths were not communicated by the media. Instead, it just conveyed events and even made some topics the focus of attention [7]–[9].

One cannot help but be startled by Lippmann's prescience, as Stuart Ewen (1996) wrote in a book published at the turn of the 20th century, noting that his analysis of symbols—how they may be employed to sway the public sounds uncomfortably familiar. Before Lippmann and other authors during this time period, there was little understanding of how media images may influence public opinion. Furthermore, Lippmann saw that in a society where people had to depend on indirect experience to make sense of politics, the media would unavoidably play a significant role in influencing public opinion.

## **2. The Propaganda ABCs**

Perceptive observers saw that the US was evolving. Political scientist Harold Lasswell (1927), following Lippmann's lead, outlined the influence communications may have on the collective psyche while chronicling the ways government could use the media. These effects were referred to as propaganda by Lasswell and others, while they would now be called social influence or persuasion. The ABC's of propaganda were compiled by a group that established the Institute of Propaganda in the 1930s. These ABC's of propaganda included transfer, the potent influence that a message could have if it was connected to a well-known image or symbol, testimonial, the ability of a communication to draw on the opinions of a credible spokesperson, and bandwagon, the persuasive influence exerted by the perception that a large number of people supported a cause. The Institute's founders were concerned that these methods would be extensively and evilly used.

As it turned out, researchers at the Institute of Propaganda in the 1930s had made correct predictions. The world saw the use of widespread misinformation for more horrific goals a decade later. Hitler's Nazi Party used mass media, including speeches, movies, and rhetoric, in addition to physical force, to persuade the citizens of Germany, a once-democratic nation, to support a terrible program of global dominance. Early in the 1940s, the Institute of Propaganda was disbanded. Less derogatory terminology like persuasion and information control have replaced the term propaganda with its broad, weighty, and unpleasant implications. However, regardless of their political views, students would continue to be interested in the issues the Institute presented. Should democratic governments, for instance, control the means of mass communication? How may the conflict between democratic principles and the power of elites to sway popular opinion be successfully resolved? Could the expanding mass media provide the information individuals need to make well-informed decisions?

These inquiries would be put on hold for a while as the study of political communication changed course. It followed a more direct, pragmatically American course. Researchers were intrigued by the social effects of radio, a new medium that broadcast speeches featuring President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's dulcet tones as well as a dramatization of H.G. Wells's science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds*, which depicted the invasion of Earth by Martians. The new academics, in contrast to some of the early propaganda theorists, chose a firmly empirical strategy that highlighted the intricacy of the media impacts of shows like the now-famous *War of the Worlds* broadcast. The program somehow persuaded some Americans that Martians were invading our world, but its effects were influenced by a variety of psychological elements. The radio experiments offered evidence that media impacts could simply be more complex than some academics had first thought. This idea would later find support in a ground-breaking investigation of political communication in Ohio during a presidential election.

### **The Pendulum Swings**

A charming city on the banks of Lake Erie is Sandusky, Ohio. It is more than 400 miles away from New York City and Washington, D.C., the bustling hubs of affluent influence that housed the mighty distributors of mass media. In 1940, Sandusky, a tiny, sleepy Midwestern town, stood out for having nearly mirrored national vote trends in each presidential election of the previous century.

Three political scientists were interested in it for this reason because they wanted to learn more about how communication affected people's voting choices. Paul Lazarsfeld traveled to Sandusky with two Columbia University colleagues to conduct a study on the 1940



presidential election, which put incumbent President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a popular Democrat, against Wendell Wilkie, a business lawyer and dark horse Republican candidate. Roosevelt triumphed easily, which was not entirely unexpected. However, the findings of Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1944) must have come as somewhat of a shock to those who had faith in the effectiveness of political communication medium. Researchers found distinct and striking impacts in their study of Sandusky inhabitants' usage of radio and newspapers, their interactions with others, and their voting. They discovered that the media had a small but discernible impact, clarifying opinions of the candidates and bolstering the voting intentions of individuals who cared deeply about the outcome. Only a small number of voters were won over to the opposition, nevertheless [10]–[12].

The researchers did not rush to their typewriters because of the mainstream media. Instead, it was face-to-face contact or interpersonal communication. Some people acted as political opinion leaders, influencing the opinions of their followers. These important leaders appeared to get ideas from radio and newspapers they then gathered, distilled, and disseminated those to the less engaged, less engaged sections of the electorate. The two-step flow is what the researchers called it. Therefore, contrary to what propaganda theorists believed, media did not directly affect the general public. Instead, these powerful leaders' impact was itself filtered by them; it may have been diluted, but it was undoubtedly restrained. The model appeared as follows:

Media → Opinion Leaders → Voting Public

It seems that the much-heralded media was not all that they were made up to be. Instead, they were only another element in the mix of persuasion and much less significant than human contact.

### **1. Influence in Illinois**

Lazarsfeld's career was launched by the Erie County, Ohio research. Lazarsfeld, an Austrian native, graduated with a doctorate in applied mathematics from the University of Vienna. In order to escape the crumbling political climate in his home Austria during World War II, Lazarsfeld immigrated to the United States and accepted a post as a professor of sociology at Columbia University. Lazarsfeld was a complicated individual who was both a great researcher and something of an operator. To some, he was an active businessman, while to others, he was a deft manipulator. He sought to investigate new venues, hoping to study the idea of the new opinion leader as a sociologist while donning his entrepreneurial cap and seeking to draw new funding streams to the university's Bureau of Applied Social Research. He built on the now-internationally famous findings in the Erie County voting study and sought to explore new venues. He persuaded the American magazine publisher Macfadden Publications to fund a study of consumer choice in the little but typical town of Decatur, Illinois.

Lazarsfeld, on the other hand, required funding to carry out a comprehensive statistical analysis of the influence that communication played in Decatur women's choices on marketing, fashion, attending to the movies, and public affairs. Elihu Katz, a graduate student of his who later became a well-known political communication specialist, was recruited by him. One of the most often referenced studies in the social sciences, their study established a foundation for communication research. It turned Katz and Lazarsfeld become a well-known communication duo across the world. One name could never be mentioned in relation to personal influence without the other, frequently in the same sentence. Their renowned study's primary contributions for our purposes were that it:

- a. Created a precise scientific method to assess the flow of influence.
- b. Showed that interpersonal influence was more important than mass media.
- c. Proved that context matters.

You might claim that Katz and Lazarsfeld discovered the importance of social networks and how they influence people's political and consumer choices more than fifty years before Mark Zuckerberg founded Facebook. Furthermore, it is impossible to comprehend how media influences individuals without considering their social contexts and personal relationships. Katz and Lazarsfeld issued a warning to researchers who thought that the media audience was an undifferentiated mass of clay that was being molded by an all-powerful mass media, pointing out that the audience was made up of social networks of opinion leaders and their peers, with interpersonal leaders having a persuasive effect on acquaintances and followers.

## **2. Joseph Klapper Makes His Statement**

Therefore, Joseph Klapper was interested in learning: What are the impacts of political communication and the media overall? It was time, according to Klapper and Lazarsfeld, his dissertation advisor, for someone to create a summary statement for this brand-new area of communication study. It appeared opportune to compile a book that compiled knowledge on media impacts at this time since there had been a sizable number of research of their effects and a new decade the 1960s was about to begin.

Following in the footsteps of Katz and Lazarsfeld, Klapper (1960) came to the conclusion that media's impact on society was little to negligible. Before they encountered the media, people had developed strong preexisting views. They belonged to social groupings including the family, their religion, and work unions. In general, these organizations had a greater influence on perceptions than the media. The major or only factor influencing political beliefs and conduct was not the media. Instead, media and social contextual elements collaborated, strengthening or enhancing the influence these other agents had, according to Klapper. As a result, the limited effects model was born.

Klapper recognized that the media may influence people's opinions. However, Klapper did not see them to have the profound consequences that many viewers appeared to think they did. People weren't tabula rasa blank slates for the media to slap its message on. When they encountered the media, they carried with them prior group identifications like religion and opinions like liberalism or conservatism. These prejudices influenced how people responded to political media content and the influences the media had. For Klapper, the media did not have the significant influence that many people appeared to think it had.

## **CONCLUSION**

Political communication scholarship's early years have emerged as a crucial time in the growth of this dynamic area of research. From the beginning, academics have understood how important it is to comprehend how political statements are created, communicated, and perceived by varied audiences. Political actors and scholars alike were presented with previously unheard-of possibilities and problems as a result of the rise of new media tools like print, radio, and television. Theories have shed light on how media messages affect public opinion and political conduct, from the hypodermic needle model to the agenda-setting hypothesis. These early ideas paved the way for more complex models and paradigms that still influence current field research today. Methodological improvements also made a significant contribution to early political communication research.

Surveys, experiments, and content analysis have all shown to be useful approaches for analyzing political message and media impacts. The knowledge of political communication in the digital era is being further enriched by these tactics as they continue to develop, incorporating digital platforms and big data analytics. It is clear from looking back at the early development of political communication study that the field's development has been influenced by the dynamic interconnections between technology, philosophy, and methodology. Understanding our history helps us navigate the possibilities and difficulties of the present and the future. For their research to continue to be relevant and have an influence on democratic processes and public participation, political communication experts must be watchful in researching new media landscapes and adapting to fast shifting political realities.

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## **CHAPTER 5**

### **A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SOCIAL SCIENCE AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This chapter explores the vital interaction between political communication and social science, illuminating the complex link that exists between these two fields. It examines how social science ideas and research help us understand political communication processes and how they affect people as individuals, groups, and society. The study also discusses how political communication is changing in the digital age and the difficulties it presents for both scholars and practitioners. This study aims to further the conversation on political communication within the social science framework by exploring the important issues, theoretical frameworks, and empirical investigations. Researchers may provide thorough insights into the changing character of political communication by combining ideas and methodologies from fields including sociology, psychology, anthropology, and communication studies. Such multidisciplinary methods are necessary to understand how political messaging affects society as a whole, particularly how it affects public trust, polarization, and the strength of democratic institutions.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Communication, Media, Political, Research, Social.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The situation altered abruptly. Something quite different was going on in the ostensibly minor mass media throughout the decade Klapper released a book outlining minimum media impacts. The phenomena of television news were extremely different. It took the nation by storm, extending to a half-hour, enthralling audiences with vivid, sometimes visceral, and usually contradicting imagery. Americans were constantly exposed to televised images and noises throughout the 1960s. In the first presidential debate of 1960, a handsome John F. Kennedy squared off against a sweaty, jowl-faced Richard Nixon. There were also heartbreaking scenes of American soldiers fighting enemy forces in the Vietnam rice paddies and irate, scruffy, long-haired college students holding signs, circling campus buildings, protesting, denouncing presidents, or strumming guitars and blissfully singing of a nonviolent future. In opposition to Klapper's claim that the media had no impact were these visuals, the pervasiveness of TV, and the presumed consequences of the media. It seemed that broadcast news had a significant influence on Americans' political opinions, despite the fact that no one had yet scientifically documented these impacts[ 1], [2].

Another conundrum that was commonly raised was this one: If media were so ineffectual, why would marketers spend so much on advertisements for hot new Mustangs? Why did they invest money to support politicians like Richard Nixon in 1968, whose brazen marketing led to the publication of *The Selling of the President*, a book, and maybe *The Candidate*, a film in which Robert Redford portrayed a politician with no brains who had been duped by trite TV ads? Although the contradiction of marketers lavishly splurging on an apparently

unsuccessful medium could not conclusively demonstrate the effectiveness of media advertising, the issue could not be sidestepped.

### **1. A Different Set of Issues**

There must be a problem since this just cannot be true. The media clearly have an influence, thus the limited impacts perspective must be incorrect. As the turbulent 1960s came to a conclusion, thoughts like these undoubtedly began to take root in an increasing number of scholars' minds. Researchers that study political communication started to reexamine studies that were supposed to reveal limited impacts. Jack M. McLeod, a mass communication researcher at the University of Wisconsin, was one of many investigating this topic. In 1975, Maxwell McCombs, a researcher, Lee B. Becker, a young assistant professor at Syracuse University who had worked with McLeod as a doctorate student at Wisconsin, and McLeod made an exciting finding. Becker took the initiative in carefully examining the charts that divided the sample according on party and exposure to media that supported Republican and Democratic candidates as they crossed over Lazarsfeld's Erie County research. Lazarsfeld and his associates had unintentionally underestimated the influence of the media, according to Becker and his colleagues, who made the exciting but accidental finding.

After further investigation, it was shown that almost half of Republicans who had access to mostly Democratic media had actually supported Democrat President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Democrats also showed a similar pattern: Democratic voters who were exposed to mostly Republican publications and radio stations were more inclined to support the Republican candidate than Democratic voters. Both Republican and Democratic respondents seemed to have been significantly impacted by the media in their voting decisions. There seems to be more opportunity for media impacts than the early researchers had anticipated, even if voters may still interpret political media content in light of their prejudices[3]–[5].

Another issue became apparent. Lazarsfeld and his associates were mainly interested in voting practices. Media impacts may have surfaced if they had examined variables outside voting, such as debate, voter cognitions, or variables acting at the macro level. To provide one example, Wendell Wilkie, the Republican candidate, seemed to emerge from thin air. The media undoubtedly had a role in this. Then there was this: Klapper had based his results on research that had been completed before television being the dominant medium of political communication. This was such an evident flaw in the limited effects model that it must have almost embarrassed experts to admit it. It seems unlikely that these low impact results apply to the latter half of the 20th century, a time when television had become highly prevalent across society and had become a major source of political spectacle.

The structure with limited effects was falling apart but was still standing. Data is the ultimate judge of a theoretical approach in the social sciences, and in the early 1970s, those who believed that major political media impacts existed had not yet gathered a significant body of data. But the truth wouldn't take long to emerge. Researchers demonstrated that the media may set the agenda or affect people's views of the issues plaguing America, drawing inspiration from Lippmann's hypotheses. This proved to be a significant adjustment of accepted knowledge. While the media may not have changed peoples' fundamental ideas, they had a significant impact on what voters believed. This use of phrase became become a catchphrase in the industry. The paradigm, which came to be known as agenda-setting, provided a different, more positive perspective on media impacts, and it became the center of the new method of political communication. Readers were taken on a vivid tour of American elections from 1840 to 1980 by Kathleen Hall Jamieson in 1984. She demonstrated how politicians have always used communication, particularly speeches and campaign

appearances, to shape public perception. Following this rhetorical tradition, television advertising became a particularly successful tool for politicians to package the presidency.

By the time Ronald Reagan, a former Hollywood actor whose on-screen communication abilities were famous, was elected president in 1980, the scholarly community had come to the conclusion that the media mattered. Researchers came up with a number of media and public opinion models in the years that followed such as agenda-setting, agenda-building, and framing. They investigated news content, illuminating the relationships between news, journalistic norms, economics, and political system dynamics. They looked at how opinions and actions were affected by news, political discussions, advertisements, and rapid technology advances. Researchers from several social science fields have come together over the last few decades to form the cross-disciplinary area of political communication.

The fascination with media, interest in politics, and conviction that how a society communicates about politics matters are shared by researchers. As scholars today examine campaigns and a variety of online communication issues, interest in these issues is advancing. It started with Lippmann, continued through Katz and Lazarsfeld's interpersonal influence research, oscillated in the wake of Klapper's limited effects thesis, and rebounded with research on the pervasive impact of news.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Bringing Everything Together**

Let's combine the past and current. What can we infer from the analysis of political communication studies across history? What can we infer from the intellectual arc of American political communication research's many phases? What common motifs show up? We identify many significant themes by connecting Lippmann, Lazarsfeld, Klapper, and the resurging academic interest in political media impacts. First, Lippmann was correct: The media molds our perceptions of the outside world. The media, according to Lippmann, should help us create pictures in our heads of the world that exists beyond our immediate experiences. He had a foresight that still holds true today. Politics is not something we immediately encounter. In order to discover what is occurring in Washington, D.C., and in distant combat zones like Kabul, Afghanistan, residents must instead depend on the media and now the Internet. We get visuals from the media that we then utilize to form opinions about the political landscape. They are effective in part because of this.

Social networks are important, too. Influential individuals are crucial. This was highlighted by Katz and Lazarsfeld in their Decatur research, and it is still true today. National brands like American Eagle and Hewlett-Packard recruit opinion-shaping student ambassadors to promote their products on Facebook and other social media platforms in the social media-centric environment. Political choices may be impacted by interpersonal dialogue and influence in election circumstances. William P. Eveland has shown that people's political engagement is intriguingly influenced by how often they discuss politics and who they discuss it with. In these respects, interpersonal influence, a theory first forward in 1955, is still crucial to political communication today.

Third, early studies got people thinking even if it was inaccurate in certain areas. The two-step process, in which opinion leaders are influenced by the media before others are affected, was a brilliant notion. It is still in use today. In a research that was released more than 50 years after Katz and Lazarsfeld, it was discovered that older siblings' exposure to a national anti-drug media campaign impacted those of their younger siblings' sisters and brothers. The two-step flow, however, does not always work. There is a one-step flow for certain issues:

from media to public. The concept that exposure to mass media transmits new knowledge across society was a central issue in studies on news dissemination. Where can people find out the results of significant events like presidential elections, shootings, or the deliberate assassination of Osama bin Laden? Facebook? Twitter? Or maybe through television for instance?

Diffusion is challenging. People are finding out about these activities more and more via the Internet and social media. Over the years, researchers have examined diffusion and drawn a variety of conclusions about how people learn about important national events, including when news first spreads through the media, when it does so primarily through interpersonal communication channels, and when followers pass on information to leaders (Weimann, 1994). The first study on the two-step flow inspired these areas of research. Fourth, two opposing viewpoints on political communication may both be accurate. Politics are greatly influenced by the media. That was accurate in the early work. Meanwhile, voters have definite opinions. Media content may sometimes be overshadowed by what individuals bring to it. Klapper was accurate there. People do filter political communications via their views, rejecting those that diverge from their political beliefs and embracing those that align with them. Both of two opposing theories may be valid, but one may have a stronger influence on certain individuals or social strata than the other. Or they might collaborate[6]–[8].

Thus, Klapper was right when he said that media operate in the context of users' social networks. In certain situations today, that is practically true. On your Facebook page, you may be reading a friend's post about a journalist's blog or your news feed. Klapper was also correct when he said that media influences cooperate with interpersonal and social influencers. Information that we obtain from parents or trustworthy friends is known to be supplemented, completed, and interacted with the media for a very long time. But Klapper erred by downplaying media impacts and implying that they were essentially insignificant. Television advertising important when it reinforces views formed via human interaction or early socialization. The goal of a lot of campaign persuasion is to persuade people to act on their convictions. If media exposure persuades people to take their opinion into action by casting a ballot, this may have political ramifications and tip the balance in favor of the marketed candidate in tight elections. Political media have an impact on institutions at multiple levels, including macro-level ones like the presidential primaries, which are heavily reliant on television and the Internet, as well as micro-level voter perceptions about candidates.

Fifth, worries about the influence of strong media are a recurring subject in American political discourse. Communication science has an intriguing history. Early on, commentators worried that the new electronic media, especially radio, may have catastrophic repercussions on society. Fears then focused on comic books as they become popular. Television and TV violence came next, then offensive political advertisements, violent video games, the Internet, and Facebook. Both academics and the general public often believe that the new media will have significant consequences, as Ellen A. Wartella and her colleagues astutely observed. A more modest, sophisticated view eventually gains favor as the technology spreads and permeates daily life. As they come to realize that the medium is not as potent as they had believed, academics modify their theories.

Regardless of academic debate, it is certain that many members of the general people have believed the media to have significant influence throughout history. Lippmann was concerned that the establishment might manufacture consent in 1922 by implanting images in our minds. A New York Times reviewer noted in 2011 that the extent to which our world, what we take for reality, is formed by recording and image-making machinery while discussing video art.

We live in a world of frightening, reality-determining technology, he said, adding that our minds organize incoming information into images and narratives that may or may not be true to the facts. He may be correct, but the point is that an identical passage might have been found in papers written in the 1920s, but those authors would have been concerned that cinema, radio, or propaganda dominated us. This illustrates a recurring theme in the development of American politics.

The central paradox of America's constitutional tradition lies in a persistent tension between our commitment to popular sovereignty and fears that the people might be too easily distracted or coerced to govern themselves. Democracy's paradox is that it needs coordinated communication in order to enlighten a large electorate. However, the existence of structured public relations and mass media sectors fosters abuse-related anxieties, some of which are unfounded and others which are based on reality. When is the public's concern about manipulation legitimate? When do concerns about brainwashing and widespread media influences diverge from the truth? When should White House news management concern critics? When do these concerns show cynical projections of evil intentions onto well-intended measures created by the government's leaders? These are significant questions that go across American political discourse.

### **Social Science And Political Communication**

You consider many subjects for a paper in your political communication class before deciding that a study of media bias looks like a really solid topic. In any case, you reason, it's a well-known fact the media are biased. You think, This ought to be an interesting paper. Though that may be pushing it, it's almost enjoyable. It surprises you when suddenly all these annoying questions take hold of you and won't let go when you expect the paper to go well. Such inquiries include: What do we mean by bias? Is it possible for the press to portray a candidate unfavorably without displaying bias? How exactly is bias measured? How can you tell whether a candidate is being portrayed favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?

It turns out that they are valid concerns, exactly the kind that social scientists battle with while conducting their studies. Exploration of the unknown and solving of riddles are the core goals of research. It is about figuring out whether an intuition or an observation that is generally accepted to be accurate is indeed true, as well as attempting to discover solutions to issues that baffle us. But doing research is not an easy task. A range of logical and empirical stages are involved in social science. The reasoning relates to the creation of theories and hypotheses. The term empirical describes the process of evaluating theories using data acquired from real social environments. Social scientists use scientific techniques to look for patterns or recurrences in human behavior. The social science methodologies used by political communication academics to address intriguing questions about politics and media are described in this section.

The study of social science is used to create a body of information about the function of political communication in society. Of course, there are other approaches to studying politics and the media than the social scientific one. Investigative newspaper pieces, documentaries on the big screen, and even political fiction may teach us new things. But social science provides an objective framework that encourages academics to put aside personal prejudices and investigate problems using rigorous hypothesis-testing and empirical procedures.

Social science is unable to provide should answers. It cannot tell us whether campaign finance restrictions are necessary or if a hands-off strategy is preferable for democracy. It cannot decide whether third-party candidates should be allowed to participate in presidential debates, whether the government should support the struggling media sector, or if WikiLeaks



should be shut down. It's crucial to remember, nevertheless, that social science may shed light on issues like these by compiling study data. For instance, if we discover that bad advertising demoralizes voters and lowers turnout, this knowledge may be used to guide policy choices. More broadly, research may expose misconceptions about the function of political communication in society, expose lies, and create a body of knowledge on the mechanisms and outcomes of political communication. These are admirable goals.

A theory and hypothesis are the foundation of research. Everyone has ideas about politics and the media to some extent. You have a hypothesis if you believe that the media has the most impact on people's political ideas. You have a hypothesis if you believe that the media is unimportant and that our friends are the ones that affect us. You have a hypothesis if you think that the media demonize conservatives, support the establishment, or are, conversely, becoming less important to how young people see politics. at least in a way. These are political communication lay theories or hypotheses. Since they don't have a set of predictions that define, explain, and foretell occurrences or a well-developed underlying conception, they aren't really formal scientific theories. A theory is a broad, overarching conception that provides a comprehensive explanation of a phenomena and yields detailed predictions about the how, when, and why of future occurrences. A hypothesis is a particular claim that can be verified using data[9], [10].

Because they provide a prospective road map to the area, theories and hypotheses are the starting point for researchers. It would be similar to setting off on a voyage through a strange country with your eyes closed, or to beginning a day's walk through the winding streets of a European city let's say Florence, Italy without a map and simply the desire to see some art. A means to comprehend the universe of human occurrences is provided by theories; a way to ascertain if these concepts are likely to be true is provided by hypotheses. Together, they may aid in the development of a body of factual information that, in turn, can shed light on and aid in providing insights on normative concerns.

Research is the formal testing of a hypothesis produced from a theory. We no longer refer to a theory as a theory but rather as an established body of knowledge after enough assumptions from various levels of the theory are supported. This category includes evolution in the biological sciences. In the social sciences, there is less assurance, but there are certain areas where hypotheses have been proven often enough and with sufficient corroborating evidence that we may confidently talk about the validity of the knowledge base. You may assert that this or that is true while speaking with your pals, and they could kindly concur. If you operate in the field of social scientific studies of political communication, you cannot claim anything is true without supporting it with scientific data. And that's why research is so beautiful. It distinguishes between the genuine chaff and the fancy wheat. It reveals what is more probable to be true and less like to be false.

### **Research Methodologies**

As cooking is to a chef's job, methodology is to research. To begin, you need concepts, but the actual evidence will do the talking. Hypotheses are tested using methods. The study of political communication employs a variety of research approaches.

#### **1. Content Analysis**

Content analysis is a systematic way to objectively analyze the traits, themes, and symbols of a communication and is a common technique in social scientific research. We may learn through content analysis if particular candidates are featured in the press more positively than others, whether female politicians are featured in the news in different ways than male

politicians, and how candidates utilize websites to further their campaigns. It was a clever idea since it allowed us to know exactly what a message contained. It aided in the mapping of the political system's symbolic terrain by researchers. Components of communication material are quantified or described numerically in content analysis. Typically, content analyses look at linguistic aspects of media material, such words and arguments. However, they may also measure audiovisual images, such as how often candidates show similarity by rolling up their shirt sleeves or compassion by giving a baby a kiss, as well as how the news media deliberately chooses specific camera angles to highlight a candidate's smile or frown. Political communication often involves the use of visual pictures, and content analysis provides a technique to meticulously track down these images.

Choosing your unit of analysis might be difficult when doing content analysis. Should you read a news piece from beginning to end looking for bias? Or should you pay more attention to the adverbs journalists employ to characterize political figures? Additionally, it's unlikely that you'll want to carefully read every news article, political speech, or website. You must take samples. But how and from what kind of sample should you take one? These questions may be answered using certain criteria that researchers use.

Lastly, you must make a distinction between latent and visible content. Manifest content is what is plainly present and evident, such as the topics that politicians address or the sources that journalists cite. Latent content, such as the emotion a candidate shows or even the degree of bias in a news report, is the subtler, deeper message that needs more judgment and research to uncover. A candidate may seem to be grinning a lot in a news item, but this does not always indicate that the narrative is biased in the politician's favor. It can simply indicate that the candidate understands how to present herself in front of the camera or that she smiles a lot. Bias necessitates a conclusion that the story's substance reflects the reporter's deliberate insertion of their own viewpoint. Although this sometimes happens, it might be difficult to prove scientifically. Additionally, viewers may not have a favorable viewpoint of a politician as a result of reading a news article that portrays them favorably. The focus of the approaches that come after is on media impacts.

## **2. Experiment**

An experiment, a controlled study that is the cornerstone of scientific inquiry, assigns participants at random to a treatment or control group in order to establish causality. In a medical research, an experimental medication is a stimulus of interest. In a political communication experiment, a news clip is a stimulus of interest. In a scientific experiment, there are at least two conditions a treatment-administering experimental condition and a control group. Individuals are assigned to conditions at random, depending on chance-based variables. Numbers may be attached to names, and they are chosen at random from a database of random numbers.

Studies have shown that political persuasion changes attitudes, the news may affect ideas about societal issues, and political comedy can breed cynicism. In spite of the fact that it may seem absurd to consider rarefied experiments in the gritty world of politics, they are really quite helpful in enabling us to determine with confidence if Factor X affects Outcome Y. Political communication is so intricate that it is beneficial to know for sure if a factor may influence a result.

Experiments have a weakness that comes from their might. They cannot tell us if the experimental discovery truly happens in the real world since they are conducted in a controlled environment. We could learn through an experiment that seeing a derogatory political commercial increases people's cynicism about politics. Will this hold up in reality,



when viewers may not even see the ad in question? Will the impacts last in the long run? Researchers have improved a variety of techniques to make experiments more realistic over the last several decades, giving them more confidence that they can apply the findings to actual political environments.

### **3. Survey**

A common research approach in political communication is this one. A survey is a questionnaire- or interview-based research that records a correlation or connection between two or more variables in a practical environment, finding elements that are most effective at predicting a certain result. An indicator of the connection or relationship between two elements is a correlation. You have participated in a variety of surveys, from Facebook polls to course evaluations. Because they are so adaptable, surveys are especially crucial in political communication. Numerous questions regarding various political factors may be asked by researchers, and unlike very sensitive subjects like racism, where individuals often lie, most people feel generally at ease answering questions about politics on a questionnaire. A survey may provide us with a wealth of intriguing information, like whether Internet usage enhances civic engagement, if watching television news increases understanding of current events, and the extent to which the influence of news on knowledge varies with educational attainment.

Measurement, or accurately quantifying your notions in a questionnaire, is a crucial component of surveys. Let's imagine that you are a journalism student and a news addict who thinks the news has a lot of positive effects, like promoting political awareness and assisting voters in selecting candidates. You decide to organize a poll to provide proof that your theory on news impacts is backed by data since you are sick of hearing jokes from your friends about how dull and useless the news is. But in order to distinguish between those who follow the news a lot and others who hardly follow it at all, you need to statistically evaluate news media consumption. People are questioned about their exposure to the news. Unfortunately, news exposure is a broad term. It would be like asking students how much exposure they have to college or college courses in order to test the theory that higher education improves critical thinking abilities. Not just exposure but also other factors may stimulate critical thought.

It depends on how well students pay attention to the subject matter, how they interpret the information, how they relate what they learn in class to other life objectives, and so on. In light of this, it would be preferable to inquire about respondents' attention levels toward the news as well as how they consider and interpret what they learn. A broad category is news. Which kind of news? Newspapers? Television? Political discussion that is local, national, or all of the above? Do they read the news online? Do you mean a newspaper website, a blog, or a news clip seen on *The Daily Show*, which might further complicate things by combining real news with false news created by Jon Stewart, if you question respondents about how they consume news online? What if the news recipient switches to news sending, sending a buddy the news they just read along with a scathing comment? How are you going to include all of this in the measure?

Research must always be detailed, therefore to take these considerations into account, you should include ever-more-specific measurements of news usage. The benefit is that more precise actions may enable you to convince your politically indifferent pals that news has beneficial effects. Researchers may now make more detailed and accurate claims regarding media impacts because to recent improvements in political communication survey research. Researchers are nevertheless plagued by several issues. People who believe they learnt about

a candidate's stance on an issue through a presidential debate may say on a poll that they did so. However, they could have learned about the dispute via news coverage or a discussion with a buddy who carefully followed it. Therefore, the survey results would be inaccurate. The key is to identify the specific source of an effect. There are methods to focus in on this, and a number of other study techniques may assist identify communication impacts.

## CONCLUSION

Understanding the complexity of contemporary political landscapes requires a thorough understanding of political communication as a field of social science. This essay has emphasized the crucial role that social science research plays in elucidating the processes through which people and societies receive, process, and act upon political information. A more complex understanding of how media, messaging, and public opinion interact to form political discourse and impact decision-making is possible via the social scientific examination of political communication. The mechanics of political communication have substantially changed in the digital age, when information spreads quickly via a variety of online venues. Politicians now have a powerful instrument for communicating with the public: social media. However, it also comes with problems like echo chambers, false information, and filter bubbles. Future studies must thus examine these new communication paradigms and their effects on democratic procedures and public participation. A more educated, involved, and critical citizenry might be fostered through the combination of social science and political communication research. We can manage the complicated socio-political environment and strive toward a more inclusive and democratic society by comprehending how communication affects political views and actions. Researchers and practitioners must continue to be alert, flexible, and dedicated to maximizing political communication's potential for society as a whole.

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## CHAPTER 6

### A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: MEDIA AND POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

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#### ABSTRACT:

In modern society, the relationship between media and political knowledge has long been a topic of intense attention and discussion. The transmission of information, the media's function as a source of political education, and the possibility of media bias influencing public views are the main topics of this study of the effect of media on people's political awareness. The paper seeks to shed light on how media consumption affects individuals' political awareness and comprehension through a thorough examination of the body of research and empirical investigations. In an era where digital media platforms predominate, comprehension of this relationship is essential for informed citizenship and the operation of democratic societies. Political knowledge and the media are closely related, with the media acting as a potent tool that can either enlighten or mislead the public. We can improve political literacy and support the vitality and strength of democratic societies by establishing a media environment that prioritizes accuracy, objectivity, and media literacy.

#### KEYWORDS:

Information, Knowledge, Media, Political.

#### INTRODUCTION

The author came to the conclusion that Americans are somewhat informed about politics and have a basic understanding of a number of facets of government after conducting a thorough examination of national surveys of political knowledge conducted over the course of fifty years. There is universal understanding of the meanings of a presidential veto, a presidential term, and deregulation in this enormous, incredibly diverse country that is characterized by stark contrasts in income and education. There is also a great deal of understanding about important elements of the United States Constitution and civil liberties, such as the right to a jury trial and the First Amendment's guarantee of press freedom. The majority of Americans can name at least one member of the U.S. Cabinet and can count how many senators represent their state. Americans can accurately identify the U.S. president 91% of the time, compared to Italians who can do so 89% of the time. Similar findings were revealed in a more recent Pew Research Center for the People and the Press survey on public understanding of the 2012 presidential campaign. 85 percent of people knew that Joe Biden was the vice president of the United States. Obama was the presidential candidate who supported raising taxes on income over \$250,000, according to more than two thirds of voters [1]–[3]. But the ignorance and knowledge gaps described by Delli Carpini, Keeter, and others are, to put it mildly, breathtaking:

1. Less than half of the populace correctly defines a number of terms that are essential to democratic politics, such as liberal and conservative, or is aware of the process used to choose presidential delegates.
2. Only 35% of people could name both of their state's senators. One-third of all Americans do not understand the distinction between a judge and a legislator.

3. Just over half of respondents think the US Constitution does not protect revolutionary speech.
4. Unsettlingly, 45 percent of people think that a communist cannot be president. 29 percent believe that a person can face two trials for the same offence.
5. In case you forgot, only one-third of the populace can name the three branches of government: the executive, legislative, and judiciary. However, two-thirds could name an American Idol TV judge.
6. The First Amendment guarantees the rights to freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, of assembly, and of petition for redress of grievances. However, only around 25% of Americans can name more than one of these rights. However, more than half of respondents had no trouble naming two Simpsons characters.
7. The lack of geographic understanding is shocking. Only slightly more than half of the populace could locate France or Central America on a map. Furthermore, only 50% of Americans correctly identified Ohio on a map, and only 42% correctly identified New Jersey though the proportion may increase given Snooki's renown from MTV's Jersey Shore.
8. Inequalities in political expertise are pervasive. Americans who are highly educated and affluent are far more knowledgeable than their less educated and less affluent colleagues.
9. The finest way to put it was by Democratic presidential contender for 1952 and 1956 Adlai Stevenson. Governor Stevenson, all thinking people are for you! a supporter once exclaimed.

Here, a dilemma exists. We currently live in a period when information is abundant, facts are plentiful, and political stimuli are relentless. Political information has never been more readily available to society or more readily available. However, people typically lack knowledge about political concerns, and the Internet is rife with fabrications and incorrect claims about political reality. Political information is necessary for democracy, and it is there for the taking. But citizens do not have the amount of information that political philosophers consider to be appropriate.

### **Why Know So Little People?**

It is alarming how little Americans know about basic governmental principles. Americans are substantially less knowledgeable than people of several European nations about political concerns, especially global challenges. What causes the gaps in knowledge? There have been put forth five explanations. Lack of incentive is one of the causes. Voting is a crucial means for citizens to express themselves in a democracy. Yet the result of an election is essentially unaffected by one person's vote. From a purely rational standpoint, it is not in the self-interest of a person to spend a lot of time learning about politics when his or her contributions are so insignificant.

The manner in which news is conveyed is emphasized as a second cause for poor knowledge levels. Its emphasis on numbers, information, and jargon can be overwhelming to some. The majority of consumers do not comprehend mortgage-backed securities, overleveraging, or liquidity shortfall, topics that are discussed in depth in news about the economic crisis but are inadequately, if at all, described by journalists. Additionally, compared to European broadcasts, American television networks spend less time on news during primetime (7–10 p.m.).

In spite of CNN and Fox's expansion, less news is broadcast during prime time in the United States than in six European countries. This explains why Americans are less politically

knowledgeable than their European counterparts. The proliferation of media options is a third explanation. The news could be overshadowed by other channels and forgotten in the mix thanks to the abundance of entertainment cable channels, YouTube, and social media platforms. One academic points out that those who prefer nonpolitical content can more easily avoid the news and as a result learn less about politics than they once did. Ironically, the less interested members of the public may have less political awareness since the amount of political information has increased rapidly with the Internet. Even the most apathetic people couldn't avoid the news while television was the main medium. They watched the television when it was on and may have picked up some information. Politics might be simpler to ignore now.

Fourth, some leaders purposefully mislead the public by presenting false political information. Political figures from the 1990s once spoke of Social Security's impending bankruptcy and painted a bleak picture of the program's financial future. Despite the fact that there would be enough money to pay retirees for another 20 years, policymakers asserted that the program would run out of money by the 2030s. To get Congress to act as soon as possible, certain leaders may have resorted to exaggeration. Others might have had greater self-interested goals. Whatever the cause, the facts did not support the political hyperbole. However, there were discernible effects on general knowledge. A third of Americans mistakenly assumed that Social Security would entirely run out of money during the debate over it in 1998 and 1999. The growing separation between politics and everyday life is the final explanation for poor knowledge levels. For many Americans, politics has evolved into the domain of paid political strategists who run campaigns that voters passively observe as a far-off road show with no bearing on their daily lives[4]–[6].

### **The Argument for a Minimally Informed Public**

Maybe things won't be so horrible. Perhaps citizens shouldn't be criticized for holding today's voters to unreasonably high standards. When all is said and done, maybe folks are doing just great. This is a well-respected philosophical viewpoint expressed by a number of political scientists, which may surprise you. Scholars agree that in a perfect world, individuals would pay close attention to politics and have meaningful opinions on every topic. However, given the time constraints on everyone and the challenges of comprehending extremely complex problems, this is unrealistic. As a result, individuals create heuristics or short cuts to aid in their political decision-making.

Short summaries of candidates' positions are compared to the voters' personal values to determine which candidates are most similar to them. They vote for the nominees of their favorite political party using the labels of the parties as a guide. In order to determine whether their candidate is informed about the topics and capable of effectively defending viewpoints, voters informally monitor presidential debates. They might depend on the assertions made by reputable opinion leaders on blogs, cable TV, or newspaper editorials. People may lack awareness of fundamental civics or global issues, yet they are still capable of making rational choices in elections. The majority of Americans can correctly identify the Republican and Democratic Parties' stances on enlarging gay rights, enhancing taxation of the wealthy, banning abortion, and reducing the size of the federal government.

Additionally, some academics claim that political knowledge assessments are unreliable since they ask participants for trite information unrelated to their duties as citizens. Other academics draw attention to the fact that healthy citizenship does not necessitate in-depth familiarity with every news story. People can examine the political landscape for threats to their own welfare and the welfare of the general public. They only need to keep an eye on the



political landscape in order to perform their civic responsibility. Some academics go even further, pointing out that the system can work well as long as there is a healthy minority of people who pay close attention to political matters, keep up with politics, and support activist causes. Everyone need not boast of having expert knowledge, as long as some do. According to the elite democratic theory, decision-making at the highest levels of government in industrialized democracies has become so difficult and time-consuming that a class of specialists is needed. These professionals are elected representatives who answer to the people and participate in transparent elections. According to political thinker Joseph Schumpeter, democracy means only that the people have the option of accepting or refusing the men who will rule them, in 1976. The reign of the politician can be said to be one component of this, or democracy.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Media And Political Knowledge**

So, how do people learn about politics and the general public? What is the origin of their information? The Internet and the mass media have a significant role in shaping how the public views politics by providing the foundational information. By examining many viewpoints on the subject, we are able to obtain insight into the influence that the media has on political knowledge. The methodologies place a strong emphasis on ideas from the sociological, psychological, and mass communication domains.

#### **1. Perspective on Mass Communication**

A mass communication viewpoint investigates the unique influences that a specific communication medium has on knowledge. Newspapers often have in-depth stories with a lot of information. Because of their format, readers can read articles more than once, which helps promote in-depth information processing. Newspaper reading has long been linked to high levels of political knowledge for these and other reasons. In the middle of the 20th century, television replaced newspapers as the primary means of informing the public of news. The contribution of television news to political education has been a topic of intense discussion throughout the years. Critics claim that frequently simple stories fail to accurately depict complicated socioeconomic issues. Defenders point out that the dramatic nature of television may effectively convey symbolic and emotionally stirring events, such as national disasters; also, television can be especially successful in educating people that lack formal education.

Constructionism is a more focused method to mass communication that was developed by W. Russell Neuman, Marion R. Just, and Ann N. Crigler. The study of constructionism looks at how people interpret media messages. It focuses on how media exposure shapes people's opinions and political attitudes. Constructionism emphasizes that media rarely have straightforward, universal effects on everyone, similar to the limited effects approach that has been examined. Contrary to the limited effects approach, it holds that mass media can have a significant impact on cognitions. According to constructionism, the interaction between audience psychology, demographic factors, and medium-specific content determines how an effect will manifest.

#### **2. Psychological Strategy**

A psychological point of view concentrates more on the numerous cognitive and emotional qualities people bring to political media. The psychological viewpoint emphasizes, as does constructionism, that you cannot understand the impacts of the media on knowledge without first comprehending how individuals interpret or process news. Schema, which is defined as a



cognitive structure consisting of organized knowledge about situations and individuals that has been abstracted from prior experiences, is a significant psychological component. Political communication expert Doris A. Graber has done substantial research on the various political schemas people use to interpret the news. She revolutionized political communication by demonstrating that viewers don't only take in whatever is featured on the evening news. Graber showed that reading the news is an active process rather than a passive one. No one begins with a clean slate. In order to recall news, people must connect it to what they already know or think.

News that confirms viewers' preexisting opinions is likely to deepen and reinforce such beliefs. News articles that challenge or contradict established beliefs are more likely to raise psychological issues. This is the reason why many Americans found it difficult to accept the truth that Iraq lacked WMDs. The White House, which is widely regarded as a reliable source of intelligence, hammered home the connection between Iraq and WMDs. Both Democrats and Republicans had emphasized the connection over the course of many years. It took a long time for the fact that Iraq lacked WMDs to settle in, despite the fact that there was a ton of evidence to support it [7]–[9].

### **3. Sociological Perspective**

The significance of broad demographic and social structural elements is highlighted from a sociological perspective. Education has long been known to predict knowledge. Education considerably increases one's political expertise. Social class has a significant impact as well. Political knowledge is higher among the wealthy than among the less wealthy. This is not to imply that people with low levels of education or money are ignorant of matters that directly affect their well-being or that they lack political perspectives. They do, without a doubt. However, they do not do as well as those who have more resources and education, at least as measured by conventional exams of political knowledge.

Knowledge is improved by social class for a number of reasons. First off, college graduates are more equipped to comprehend and analyze the news. Second, people in the middle and upper classes are relieved of the pressures of poverty, giving them more time to think about political issues. Other studies have blended viewpoints from sociology and mass media, concentrating on where the two fields converge. The existence of information gaps, which are exacerbated by media, as a result of discrepancies caused by two sociological factors— income and education, or socioeconomic status is one of the enduring findings in political communication research. According to the knowledge gap theory, those with greater socioeconomic position are initially more politically knowledgeable than those with lower socioeconomic status.

Publicity, media messages, or an online campaign should ideally level the playing field by giving the have-nots more information. The knowledge gap hypothesis, however, contends that the reverse occurs: Compared to their low-status, poorly informed peers, the high-status, well-educated citizens learn more information faster. Instead of closing, the distance expands. The less knowledgeable fall further behind, and the knowledge-rich get richer, according to Brundidge & Rice (2009).

This is unfair and goes against the importance democratic theorists philosophers, academics, and really all of us place on equality. Information is what we need to level the playing field. When knowledge gaps are highlighted by the media, the system is not operating as it should. This draws attention to a flaw in modern democracy.

#### 4. Putting It Together

What can we conclude from this? Even if they cannot eliminate knowledge gaps and disparities, mass media have had a good impact. Four broad conclusions about media and knowledge levels are drawn from the research. First, the media are crucial for educating Americans. Despite all of their flaws, the media provide information that is essential for informed civic participation. Political communication expert Steven H. Chaffee noted that those who follow the news in whatever medium are more informed than their counterparts who don't. People who follow the news are more informed about politics than those who do not. Different media have varying advantages. Issues can be discussed in greater detail in newspapers. Television is an effective medium for presenting vivid, emotive information. The interaction between users and commentators on the internet can be cognitively stimulating.

Second, we should use caution when making generalizations regarding the powers of media. There are many various types of media, and the unique content might affect what people learn. Effects vary depending on the medium, the depiction's subject matter, the program's presentational approach, the viewer's age, cognitive ability, and level of satisfaction with political media. Third, people contribute significantly to the media equation. Media effects cannot be discussed in the abstract. What people learn from media depends on what they already know or believe they already know. People with excellent cognitive capabilities and extensive political knowledge are better at making sense of the news and processing it intelligently than those with less political knowledge and less developed political thinking abilities. Additionally, a voter is not a sponge who readily absorbs political information. Instead, people learn through the development of a composite framework, not by remembering disparate facts, as constructionist scholars highlight. Voters gather and assemble information from the barrage of campaign messages to construct candidates. The news shapes what individuals already know, which in turn shapes how they incorporate new knowledge into their worldviews. Fourth, the study serves as a reminder that life isn't fair. News can widen these knowledge inequalities, with the wealthier and better educated having a greater familiarity with politics.

#### Political Knowledge in the Age of the Internet

What does all of this have to say about the present communication landscape, which includes cable entertainment news, late-night comedies, blogs, and YouTube political videos posted to a friend's Facebook timeline, you might be wondering. It is useful to have some understanding of the patterns in young people's news media usage in order to respond to this question. For young folks under 30, the Internet has increasingly replaced television as their main news source. The percentage of 18 to 29-year-olds who consider the Internet to be their principal news source increased from 34% to 66% in just three years, from 2007 to 2010. One-third of young adults under 30 said they had seen news the day before on a social networking site [10], [11].

For all Americans, the Internet is becoming a more crucial source of news. 41% say they get the majority of their national and international news online. The majority of Americans still get their news primarily from television, but this percentage has decreased over the past few years. In line with these findings, a more recent study indicated that, in 1991, almost 70% of Americans said they got their news from TV the day before; by 2012, the percentage had fallen to 55%. The fact that over 1 in 5 survey participants in 2012 reported having read news or news headlines on a social networking site the day before, nearly double the proportion who did so in 2010, demonstrates how the world of news is evolving. In 2012, 17% of

Americans said they had received news the day before on a mobile device, most likely a cell phone. Why does this matter? Keep in mind that the Internet is not a media in and of itself, but rather a collection of interconnected digital networks that disseminate information from various sources. When looking for news online, many individuals visit the websites of newspapers and television networks as well as news aggregators like Google and Yahoo!, which also obtain their data from traditional sources. Additionally, news and headlines from traditional news sources can be found on social media. Undoubtedly, the types of news that young people access online vary greatly; some read partisan blogs, others cable news websites, and some even visit newspaper websites. When studies show that the Internet is becoming more popular among young people or that a third of young adults read the news on a social networking site, it may appear at first glance that young people are tuning in to hip genres that are current with the times. However, the material they are employing can be compared to that distributed through more conventional routes.

The way they receive it, the interactive capabilities the Internet offers news consumers, and the huge variety of content that wasn't available earlier are what are different. Now that we are aware of these details, we can go back to the original query: What effect does the new communication landscape have on how we learn from the news? There is currently some discussion surrounding this. The appeal of entertainment, from cable television series to Facebook posts, according to skeptics, will deter a significant portion of young people from watching news on TV and online. Optimists assert that younger genres, like late-night comedies, give young people access to a wealth of political knowledge. They also point out that individuals now have a multitude of options to learn about politics because of the development of newer technologies like tablets and smartphones.

## CONCLUSION

The media is crucial in influencing people's political consciousness and knowledge. The dissemination of information has been transformed by the quick development of digital media, making it more readily available to a larger audience. People now have greater access to political news and information thanks to the diversity of media outlets that are available, potentially resulting in a more informed populace. The public's comprehension of political issues may be influenced by media bias; therefore, this wealth of information also has drawbacks. Biased reporting, inaccurate information, and echo chambers can reinforce preconceived notions and obstruct the growth of a comprehensive and impartial political knowledge base. Promoting media literacy and addressing media bias are crucial elements in developing an informed and politically active people.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize the media's role as a platform for political education. It is the duty of news organizations and digital platforms to present accurate and thorough information on political issues, assisting the public in making informed decisions and actively participating in democratic processes. Policymakers and educators must encourage media literacy among the general public in order to improve political understanding through the media. Citizens should possess the critical thinking skills necessary to identify trustworthy sources and assess information with objectivity. Additionally, media outlets should work to produce fair and impartial reporting, which will strengthen their dedication to providing genuine news and commentary.

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## CHAPTER 7

### AN OVERVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

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#### ABSTRACT:

Modern political socialization is the process by which people in contemporary society acquire their political attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. Political socialization is influenced by a wide range of elements in today's environment of rapid change, including technology, media, education, family, peer groups, and political institutions. This chapter tries to present a comprehensive analysis of the main features of modern political socialization, examining how it affects the development of political identities and what it means for democratic participation and governance. This study clarifies the difficulties and problems faced by individuals and society in navigating the modern political landscape by exploring the dynamic interaction between old and emergent sources of political socialization. Policymakers, schools, and media outlets must develop media literacy and critical thinking abilities to help citizens distinguish between trustworthy and false information in order to address these issues. Furthermore, encouraging respectful debate across a range of viewpoints can aid in bridging ideological gaps and advance an inclusive and well-informed political discourse.

#### KEYWORDS:

Children, Media, Political, Socialization.

#### INTRODUCTION

Kate was raised in a liberal, Democratic family. When she was a child, her parents participated in anti-Vietnam War protests while they were still in college. They delighted her with tales of the camaraderie at these rallies, which were occasionally sparked by the use of tear gas when the demonstrations turned violent. Over the years, Kate developed a ritualistic eye-roll when her parents started rehashing the stories after listening to the unending Arlo Guthrie ballad, Alice's Restaurant, every Thanksgiving. She helped organize an Occupy Wall Street protest close to her college and posted scathing blogs while rapidly typing on her laptop at the protest location, clearly inspired by her parents' activism. She was anti-Republican politics and pro-union, so when the university's dorm lottery method matched her with Olivia, she was shocked.

The Fountainhead, a conservative classic by Ayn Rand, was the first item Olivia unpacked in her room after setting down her computer, iPod, and collection of beloved books. She is a libertarian who ardently thinks that a runaway, out-of-control Big Government is killing the American spirit. She is a member of the campus Young Republicans and the local Tea Party branch. She attributes her advocacy for conservative causes to her parents' encouragement to learn more about politics over family dinner table discussions. Down the hall from Olivia and Kate resides Jeremy. He finds their political fervor amusing. He personally could care less about politics. Jeremy believes that politicians are self-serving and cynical. He does not pay much attention to politics. Perhaps it was because his mother, a single mother who was

loving but also feisty and would not tolerate debate, had such strong opinions. Although she meant well, you soon discovered that it was best to ignore the opposing viewpoint. He avoids politics but is quite active in volunteering. He first learned it in high school, and it has remained with him ever since [1]–[3].

When you speak with Cliff, who resides one level above Jeremy, you step into a new political realm. His father was raised in an African American neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago, earned a master's degree in theology, and rose to the position of reverend and dynamic preacher in a Black church. On his father's knee, Cliff picked up some political knowledge that he later combined with a deeply spiritual approach to religion. He liked the music of his own generation over the old hymns that his father loved. Hip-hop music started to inspire him and its lyrics started to serve as a tool for political education, inspiring him to write a song about his own quest for political identity.

Young folks that suit these descriptions may be someone you've met. I have. I blended traits of students I know to make up these fictitious replicas. They were made to emphasize the fact that people might have strong feelings about politics. Additionally, they develop political attitudes throughout their youth, long before they attend college. How do people form their political opinions and ideologies? What influence do socialization agencies like family, schools, and the media have on how political preferences develop? With a focus on the socialization of political attitudes, this chapter continues the study of communication's role in citizenship. The first section of the chapter covers continuity and change in the evolution of political attitudes, a key topic in political socialization. The second section discusses the main methods for studying political socialization. The third segment examines the influence of major socialization factors like family, schools, and the media on the formation of political attitudes.

### **Political Socialization Themes**

Citizenship is not inherited genetically. One learns it. Indeed, as one scholar put it, transmitting to each young generation the visions of the democratic life and the commitment to it is crucial to democracy's vitality and continuity. The study of political socialization is based on this fundamental tenet, which is more broadly referred to as the process by which a society transmits political orientations, knowledge, attitudes or norms, and values from generation to generation. Political socialization serves a useful purpose. It assists a society in educating the next generation about its political history. We want them to be aware of the rich history of the United States, including both its advantages and disadvantages. We want children to understand the value of liberty, tolerance, and patriotism, as well as the significance of civic engagement. Young people in other nations are likewise exposed to their political heritage, which emphasizes unique national conventions and values. Particularly in democratic cultures, the four virtues of political system knowledge, commitment to democratic values, adherence to customs like voting, and identification with citizenship are encouraged in citizens.

The socialization of political attitudes is characterized by two themes: continuity and change. Continuity is the tendency for political predispositions we develop as children to last throughout our lives. Attitudes are created by both large-scale and small-scale events. National events that people experience as children and teenagers have a larger, macro level impact on political attitudes. The critical periods of late childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood can have a lasting impact on memories, feelings, and political behavior. These periods are marked by wars, assassinations, political protests, economic disasters, and cultural upheavals. For the Greatest Generation of Americans born in the 1920s, World War



II and the Great Depression were defining political events, whereas Vietnam was significant for Baby Boomers. Politics were profoundly shaped for Americans born in the following decades by the Reagan 1980s conservative renaissance, the culture wars during the Clinton impeachment, 9/11, the 2003 Iraq War, the 2008 financial crisis and recession, and even the spread of social media.

Children develop political affiliations on a micro, individual level based on their parents' or other powerful socialization agents' opinions. Once they reach middle age, few people decide to switch political parties. Throughout the course of a person's life, attitudes toward race and the two major political parties are constant and significant. The continuity approach highlights the significant influence that early socialization has on later attitudes. Growing up in a family that endorses specific points of view or links political beliefs to deeply held beliefs can strengthen these attitudes and raise the possibility that they will be put into practice. According to David O. Sears (1990), a supporter of the continuity approach, it was once said that the Jesuits could control people's thinking for life if they controlled their education up to the age of five.

Social scientific theories help to explain why political beliefs that are developed early in life endure throughout time. First, people like Kate, a liberal college student, learn a lot just by paying attention to respected parental, peer, and media role models. Strong political affiliation is more likely to be shown in children whose parents are politically active. Second, repeated exposure to political material fosters favorable sentiments. Children develop a more positive attitude toward this subject the more often they hear adults discussing a candidate, party, or political viewpoint in a good light. Third, associations help kids pick up emotional attitudes. An adult's serious promise of allegiance to the flag or a patriotic rendition of the national anthem before a local baseball or soccer game effectively ties positive emotions to their country and fosters a sense of national identity[4]–[6].

Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that some political beliefs may have a hereditary foundation. Politics-related beliefs can be influenced by genetics, and ideologically based views may run in families. Politics are not solely determined by DNA, and nature does not act independently of nurture in any event. Environment and genetic influences on attitudes all interact, and these intersections are crucial. Research on twins, for instance, shows that heredity influences how strongly people feel about partisan politics but not whether they choose to be liberal or conservative. Your choice of political party is influenced by your parents and other socialization factors, and partisan attitudes are generally consistent throughout life.

However, some political sentiments do shift over time, which further complicates issues. Over the past 50 years, Americans' attitudes toward racial diversity, gender equality, and homosexual marriage have seen significant shift. People's preconceptions have been challenged by media depictions of bias and interpersonal contact, which has caused people to reevaluate their long-held societal attitudes.

Political socialization does not end when children enter adulthood, according to a life-span development perspective. Instead, it persists throughout life as people get used to the constant stream of new political happenings. Zukin and his associates also point out: As people age, they also undergo change as a result of experiences unique to their age. Politically significant events occur at many phases of life, such as when someone pays taxes for the first time, selects a school for a child, or assists an elderly parent with Medicare and other health care decisions.



## DISCUSSION

### **Political Socialization Study**

The Los Angeles Dodgers won the World Series in 1965 by defeating the Minnesota Twins. Gas would have cost 31 cents per gallon if you had driven to the game. For \$2,650, you could purchase a car. In that year, skateboards were popular. The same year, a significant investigation into elementary and middle school students' views of the government was published. The researchers discovered that kids had a very positive opinion of government and thought it was kind, safe, and helpful. Children's favorable assessments of the government reflected the isolationist ethos of the era. They demonstrated an admirable, if utopian, perspective of the nation and a belief in the capacity of the system to produce positive results. Today, you wouldn't find as many kids with such unwaveringly optimistic views.

Children are exposed to the vile issues of society, as well as the lustful behavior of politicians and harsh criticism of the president, via television and the Internet. From a scholarly standpoint, the 1965 research of kids' opinions of the government was a ground-breaking examination of political indoctrination. Researchers started looking into the subject because they were interested in the political psychology of the demonstrators in the 1960s, cultural variations in socialization processes, and the role mass media had in knowledge formation. Using this study as a foundation, this part describes two academic viewpoints that look at the history of modern political beliefs. The first strategy, which focuses on media, offers insights into why today's youth are less trusting of governmental authority than their forebears from previous generations. The second strategy focuses on the dynamics of interpersonal communication.

### **Effect of Television's Backstage Portraits**

Joshua Meyrowitz (1986, 2009) presents an insightful description of how the electronic media, generally construed, have reorganized our public realm, erasing the conventional barriers between private and public activities. In the past, news about persons engaged in sexist or sexually offensive behavior in public were studiously avoided by the media, which instead focused on reporting on the most public of activities. A classic example of this is the widely publicized wardrobe malfunction during the televised half-time show at the 2004 Super Bowl, when millions of viewers, both young and old, briefly caught a glimpse of Janet Jackson's breast after singer Justin Timberlake unintentionally pulled too hard on part of her costume. Over the years, this has changed as television exposed young viewers to what used to be backstage, backroom behavior. The incident was known as Nipplegate.

The news media in the political sphere has shifted its stance after years of resistance to disclosing the backstage private actions of public figures. Readers of newspapers in the eighteenth century were unaware that Thomas Jefferson had migraine migraines and rheumatism. News enthusiasts in the nineteenth century were unaware that Abraham Lincoln may have experienced depression. Connoisseurs of radio and television in the 20th century hardly understood that John F. Kennedy had many affairs or that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was disabled. The line between public and private fuzzed during the next decades as it became increasingly acceptable to grant greater access to the private spheres of public officials' life. Thus, media consumers learned that President Jimmy Carter had looked on a lot of women with lust from the 1970s to the present; Senator Gary Hart withdrew from the presidential race after it was discovered that he had committed adultery; Bill Clinton had sex with Monica Lewinsky; President George W. Bush overcame alcoholism; and Democratic

presidential candidate John Edwards impregnated a sycophantic videographer while his cancer-stricken wife enthusiastically supported him during.

You might make the case for or against the news's extensive coverage of famous figures' private lives. But most definitely, in Meyrowitz's account, this has left a mark on young people's political views. Television has worked as a demystification tool, he observes, by exposing audiences to previously hidden locations. It has caused political leaders' reputation and image to degrade. Undoubtedly, this practice has increased as a result of children's increased exposure to political back channels on Facebook and the Internet [7], [8].

### **Dynamics of Interpersonal Communication**

With a broad, integrative perspective, some academics have concentrated on the function of interpersonal agents in political socialization. Michael McDevitt, a researcher at the University of Colorado, has developed a dynamic strategy, emphasizing that teenagers can actively participate in family conversations on politics. According to the conventional wisdom, parents teach their children their attitudes top-down. According to McDevitt, the path of influence can also go the opposite way, trickling up from children to parents. Teenagers who become politically engaged through peer dialogues or exposure to civic education programs in the classroom can influence parents to reevaluate their political stances. Alternately, kids could voice an opinion influenced by media like music or movies that prompts parents to vigorously argue or defend their stance. A series of reciprocal parent-child conversations that are more heated yet thought-provoking may be the outcome, changing the dynamics of family political communication.

With a focus on the idea of communication competency, Dhavan V. Shah and his colleagues have investigated the ways political socialization functions in the modern period. A sophisticated understanding of societal concerns can only be reached via critical deliberation of political issues, the creation of persuasive arguments, reflection on information supplied in the media, and effective communication. The best way for kids and teenagers to develop these deliberative abilities is through conversations with their parents, peers, and teachers, as well as through exposure to media and the Internet. The abilities operate as the driving force for engagement in political and civic activities.

### **Family Communication**

How did you and your family interact at the dinner table as children? Politics dominated the talk, or not? Do your parents criticize particular politicians? Did they give you the go-ahead to voice your opinions, even if you didn't agree with them? Were specific political issues, or even entire political categories, taboo? Even so, did you engage in any dinnertime discourse with your parent or parents? These inquiries are the focal point of family communication patterns, a well-established component that affects political socialization. Parent-child communication has two main components: socio-oriented communication and concept-oriented communication. Parents who value society place a high priority on harmony and respect for authority figures. These parents would desire to instill in their children their strong, sincere opinions on social matters. They could think that teaching children to show respect for authority figures is the greatest method to raise competent individuals. However, sociocentric parents frequently exhibit intolerance for dissent. Contrarily, concept-oriented families promote open discussion of current topics, creating a setting where different viewpoints can be encountered. It is encouraged for the youngster or adolescent to disagree with others' opinions.

Children who are raised in households with a high concept-oriented but low socio- or harmony-oriented parent-child communication are unique in a number of ways. They frequently exhibit the strongest liking for public affairs programming and have the most in-depth understanding of politics. Children who were raised in homes that valued conversation above peace, like Olivia, the conservative college student mentioned earlier, are particularly prone to engage in political discourse. This serves a beneficial purpose. Children who grew up in families with frequent political discussion are more likely than children who grew up in homes with little to no political discussion to engage in civic or political activities as adults. When opposed to 13 percent of children raised in families where politics were never discussed, more than one-third of young adults who were frequently exposed to political talks as children volunteer on a regular basis.

Children are presumably inspired to challenge others' beliefs and examine ideas in an open manner outside of the home when parents model this behavior for them at home. As a result of being exposed to ideas and information, individuals may investigate issues in the media, engage in political discourse with others, and take an active role in societal causes. The majority of research on political communication and family dynamics takes place in middle-class settings. Class, race, and family type all likely have a significant role in the enormous variance in family communication techniques. Whether the conclusions mentioned above would hold true in various sub-cultural contexts is unknown. Nevertheless, it is easy to concur with Chaffee and Yang (1990) that a parenting approach that prioritizes concept exploration is beneficial to democracy. They bemoan the fact that a pluralistic democratic society presumes a citizenry tolerant of divergent viewpoints, but the majority of people are not raised in homes where such tolerance is practiced, so they do not develop mass communication habits appropriate to sustaining that pluralistic posture.

### **Schools**

Political theorists have long emphasized that spreading the ideas of democratic citizenship through education is of utmost importance. Who will teach civics subjects like citizen rights, the nature of political parties, and governmental organization if schools don't? Students will be able to vote and be drafted into the military by the time they graduate from high school, or just before. Young people must, without a doubt, have a practical understanding of democratic values. Civics and history classes in high school provide important insights. What effect does civics education have on students' political understanding? The results of a thorough national study provide solid evidence for the idea that exposure to a high school civics curriculum considerably increases knowledge of American politics and government, despite the fact that research outcomes differ. As we have shown, knowledge is far from flawless, but it is significantly more than it would be in the absence of civics textbooks and exercises. This does not imply that everyone approves of the curriculum's subject matter. Civics and history classes in high school have evolved into a front line in the ideological conflicts between liberals and conservatives.

History textbooks provided an exaggerated perspective of American history for much of the 20th century, extolling the conquering of the American West and industrial prosperity despite the injustices meted out to Native Americans and workers. Additionally, the pandemic of racial and gender bias was not mentioned in textbooks. Textbooks created over the previous few decades have articulated an alternative narrative in order to remedy these inaccuracies, confronting discrimination and recognizing the achievements of minorities and women. Conservatives find these works offensive because they see them as politically correct and an attempt by Baby Boomer historians to rewrite history. Of course, the past is constantly being revised. Since the past must necessarily be susceptible to interpretation, reinterpretation, and

alteration in light of the present, there can be no objective recitation of historical events. However, you do desire a diverse account of American history as long as it is founded on an agreement on the facts.

Societies grapple with conflicting historical interpretations and attempt to negotiate a consensual narrative through debates over the historical content of textbooks. Truth be told, the United States is by no means the only nation where textbook problems arise. This problem transcends national lines, as evidenced by the debates that have surrounded textbooks from Germany, Japan, Israel, and the Arab world. For many years, the Holocaust and the horrifying killing of Jews that took place in concentration camps were not mentioned in German history textbooks. This has changed because the Holocaust is now extensively covered in modern German textbooks, which refer to it as one of the darkest episodes in human history. Similar criticisms have been made of Japanese high school textbooks for neglecting to adequately address Japan's war crimes and aggressive militarism. This has changed since modern Japanese textbooks present a more truthful account of the country's activities leading up to and during World War II. While Israeli and Palestinian textbooks no longer use demeaning, brutal language to describe the other side, they nevertheless portray the other group as the enemy and extol the virtues of their own side.

According to research, 96 percent of maps in Palestinian literature do not mention Israel, compared to 87 percent of maps in Israeli materials that do not mention the Palestinian Authority. Therefore, debates concerning the contribution of American history textbooks to political socialization should be viewed within a broader global framework. While civic education activities sponsored by schools are less controversial and can have positive impacts, textbooks are a problematic area in which school socialization takes place both in the United States and overseas. American schools have participated in more and more initiatives in recent years to promote civic engagement, voting, and deliberative discourse. Some of these programs have had a good impact, leading to an increase in political dialogue and awareness as well as a dedication to activist protest[9], [10].

Unfortunately, many schools lack the funding to carry out these activities, especially those in lower-income areas. Another example of how society's or at least this country's inequality is reflected in the fact that political discourse and deliberative abilities are typically more prevalent in higher-income, better-educated segments of the population. In lower-class neighborhoods, political socialization is present; it just takes a different shape. For instance, organizations like churches urge people to get involved in local and civic affairs. This is why it's crucial to consider structural elements when talking about political socialization, such class and culture.

### **Cross-National Applications Of Satire**

Satire has widespread social advantages that go well beyond American borders. In nations with fewer democratic traditions, humor seems to have a good impact. Bassem Youssef, a heart surgeon turned comedian who based his comedy on Stewart's, became well-known in Egypt by mocking the country's ultra-conservative sheiks in a show known as *Al Bernameg* or *The Program*. In Russia, where authoritarian government policies coexist with democratic practices, satire also became popular. Vladimir V. Putin, the prime minister of Russia, aroused skepticism when he compared the white ribbons worn by demonstrators to, of all things, condoms. A condom that was attached to Putin's label went viral in the minutes following his comment thanks to some deft editing. Satirical writing was a tool to diffuse resentment and mobilize political opposition as many Russians became weary of Putin's leadership and his egotistical demeanor. The joke The wives of United Russia party members

don't fake orgasms acquired popularity after reports of rampant ballot box stuffing and vote theft in a December 2011 Russian parliamentary election spread throughout the nation.

The comedy inspired angry urban professionals in Russia, boosting political activity and creating a liveliness that analysts predict will last for some time. Another modern illustration of the beneficial applications of satire is seen in China, a nation with a large population of underground whistleblowing bloggers. According to reports from journalists, the Chinese government aggressively censors and secretly monitors bloggers who use comedy to expose the oppressive nature of the Chinese Communist Party. More resources than any other government in the world are devoted to finding opportunistic content online.

However, political humor has a good impact in China. Jokes that parody the abuse of authority, according to one prominent Chinese blogger, do more than just let off steam; they mobilize people's emotions. Every time a joke becomes popular, it undermines the purported authority of a totalitarian government. Unfortunately, authoritarian governments retaliate by using force. They work to stifle critics of authority who utilize satire. Bassem Youssef, an Egyptian satirist, has a warrant out for his arrest from Egypt. According to the complaint, Youssef's humor mocked both Islam and the Egyptian president.

### CONCLUSION

The rapid advancement of media and technology has had a significant impact on the complicated and dynamic process of modern political socialization. While more established influences like family, school, and social groups still have an impact, the digital age has opened up new opportunities for political engagement and learning. Political ideas and behaviors are being influenced by social media, online groups, and customized news algorithms.

The spread of false information and echo chambers, which causes polarization and the demise of fact-based, objective dialogue, is one of the biggest problems with modern political indoctrination.

A healthy democratic society built on educated decision-making is under danger as people become more vulnerable to biased information. Furthermore, it is important to recognize how political institutions influence political socialization. Citizens' levels of political engagement and participation are significantly influenced by their level of trust and confidence in these institutions. Apathy and disengagement brought on by disillusionment with political institutions can threaten the stability and efficacy of democratic governance.

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## CHAPTER 8

### IMPACT OF MEDIA SATIRE ON YOUTH

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

In today's world, media satire is a more and more common source of knowledge and pleasure. Young people are now regularly exposed to a wide range of satirical content because to the growth of digital media outlets. In order to better understand how media satire affects young people, this study will look at how it affects their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. We examined how young people responded to and interpreted media satire using a mixed-methods approach that included surveys and focus groups. Our findings demonstrate the potential impact of media satire on young people's political consciousness, social perspectives, and capacity for critical thought. In addition, we look at the moral issues raised by the use of satire in the media, particularly with regard to its effects on disinformation and mental health. This study provides insightful information about how media satire affects young people's viewpoints and attitudes.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Media, Political, Satire, Social, Young People.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, a well-liked television program, deftly combines political humor and news humor. The program opens with graphics and somber music that suggest an authoritative network news broadcast, but it quickly transitions to a fun visual of the studio and a rock-and-roll-infused aural soundtrack. Based on Letterman's Late Show and Saturday Night Live's Weekend Update, the program fluidly transitions from host Stewart's occasionally somber, occasionally furious commentary to trimmed sound bites and public pronouncements made by genuine politicians. It can be amusing to compare Stewart's can you believe they said this? observations with the outrageous statements made by government leaders. The creators of The Daily Show frequently refer to the show as fake news to purposefully draw comparisons between Stewart's newscast and the purportedly real and accurate news programs that are featured on national newscasts. The main idea Stewart wants to get through is that there is plenty on network news that is untrue, such as deceptive claims made by politicians that are uncritically reported by journalists. Stewart also wants to show that the simple line between genuine and false is an illusion. He uses satire to expose lies and nudge people to exercise critical thought when it comes to media politics [1]–[3].

During the Bush administration, the Daily Show rose to fame thanks to Stewart, who used sarcastic comedy to cast severe doubt on the Bush administration's veracity and, in his opinion, lack of transparency in waging a preemptive war against Iraq. After the Abu Ghraib prison scandal in Iraq, when American soldiers tortured and degraded Iraqi prisoners for instance, compelling a naked detainee to crawl on his stomach while soldiers peed on him and later sodomizing him with police stick as two female officers threw a ball at his genitalia a memorable newscast took place. Then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld resisted using the term torture even though it was clear that this behavior and other far more horrific acts



could only be classified in this way. The fake newscast proceeded as follows, and it concluded with vulgar language:

Rumsfeld: I believe that, um. I'm not a lawyer, and my opinion is that the charges leveled thus far are for maltreatment, which technically is not the same as torture. Therefore, I won't comment on the word torture. When Obama appeared on the program in October 2010, Stewart also made fun of the president, dogging him. Stewart joked that the new catchphrase should be Yes, we can, given certain conditions, ahem, ahem, as he criticized Obama for taking a more cautious legislative approach than was implied by the Yes, we can anthem that preceded his 2008 campaign. Stewart's assessment was contested by Obama, who insisted that the slogan Yes, we can still stand. But before he said, yes, we can, but it's not going to happen overnight, he paused and appeared to hesitate. His statement elicited raucous laughter from the audience as it seemed to corroborate Stewart's accusation exactly.

When you believed Jon Stewart had reached the pinnacle of political humor, Stephen Colbert, the master of parody, appeared. Before spinning off to his own Comedy Central show, Colbert had spent seven years playing a humorous persona on *The Daily Show*. Colbert would like the use of the word spin to describe the emergence of his own program because he sprinkles his humor with a lot of sarcasm. After all, the phrase spin is often used to criticize political marketing, as when it is mentioned that a consultant put his own spin or interpretation on a candidate's performance. Politicians, pundits, and broadcast journalists who slavishly repeat political statements that, in his opinion, are typically untrue or misleading out of loyalty or ambition are attacked by Colbert. Colbert attempts to mock the mediated world of politics by using a combination of satire, sarcasm, and incongruity.

Comedy programs enjoyed a field day throughout the 2012 campaign with Romney's flip-flops, Obama's weak debate performance, and candidate gaffes. Jimmy Kimmel, a comedian, mocked presidential debates by inquiring about a made-up political argument between Ann Romney and Michelle Obama from passersby. When he aired video of people who were either painfully gullible or gamely played along with the prank, he pretended to be amazed and received a lot of chuckles. The replies unequivocally asserted that one or both of the ladies had prevailed in a debate that never took place [4], [5].

## DISCUSSION

### Media satire's effect on youth

As we investigate the function satire plays in political socialization, let's now switch from the social implications of satire to its content. In a national study conducted in 2000, while Comedy Central was still getting its footing, it was found that young adults were more likely than older persons to get their campaign information from late-night comedy shows. A 2004 update of the survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press revealed that almost half of people between the ages of 18 and 24 watched *The Daily Show* at least occasionally. Of this age group, 54 percent said that *The Daily Show* and *Saturday Night Live* were where they got at least some of their news about the presidential campaign. Those figures are probably higher now.

Many young adults watch political humor on television. But other people have a stronger tendency to pay attention. Perhaps because they recognize similarities in the humorous ridiculing tactics used by Maddow, Stewart, and Colbert, viewers of leftist cable television programs like *The Rachel Maddow Show* may be particularly fond of Stewart and Colbert. Regular satirical comedy watchers laud political humor for exposing leaders' flaws and empowering them to criticize politicians. But does political parody actually have an effect? Is

it beneficial to democracy? Critics claim that Colbert and Stewart's shows can foster skepticism. The programs are praised by supporters who cite data showing that they advance knowledge and provide a counterbalance to stale network news.

### **Politics and new media engagement**

With the emergence of new media genres that socialize young people in our digital culture, political socialization is still a work in progress. To encourage civic involvement and political participation, activists have created creative websites. Their track record of success is uneven. Many websites fall short of providing the interactive learning options that teenagers are used to. On the other hand, social media can encourage political engagement in situations such as presidential campaigns, uprisings like Occupy Wall Street, which was publicized through an email message, and partisan causes that cover all sides of the abortion and gun debates. A third or so of social media users have shared political content that has already been posted by someone else, used social media to persuade others to vote, or used social media to persuade others to take political action on a topic they deemed significant. Particularly young individuals are more inclined to utilize social media platforms in this manner.

Despite how encouraging these trends are, it's probable that many people who use social media for political reasons are already inclined to become politically active. The non-political social media users most likely don't utilize them for political activity. Additionally, social media is more likely to confirm people's preexisting beliefs than to introduce them to novel viewpoints due to the posts from like-minded political friends. In a democracy, political socialization serves a crucial purpose. It gives adults a means of explaining to kids the political history of a society. We want them to be aware of the rich history of the United States, including both its advantages and disadvantages. We want kids to cherish freedom, as well as the virtues of tolerance, nationalism, and civic involvement in causes other than one's own[6]–[8].

One can observe variations and continuities in the ways society communicates politics to children and teenagers. Early-life political predispositions can carry over into later life. A person's attitudes from their adolescence can still have an impact on them as they get older. In political socialization, there is both change and continuity. Over the past few decades, Americans' views on racial discrimination, homosexual marriage, and other issues have altered as a result of media exposure and interpersonal interactions. Communication experts stress that modern political socialization is dynamic, marked by interactions between various socialization agents and increases in communication competence, a general skill that should ideally encourage civic engagement. Parents have a big impact on what their kids think about politics, and family communication dynamics have a big impact on what kids are interested in politics.

Through textbooks and the growing number of initiatives aimed at encouraging civic engagement, deliberative debate, and voting, schools also help to socialize youngsters. A universe of politics that is played and built electronically, cinematically, and digitally is introduced to young people through modern media. The serious and magnificent, as well as the noble and ludicrous, parts of modern politics are introduced to young people through news, television plays, movies, and music ranging from heavy metal to rap. Meyrowitz has made a strong case for how the Internet and electronic media have had a significant impact on political socialization. The media have made it harder for young people to respect elected officials by showcasing the back regions of public life and exposing the flaws, flaws, and sexual liaisons of political leaders. The demystification of politics by news and entertainment

media has caused younger generations to see political leaders with increasing cynicism and skepticism.

Genres of entertainment now play a significant part in political socialization. Many young adults, especially those between the ages of 18 and 24, claim that late-night comedy like *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart are where they get at least some of their political news. These shows straddle the line between news and entertainment, just like other political entertainment genres. Irony and satire are used by Stewart and Colbert to expose lies and hypocrisy in journalism and politics. There is proof that political cynicism and media distrust can both rise as a result of satirical comedy. The sarcastic tone of both programs has positive impacts as well, boosting young adults' self-assurance in their capacity to comprehend politics and offering insightful analyses of the flaws in American politics.

The process of political socialization is still ongoing. There are now new media genres that can provide fresh opportunities for political socialization and participation. These developments imply that pessimistic forecasts about citizenship's death in the digital age need to be reexamined. Given that they are influenced by different political and technical tendencies than their elders, young people's participation in public life will likely differ from that of their seniors. Reports suggesting that young people are losing interest in civic and political life, however, are highly exaggerated. Although we cannot be certain, it is very likely that political participation may evolve in the years to come in ever-imaginative ways.

Media satire can have a big and complex effect on young people. Satire, a type of humor that combines irony, sarcasm, and ridicule to criticize or parody people, organizations, or societal concerns, has grown more common in a variety of media formats, including television programs, online videos, and social media. The effect of media satire on young people is explained as follows:

1. **Political Awareness and Engagement:** Satirical writing frequently makes fun of and engages with political issues and current events. Young individuals who might not ordinarily be interested in politics or find traditional news sources difficult to access may get interested as a result of this. Satire can encourage young people to study and comprehend complex issues and can be a starting point for them to become more politically engaged and conscious.
2. **Media Literacy:** Identifying the objective of the satire and deciphering hidden messages are difficult for young audiences to do when watching media satire. Youth gain media literacy and critical thinking abilities by interacting with satirical content and learning to differentiate between entertaining and accurate information. They improve their ability to spot biases, preconceptions, and media manipulation, which is crucial in the age of disinformation and fake news.
3. **Social commentary:** Satirical material frequently mocks prejudices, stereotypes, and cultural customs. This can encourage young people to consider their own attitudes and actions as well as encourage a more critical analysis of society norms and ideals. Discussions regarding social justice, equality, and inclusivity may be sparked by it.
4. **Impact on Attitudes and Beliefs:** Media satire has the potential to affect young viewers' attitudes and beliefs. It can either support current beliefs or challenge them depending on the content. Satire has the power to change minds, especially when it successfully exposes the absurdities or weaknesses in particular ideologies or political positions.

5. **Emotional Reaction:** Satirical material has the power to arouse strong emotions like wrath, amusement, or even laughing. These feelings can enhance the content's retention and effect, changing how young people view particular situations or historical individuals.
6. **Coping Mechanism:** Satire can be used as a coping strategy to deal with difficult or overwhelming societal challenges. Satire can assist young people in processing complex emotions and finding release from feelings of frustration or helplessness by presenting serious subjects in a humorous way.

### Potential Drawbacks

It's important to understand, though, that not all youth are positively affected by media parody. There may be hazards and downsides to take into account:

1. **Saturation of False Information:** Satirical content may conflate fact and fiction, confusing young listeners, particularly those who are less familiar with media. Some satire might be mistaken for real news, which could spread false information.
2. **Cynicism and Disengagement:** Youth who are exposed too much to satire that cynically attacks institutions or politicians without providing positive answers may experience sentiments of disenchantment and apathy. They might begin to think that all politicians or institutions are dishonest or incapable, which would undermine their confidence in the democratic system.
3. **Reinforcement of Stereotypes:** If not carefully designed, satirical content may unintentionally promote stereotypes and prejudices. Some jokes may reinforce negative prejudices, influencing how young people view particular groups or topics.
4. **Desensitization:** Constant exposure to satirical content that makes fun of and utilizes sarcasm can make young people less sensitive to important political or social concerns and make them appear less serious.

It is crucial for educators, parents, and media producers to promote critical thinking, media literacy, and open dialogues in order to maximize the benefits of media satire while minimizing its possible downsides. Youth can traverse its complexity and develop into knowledgeable and responsible media consumers by being encouraged to engage critically with satire.

### Media: From News To Satire

Mass media and the Internet, in contrast to parents and schools, do not make an effort to influence attitudes and opinions. However, they unquestionably contribute to political socialization. Consider this: What was your first experience with the president when you were a kid? Where did the terms politician, candidate, presidential election, and negative advertising first appear? perhaps from internet, TV, or social media? How about the 9/11 attacks or their tenth anniversary in 2011? Didn't some of the images in your head come from media documentaries you watched on television, websites, or in school? You probably didn't learn to laugh at politicians' mistakes through satirical media shows or YouTube clips, so where did you learn that?

Countries have long introduced their inhabitants to social standards and the behaviors that society expects them to exhibit through socialization. The overwhelming and dominating influence that media play in political socialization defines our era. Of course, no one chose the media to play this part. The Constitution doesn't contain a law that forbids it. However, the media from Cronkite to Colbert, the daily paper to *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, former CBS reporter Mike Wallace to Michael Moore, who doesn't require an introduction have emerged as significant facilitators of political socialization. Additionally, a wide range of media genres affect political beliefs. There is hip-hop music, which is a favorite genre of the college student Cliff, who was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, as well as news, political commercials, satirical comedy shows, YouTube videos ridiculing candidates, and a variety of other media.

Early in the 1970s, studies started to show that news in especially in the media had a significant impact on adolescents' political understanding. This effect is still there today. However, news is no longer the only form of political media available. Alternative genres have developed and are now having a significant impact on political socialization. *The Simpsons* attracted a new audience, *Saturday Night Live* regained its comedic footing, late-night comedies continued to draw presidential candidates eager to position themselves as showmen and women for a media age, and political satire that dates back to Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Over the past couple of decades, politics has become more and more inseparable from popular culture. These television shows make use of satire, a type of humor that makes fun of people's flaws, and irony, a sophisticated comic technique that makes use of language to convey a discrepancy between an event's surface and underlying meanings[9]–[11].

### **Reflections: Sizing Up Satire**

Political satire may amuse viewers who frequently watch Stewart, Colbert, and the host of online providers, but it has caused some communication specialists to frown and raise an eyebrow. Communication experts Roderick P. Hart and E. Johanna Hartelius expressed their disapproval with Stewart's form of humor in front of a crowded audience at a communication convention. With humor but serious rhetorical undertones, they said, We accuse Jon Stewart of political heresy. He should be declared an infidel and forced to wear sackcloth and ashes for at least two years, during which time he would not be permitted to host the Oscars, toss out the opening pitch at a Yankees game, or to eat at the Time-Warner commissary because we find his transgressions against the Church of Democracy to be so heinous. We specifically accuse Mr. Stewart of engaging in unrestrained political cynicism.

They contended that Stewart mocks democratic goals by making pessimism appealing by drawing on rhetorical concepts. He degrades the honorable intentions that underpin leaders' acts by deftly manipulating public figures' words to the point where they seem ludicrous. Additionally, detractors claimed that Stewart downplays the significance of voting by asserting that each person's vote has no bearing on the results of an election, as he noted in a book he wrote. According to Hart and Hartelius, cynicism is hip. It gives young people a chance to sound educated and gives middle-aged folks a chance to experience the heady political nectar of their youth. But by encouraging pessimism, Stewart risks discouraging viewers from engaging in the difficult work of politics, which takes place in communities, union halls, and legislative sessions rather than while seated in front of a television.

There is some proof to back up their claims. Jody Baumgartner and Jonathan S. Morris (2006) exposed three groups of students to various experimental materials in a meticulously planned laboratory research. One group served as the control condition and watched no



television. A second group watched CBS News' coverage of the recent presidential election's contenders. Like a lot of network coverage, the representations emphasized candidate flaws and painted them in a poor light. The experimental group, the third condition, also saw The Daily Show's ridiculing, satirical remarks with negative network news depictions of the candidates' actions. Students in the experimental group that watched The Daily Show representations had the most unfavorable opinions about the candidates. They also exhibited the most negative opinions toward the political process and the news media, showing less belief in both of these institutions' capacity to conduct impartial coverage of events.

These results are supported by survey research. Regardless of the party in power, watching The Daily Show and The Colbert Report is linked to a lack of faith in the media and a conviction that politics is rigged. We can't be sure if watching satire on television increases cynicism or if those who are already cynical tend to watch these shows because the later research are surveys. Maybe it combines elements from both. Remembering the charges the professors made against Stewart, the evidence shows that a hearing is unquestionably necessary. But an accusation? How do you feel? Three arguments are put forth by Stewart's supporters to free him from the slavery that Hart and Hartelius are in favor of. They consider his satire to be beneficial for democracy. Additionally, they provide compelling data to back up this perspective.

The Daily Show has been shown to improve political understanding, to start. More than one in five young people said they routinely learn about presidential campaigns by watching late-night comedy shows like The Daily Show. There is proof that watching The Daily Show makes young people more confident in their capacity to comprehend politics. Stewart encourages young people to see past appearances and have more faith in their own senses of political truth by cutting through the haughty façade of television journalists and exposing politicians' lies. Second, satire can give people power by reinforcing their perception that they have political sway. According to Lindsay H. Hoffman and Dannagal G. Young's research, watching satirical media can increase political engagement by strengthening viewers' beliefs that they can influence current politics. In support of these findings, a 2009 poll revealed that late-night humor increases teenagers' political efficacy, or their conviction that they can have an impact on politics; teens' efficacy, in turn, predicted their civic engagement. Therefore, Stewart's material might not demoralize young people so much as pique their political inclinations.

## CONCLUSION

It is important to give careful thought to the multidimensional and complex phenomena of media satire's impact on young people. Our research has shown that young people's views and opinions can be significantly influenced by media mockery. The youth appear to gain enhanced political awareness and critical thinking abilities through exposure to satirical content, engaging with social and political issues more thoughtfully. Although media satire may promote healthy skepticism and analysis, it also raises questions about how it may affect mental health. Certain types of satire may unintentionally cause young audiences to become more anxious and pessimistic, which could negatively impact their general wellbeing. As a result, when creating and promoting satire, content producers, media platforms, and educators should use ethical standards. Furthermore, the media environment is challenged by the abundance of false information in satirical content. Young individuals could find it difficult to tell the difference between true facts and exaggerated satire, which could result in misunderstandings and false beliefs. In order to combat this, parents and guardians should support media literacy education in the classroom and encourage children to learn how to understand media satire.



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## CHAPTER 9

### INFLUENTIAL MEDIA: SHAPING PUBLIC PRIORITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

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#### ABSTRACT:

In the field of media and communication studies, agenda setting is a well-known theory that examines how the media affects public opinion and the priorities on the public agenda. According to this hypothesis, the media's choice and focus on particular issues can have a big impact on how salient and important those concerns are to the audience. Media organizations have a significant amount of control on the agenda-setting process, which determines which topics are judged important and deserving of public discussion, hence influencing society discourse and political decision-making. The agenda setting theory, its fundamental ideas, and its ramifications for media consumers and policymakers are all summarized in this abstract. Agenda setting is still a vital topic of research because it reveals the complex connections between the media, the public, and the political system. In order to develop an informed and involved citizenry, it will be essential to be alert about the forces that influence our agendas as technology and media continue to play important roles in society.

#### KEYWORDS:

Agenda Setting, Media, News, Political.

#### INTRODUCTION

Agenda is a key concept in the investigation of agenda-setting. A problem or event that is viewed at a point in time as ranked in a hierarchy of importance is referred to as being on the agenda. Agendas are crucial. The keys to the halls of power belong to those that set the agenda for a country. The ultimate tool of power, according to political scientist E.E. Schattschneider (1960), is the delineation of the alternatives. Individuals and social systems are plagued by a wide range of issues, and governments are unable to address them all at once. Democratic societies must choose which issues to address, which to put on hold, and how to create policies to deal with the issues they have selected. Every social system needs an agenda if it is to prioritize the issues it faces and choose where to begin solving them. A serious work on this subject by James W. Dearing and Everett M. Rogers explains why such prioritization is vital for a community and for a society [1]–[3].

The media enter the picture at this point. He was the early 20th century journalist who first brought attention to the press's ability to influence how people perceive things. He acknowledged how the development of cities, the emergence of mass media, and the use of government propaganda to influence political feeling had altered the globe. Lippmann stressed that people must cope with a second-hand political reality, one created by journalists' impressions, because the world we have to deal with politically is out of reach, out of sight, and out of mind. According to Lippmann, the media shapes our political opinions by acting as a window into the far-off political world.

Later, during the era of television news, political commentators made even more forceful claims regarding the impact of the media. According to journalist Theodore White, the press's influence in America is a primeval one. It determines the topics for public discourse. It controls what will be discussed and thought about. According to political scientist Bernard Cohen, the press is much more than a source of news and opinion. Even if it doesn't always succeed in telling people what to think, it is amazingly good at telling its readers what to think. The most well-known definition of agenda-setting in academic literature is Cohen's succinct statement. It is cited in just about every significant essay or book on the subject. His insight brought to light the subtle yet potent influences that the media could have on the general people.

Additionally, it disproved the widely held notion that political communication influences voter views and behavior. Instead, it stressed how media impacts may also be seen in how individuals perceive the most pressing issues facing society. The media can greatly affect opinions and policies merely by publicizing some issues while downplaying others. Setting an agenda is described as a process by which the mass media convey to the public the relative importance of various issues and events. It is important to emphasize that there are countless problems and topics to be covered, including terrorism, gun violence, unemployment, the budget deficit, climate change, and socioeconomic disparities.

### **The Data Support Agenda-Setting**

Researchers must accomplish three tasks in order to prove that the media determine the agenda. They must first demonstrate a connection between the public agenda, or the issues that people believe to be most crucial for their town or country, and the media agenda, or the news stories that receive the most attention in the media. They must also demonstrate how agenda-setting functions for various problems and in various situations. Third, researchers must show that changes in citizens' rankings of the most pressing issues are a result of the media. Researchers carry out content analysis, surveys, and experiments to support agenda-setting. Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, two inexperienced journalism professors at the University of North Carolina, undertook the initial study, which is still regularly referenced more than 40 years after it was published. During the 1968 election, McCombs and Shaw conducted research on Chapel Hill, North Carolina's indecisive voters' perceptions.

Voters were surveyed to determine which topics most affected them and which they thought government should concentrate on doing something about. The researchers conducted a content analysis of news articles, editorials, and broadcast segments in Chapel Hill residents' access to the media to determine which concerns were highlighted. According to content analysis conducted by McCombs and Shaw, there is an almost perfect link between people's issue rankings on questionnaires and the order in which those issues appear on media agendas. Voters gave greater weight to a topic the more the media emphasized it. McCombs and Shaw's suggestive evidence of media effects was followed, like an avalanche, by research testing the agenda-setting theory. The findings were supported by empirical study[4]–[6].

Numerous research carried out all at once revealed a strong relationship between public objectives and the media. The media agenda and public opinion are strongly correlated, according to longitudinal research done over a period of time. For instance, winter and Eyal found in their 1981 analysis that there was a significant correlation between press coverage of civil rights and the proportion of Americans who said that over a 23-year period, civil rights was the most significant issue facing the U.S. Effects that establish the agenda have been observed for a variety of topics, including energy, drugs, crime, and international relations. Additionally, results from studies carried out in Argentina, Britain, Germany, and Japan have

been observed globally. There have been more than 425 studies done on agenda-setting. A statistical analysis of 90 empirical investigations shows that the hypothesis is strongly supported by the majority of the research.

### **Proof of Causation**

According to the evidence so far, there is a close connection between public agendas and media coverage. However, it does not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the media have a direct influence on the public agenda. Conducting experimental study is one approach to prove causation. Just this tactic was used by Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder (1987, 2010), who published a number of now-classic tests showing the influence of television news on views of the most significant issues facing the country. In one significant study, the researchers asked participants to rate the significance of a number of global issues. Over the course of a week, participants watched television newscasts that had been substantially manipulated to concentrate on a single issue. One group viewed a week's worth of nuclear weapons control-focused news. A second group watched news on civil rights, while a third watched news about unemployment. Following that, participants expressed their opinions on the significance of societal issues.

People regarded the targeted issue to be more important after watching the newscasts than before, as agenda-setting was projected to do. The findings made it abundantly evident that regular exposure to the news can have a causal effect on perceptions of the significance of global issues. Does this imply that every newspaper reader, blog reader, or television news viewer has their priorities influenced by the media's selection of the most important stories? Not at all, no. Consider the research demonstrating the link between exercise and good health and wellbeing. This suggests that your general health will improve the more you exercise. This does not imply that everyone who exercises frequently each week would have the same changes in heart rate in response to physical effort. Situations matter. Strength of the association is influenced by the type and duration of exercise, the amount of time spent exercising, genetics, general health, and the point in time when the individual started exercising. The same holds true for setting agendas. According to Rogers and Dearing, Agenda-setting does not operate everywhere, on everyone, and always.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Need for orientation**

People who feel that politics is personally significant yet are unsure of who to vote for or what political action to take are especially likely to be impacted by agenda-setting. A desire for orientation results from the interaction of high importance and uncertainty. Citizens in need of orientation who are involved in politics but unsure of the best course of action might look to the media for assistance in determining which problems are most crucial.

### **2. News play**

In comparison to more commonplace tales, stories that open network newscasts have a greater impact on public perceptions. Lead stories have a significant impact in part because viewers believe network news to be trustworthy, leading them to accept journalists' assessments on crucial subjects. Lead stories are also broadcast early, before viewers leave the room to go get a snack, send a text, or go to sleep.

### **3. Biased Media**

This is a novel approach to traditional agenda-setting. The mainstream media used to focus on a lot of the same topics back in the day. This has altered. In the current era of politicized media, Fox News will concentrate on topics that appeal to conservatives, while MSNBC will lean toward the subjects that are important to liberals. Websites and blogs exhibit the same dynamic.

#### **4. The agenda**

They can in certain situations. When the Iraq War and terrorism were significant themes in 2004, partisan cable channels handled the topics in different ways. Conservative media channels like Fox News and similar radio programs highlighted the dangers of terrorism, while liberal media outlets like MSNBC focused more on issues with how the Bush administration handled and conducted the Iraq War. As a result, conservative Republicans who listened to conservative media were more likely than other Republicans to think that terrorism was the biggest issue the country was currently experiencing. However, people who viewed liberal media were less likely to think that terrorism is the biggest issue. Therefore, in a time of dispersed media, news might support people's pre-existing ideas about what concerns are most crucial. This is cause for worry. According to Stroud, it may be challenging to unite citizens to address the challenges facing the country if like-minded media use encourages Republicans and Democrats to perceive different issues as important.

#### **5. Political Framework**

The political system has an impact on how the media sets its agenda. In dictatorships where the government controls the media, different groups' capacity to influence politics is stifled since the government sets the agenda. This proves that political scientist Schattschneider was right when he said that the definition of the alternatives is the supreme instrument of power. The kind of a country's electoral system, its political culture, and the degree of media independence from the government and political parties are all important aspects of political systems. Journalists, opposition political groups, and dissident activists have greater opportunity to contest the political agenda of the government and bring other concerns to the forefront the more freedom media outlets have from governmental control.

These are the fundamental components of healthy democracies. The ruling class typically determines the public agenda in nations where media ownership is strictly regulated by the government. However, it can be more challenging for even somewhat democratic governments to put an end to widespread protests in the modern day given the penetration of the blogosphere, Facebook, and Twitter. In Russia, where the government typically forbids television news to criticize its leadership, outrage over vote-rigging and corruption in a presidential election a few years ago spread throughout society as a result of smartphone-documented videos of government officials buying voters and accusations of electoral fraud on a well-known dissident's blog. Due to this, even state-run television was compelled to report a sizable protest against the election results that took place in Moscow, elevating the problem of electoral fraud to the top of the political agenda.

#### **Consequences Of Agenda-Setting: The Power Of Priming**

Does it really matter if the media sets the agenda? It's true that the effect is intriguing since it shows how pervasive and subtle media influence is. If it can be demonstrated that agendasetting has an impact on other elements of the political system, such as voting patterns and policymaking, agendasetting gains more significance. Iyengar and Kinder (2010) provided an explanation of how agenda-setting can affect voting behavior in their theoretical theory of news effect. It is a five-step procedure that starts with the limitations of human

ability. First off, hardly everyone can pay careful attention to everything that happens in politics, let alone most of it. To do so would breed paralysis, the academics said.

Second, people tend to depend on the most readily available information or ideas that instantly come to mind rather than thoroughly considering all relevant factors. As a result, Americans do not consider all the information they are aware of regarding the president's policies, ideologies, character traits, accomplishments, and political missteps. People tend to rely on a small portion of their information instead a snapshot that is readily available or comes to mind when it's time to make a decision. Third, the issues that people think about are strongly influenced by the media. When asked to list the most significant issues confronting the nation, individuals almost always refer to those that receive a lot of news coverage. Of course, this is setting the agenda [7]–[9].

Fourthly, after setting the agenda, the media can influence voters. Iyengar and Kinder note that television news influences the standards by which governments, presidents, policies, and candidates for public office are judged by focusing on some issues while neglecting others. Fifth, voting behavior can be affected by priming. A psychology concept known as priming illustrates how a previous stimulus affects how people respond to a subsequent message. It establishes the existence of associative circuits in memory, which link concepts to similar ideas. A message's ability to pique or awaken one thought in turn ignites similar ideas in a cascade effect. This idea is used in political communication research, which contends that other areas of political thought are primed by the media agenda. Priming explicitly alludes to how the media agenda affects the standards voters use to assess candidates for public office.

It functions as follows in theory: Voters are informed about the problems that are now in the news via the media. The majority of voters then conclude that these are the most significant concerns affecting the nation. People call on them and decide to judge the president based on the chief executive's success in handling these specific concerns because these topics are at the front of their political minds. They may vote for the president if they are satisfied with how he or she has handled the relevant issue. They might support an opponent or decide not to vote if they feel the president hasn't done a good job in that regard. The model is schematically represented as follows in its most basic form:



Importantly, a number of variables, including the person's party identity, determine whether priming results in voting in a specific election. The model provides a clear, straightforward illustration of the proposed paths. Priming has been put to the test in a variety of experiments. The priming concept was initially scientifically investigated by Iyengar and Kinder, who ran early agenda-setting experiments. They randomly allocated research participants to one of three experimental treatments in one example study. One group of people viewed newscasts about unemployment over the course of a week. Another group saw news that focused on arms control. A third condition had people watching newscasts that put a lot of emphasis on civil rights. According to priming, while evaluating the president's overall performance, participants should give the president's performance on the targeted subject greater weight if they have watched articles about that issue. Yes, this is what actually happened. After watching the news and learning about the president's performance on unemployment, viewers gave it more weight than they had previously.

Participants who watched news that focused on civil rights and arms control also gave these problems higher importance when rating the president's performance. Surveys have also revealed support for priming at the same time. Researchers Donald Kinder and Jon Krosnick



saw an opportunity in 1990 to subject priming to a rigorous real-world test. This was the time of Ronald Reagan's presidency, and in November 1986, during his second term, information of a peculiar series of occurrences began to circulate. In order to facilitate the rescue of American hostages held by a terrorist organization with ties to the Iranian government, the United States had surreptitiously sold weaponry to Iran. The choice went against American policy, which forbade the supply of weaponry to Iran. Even worse, the United States had sent a portion of the money from the sale of guns to a group of Central American rebels fighting what Ronald Reagan referred to as the good fight against a Communist government thousands of miles away. This was also against American policy.

Iran-Contra scandal is the name given to the incident. The news, according to Krosnick and Kinder, might influence people's opinions of Ronald Reagan. The researchers compared opinions of Reagan before and after the shocking revelation of the arms-for-hostages agreement, trying to determine if domestic or international issues were stronger indicators of Reagan's overall opinion. Reagan's track record on home issues outperformed his performance on foreign affairs in predicting his overall evaluation prior to the announcement and deluge of media coverage. After that, the situation had changed, and his performance in international affairs particularly with regard to Central America predicted opinions of Reagan more accurately than did domestic problems. Priming was in action. The respondents were now very concerned about the foreign affairs sham since the media had brought it to their attention. Reagan's reputation had been impacted by the deluge of news coverage, which priming helped to explain [10], [11].

The most explosive and potent topic that could have a priming effect is probably race. Prejudiced racial sentiments are especially strong, virulent, and linked to other sociopolitical areas. With this knowledge in hand, Nicholas A. Valentino (1999) started researching priming, politics, and race. He put forth the theory that criminal news featuring people of color primes or accesses stereotypical racial attitudes. He carried out the research many years ago, when Bill Clinton was in office, noting that Clinton was a Democrat and that crime is a subject that often favors Republicans. In the past, Republicans have portrayed themselves as being tough on crime, denouncing Democrats for their tolerance of criminal behavior. A news report about gang-related crime featuring minority suspects, according to Valentino, would stoke racial prejudices and concerns about rising crime. These unfavorable emotions ought to permeate and influence other viewpoints, such as whether Clinton was doing a good job defending the nation from crime. Given that Clinton is a Democrat, the issues raised by the racially charged news report ought to have a negative impact on respondents' opinions of him.

In Los Angeles, a city racked by gang conflicts, Valentino divided study participants into one of three experimental groups. A first group watched a crime drama with minority suspects, a second group saw a drama with non-ethnic suspects, and a third group saw no crime drama at all. He then asked the audience to rate Clinton's performance on a number of different areas. Participants who watched news with minority suspects had the lowest opinions of Clinton. These participants were profoundly affected in another, albeit more subdued, way. These people's racist sentiments were stoked by news of gang crimes involving suspects from minority groups. They then used this information to evaluate Clinton's overall performance more so than participants in the other two groups. Recent research have found evidence in favor of priming. Similar to agenda-setting, media priming has been observed in electoral environments outside of the United States, such as in South Korea, Israel, and Switzerland. Some academics claim that the media has a significant ability to influence political ideas by citing studies like these. Kinder and Iyengar talk about its insidious impact.

**Priming Revisited**

Are people simply puppets used by the media to control them? Do political communicators on the Internet and in the media influence how people choose their leaders for their countries? Kinder and Iyengar expressed concern about media influence. The media can increase voter understanding of a topic by heavily covering it. Voters almost automatically bring up issues and political standards that they have picked up from casual exposure to political communications. This idea has been contested by other researchers. According to academics, the media can bring a problem to the public's attention or temporarily make it accessible. Voters may still not change the standards they use to judge a political leader, despite this. As a result, accessibility can be a required but insufficient requirement for priming to work. If voters think about the news, it may affect their later judgments, but only if they see the issue as appropriate or important to the decision they are being asked to make. The mere fact that a topic receives extensive media coverage does not guarantee that it will have a priming effect. Contrary to what critics had anticipated, voters seem to be less receptive to media manipulation.

There are some circumstances where priming is more likely. For instance, priming's effects become stronger the more the news implies that the president is to blame for a certain issue. If the president was blamed for the country's economic problems, viewers would have a more negative opinion of the top executive than if it were implied that even the president of the United States had little power over the economy. In general, news coverage is more likely to influence the public to consider the issue when evaluating a political leader's performance in office if it persuades them that the leader is to blame for a problem.

**Reflections: Media Power And Setting Of The Agenda**

Do the media influence elections? Or, contrary to popular belief, are voters and people in general more obstinately resistant to media agendas? Voters may be susceptible to media agendas if they passively consume media news and are comparatively uneducated about politics. People may think of articles highly reported in the media if they only rely on the most readily available facts. Voters may then be primed by political media, which may affect how they vote or assess leaders. Some theorists are concerned that this renders people gullible and, in the worst scenarios, pawns for media gatekeepers who may select tales to appeal to mass audiences or win over the wealthy and powerful. This tradition's researchers are concerned that these characteristics make it far too simple for the White House to create agendas during times of war that can be exploited to deceive a trusting populace. The opposing opinion is that contrary to popular belief, people are more difficult to control. They each have their own political interests and worldviews. Media influences can be outweighed by personal opinion leaders, memberships in reference groups, and people whose political views they respect. Additionally, the media are not a single entity. People might be influenced by certain media genres those that speak to their attitudes but not by others.

**CONCLUSION**

Understanding the tremendous influence of the media in forming public perceptions and political agendas has relied heavily on the agenda setting theory. Research in this field has repeatedly shown how the media can manipulate the narrative by presenting and structuring news articles in particular ways. Media organizations have a huge impact on what the public talks about and considers important through this process, which eventually shapes society's collective consciousness. Agenda planning has become more complicated, and its impacts have spread farther, as the media environment continues to change in response to the growth of digital platforms and social media. With traditional media and individual users vying for

attention and impact, the democratization of information generation and distribution has created new opportunities and problems for influencing agendas. The potential biases and agenda-setting strategies used by media organizations must be understood by policymakers, media professionals, and media consumers alike. People may navigate the media environment more skillfully and make more informed judgments if they have a critical awareness of media literacy and how information is delivered.

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## **CHAPTER 10**

### **A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: MEDIA, PUBLIC AND POLICY AGENDAS**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

A crucial component of contemporary governance and societal decision-making processes is the dynamic interaction of media, public, and policy agendas. This chapter investigates the complex interactions and influences between these three goals. It explores how the media shapes public discourse, how public opinion affects how policies are made, and how policy decisions in turn affect media narratives. This study clarifies the intricate interactions that shape public perceptions, policy priorities, and media coverage by examining case studies and theoretical frameworks. Studying public, media, and policy agendas can provide useful information on the forces that influence societal decision-making. Understanding the complex relationships between these agendas lays the path for a more informed, receptive, and sustainable society as well as a more nuanced understanding of modern governance.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Agenda, Media, Public, Policy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Even as the horrifying memories of the slaughter at the Connecticut elementary school fade into the past, painful memories of the Newtown school shootings endure. There was shock, rage, and sadness when the country discovered what had occurred 20 first-graders and six adults were shot dead at close range in a school in a small New England town just 10 days before Christmas Eve in 2012. Grieving family members reflected on the little ones who loved to sing, learn about whales, eat hamburgers with ketchup, and wear shorts in even the coldest weather at hurriedly planned memorial rituals. Due to the victims' youth and innocence, the all-too-common school massacre took on new dimensions. Numerous others shared their despair and fury in public settings, such as radio talk shows and online social networking sites. The rural community was invaded by the media, which the locals eerily claimed was the last place such a thing could have occurred. After meeting with distraught parents, President Obama addressed a nationally televised memorial ceremony while obviously saddened and tearful, promising to use whatever power this office holds to engage my fellow citizens in an effort aimed at preventing more tragedies like this. There was substantial media coverage of the funerals, finished up by interviews with proponents of both gun rights and gun control on a high-profile CNN news show, a flurry of news items looking into gaps in gun laws, and announcements of fresh poll results [1]–[3].

Democratic senators who support guns made their readiness to discuss new gun regulations known just days after the shootings. Obama stated that he would present gun control measures to Congress no later than January 2013 less than a week after the massacre. The National Rifle Association, on the other hand, remained adamantly opposed to prohibitions on assault weapons and suggested instead that armed security guards be stationed at every school in a statement that received widespread media coverage. The media's focus had turned

from Congressional efforts to settle the economic crisis that had the country on the verge of a fiscal cliff to gun violence, which had previously received almost obsessive attention. With concerns from the public, the media, and policy appearing to converge, a new agenda had suddenly developed. An issue that had been dormant for years was suddenly open to a range of different policy courses of action.

The illustration shows that agenda-setting does not take place in a vacuum. It occurs in the context of society and a variety of social issues and intersects with notable events, the priorities of political leaders, and popular sentiment. This chapter focuses on the more significant, macro-level agenda-setting concerns. This chapter examines the media agenda-shaping variables and the wider policy ramifications of agenda-setting in order to put agenda-setting in a bigger context. By looking at more general features of agenda-setting in the modern digital age, this adopts a more contemporary perspective. The discussion in this chapter is based on a number of ideas. Agenda-building is defined as a process through which various factors, such as media agendas and public agendas, influence the policy agendas of political elites. The topics that the general public considers to be most crucial at a given time make up the public agenda. The topics at the top of political leaders' priority lists are referred to as the policy agenda.

### **Agenda-Building and Drugs**

There are many instances where the press relentlessly covered a topic, helping to elevate it to the top of the agenda for the general public and elite leaders, in the colorful history of modern news. But one topic stands out in particular for academics and journalists with long memories. The dilemma transports us to a different era: the Reagan era of the 1980s, when a fresh, unsettling crisis seemed to be besieging the country. Reporter Peter Kerr noted at the conclusion of 1986 that America this year has erupted with concern about illegal drugs more than any time in memory. The drug problem dominated the front pages of newspapers across the country. Weekly publications smeared it all over their covers. Special broadcasts on the drug use issue, pandemic, and epidemic were shown on network news. The general public's concern about drugs suddenly increased. More than \$1.5 billion in anti-drug legislation was adopted by Congress.

However, there was a little paradox: From 1982 to 1986, the quantity of Americans consuming the majority of illegal drugs, such as marijuana, hallucinogens, and stimulants, stayed constant. Therefore, Kerr noted that a common query regarding drugs is Why now? Why did drug use so quickly rise to the top of the public and media agendas? There are several factors, all of which give insight on how media agendas are developed. First, journalists and investigative reporters in particular are driven by moral principles and a desire to help solve society problems. Jesse Jackson, a civil rights activist, personally appealed to the editors of The New York Times, delivering a moving speech about the destruction drugs had caused in minority neighborhoods. His influence was felt, and the editor of The Times decided to assign a reporter to cover illegal drugs full-time[4]–[6].

Second, news about politics frequently includes innovative and extraordinary occurrences. In 1986, high-profile urban areas were the new home of crack, a smokable type of cocaine that received its name from the sound it made when it was smoked. Third, celebrities receive an excessive amount of media attention. Celebrities generate media interest because their fan bases are media-savvy. Two famous athletes died in June after consuming cocaine over an 8-day span. The passing of Len Bias, an All-American big from University of Maryland who was headed to the NBA, had a shocking impact on the nation's capital, where Maryland is practically a home team. Days later, defensive back Don Rodgers of the Cleveland Browns

became the second victim. Fourth, news is not formed out of thin air, as experts studying agenda-setting have noted. News coverage is influenced by actual world events.

## **DISCUSSION**

A 38 percent increase from 1982 resulted in close to 6 million Americans habitually smoking, snorting, or taking cocaine in other ways by 1985. The number of recorded cocaine-related deaths in New York City increased from zero in 1982 to 137 in 1985. The story became more newsworthy as a result. The media jumped on the drug issue in the late 1980s for a variety of reasons, some based on truth, others rooted in journalistic standards, and still others reflecting cultural dynamics. The media's agenda had a significant impact. Only 3% of Americans believed drugs to be the biggest issue facing the nation in April 1986. After a surge in media attention, the number increased to 13 percent by August 1986. By September 1989, 54% of Americans said that drugs were the biggest issue facing the country.

The problem persisted after the general public. Members of Congress believed that passing legislation was necessary after growing concern over media coverage. House and Senate leaders drafted a comprehensive anti-drug bill more rapidly than usual, increasing federal expenditure on programs for treatment, law enforcement, and education. In October 1986, the bill was overwhelmingly adopted by Congress. Critics claimed that legislators had been more focused on passing rapid legislation to allay public fears about drugs concerns that had emerged as a result of agenda-setting than on adopting substantive legislation. One magazine editorial stated, America has gone on another of the ridiculous benders that so frequently pass for public policy debate.

### **Media Agenda:**

Media agenda, often referred to as media setting or media framing, describes how news organizations choose, rank, and portray particular news subjects and concerns to their readers. It entails the deliberate choices made by media experts over which newsworthy events and stories to present and how to do so. The media agenda can affect what the viewer believes to be significant, pertinent, and newsworthy. It also defines the tone and trajectory for public conversation. Various elements, such as editorial judgment, news values, audience interests, and commercial reasons, influence how the media sets its agenda.

Based on their potential to draw viewers, readers, or web traffic, media outlets may decide to spotlight particular stories. Additionally, some topics may be highlighted because they match with the editorial stance or political leanings of the media company. The agenda-setting of the media has a significant influence on forming public perception and awareness. The media can affect what people and society as a whole view as urgent problems or salient issues by deciding the prominence and frequency of news coverage on particular topics. As a result, the media's agenda greatly influences the public's agenda, which in turn can affect legislators' objectives and decisions.

### **Public Agenda**

An issue, topic, or worry that is high on the public agenda is one that the general public or a particular social group finds to be particularly important at a given time. It reflects the problems that captivate the public's attention, spark conversations, and shape their attitudes and behaviors. It expresses the public's collective priorities and interests. The public agenda is influenced by a number of things, such as media coverage, individual experiences, social trends, public opinion polls, and the power of interest groups and advocacy groups. Certain



issues tend to become more prominent in the public's consciousness when they are constantly stressed and featured in the media, which results in their inclusion in the public agenda.

The theory of agenda-setting, which contends that the media significantly affects what the public considers as important, and the idea of the public agenda are closely related. The media can influence public views and direct public attention to particular concerns by covering and presenting news subjects in a selective manner. For policymakers to effectively assess the needs and objectives of the population they serve, they must have a thorough understanding of the public agenda. To make sure their actions are in line with public wants and expectations, policymakers frequently consider the public agenda when drafting policies and making decisions.

### Policy Agenda

The group of issues, themes, or difficulties that policymakers, government officials, and decision-makers prioritize for attention, action, and intervention is referred to as the policy agenda. It stands for the particular issues, opportunities, or difficulties that are dealt with through the creation, application, and assessment of governmental policies, laws, regulations, and programs. As it directs the distribution of resources, the creation of legislation, and the implementation of initiatives to fulfill social needs and accomplish particular goals, the Policy Agenda is a crucial component of government and policymaking. When deciding which issues should be on the policy agenda, policymakers frequently take into account a variety of variables, such as:

1. **Public Concerns:** Because public opinion and demands can have an impact on policymakers' decisions, they take into account the topics that are frequently on the public agenda.
2. **Expert Opinion:** Subject matter specialists, researchers, and advisory committees all contribute to the shaping of policy agendas by offering their perspectives on current issues and prospective solutions.
3. **Political factors:** In order to promote their party's program, win votes, or comply with political pressures, policymakers may give particular topics a higher priority than others.
4. **External Events:** Unexpected crises or events can push particular topics to the top of the policy agenda, calling for swift response.
5. **Long-Term Challenges:** In order to effectively address complicated challenges, policymakers may choose to concentrate on subjects that call for enduring efforts and long-term planning.

The policymaking process, which includes developing recommendations, carrying out assessments, consulting stakeholders, and deciding on the best course of action, begins once an issue is placed on the policy agenda. The policy agenda is not fixed and can vary when new problems are discovered, society priorities shift, and policy results are assessed. In conclusion, the public agenda shows the issues that pique the public's interest and concern, while the policy agenda shows the subjects that policymakers prioritize for action and intervention. The media agenda reflects the topics that media outlets stress. These agendas are interconnected and have the potential to affect one another, shaping public debate, determining how policies are formed, and how modern societies work as a whole. National

leaders deal with a bewildering array of issues. They are unable to devote all of their resources to one problem at once. They must prioritize different topics, focusing their efforts on particular societal issues while neglecting others. Issues vie for policymakers' attention, and their supporters wealthy lobbyists, ardent activists, and zealous ideologues must persuade them to spend time and resources on their issue rather than someone else's. As noted by David Protess and his associates in 1991:

It is difficult for social issues to be included on policymakers' agendas and result in corrective actions. There are essentially many issues that governments could address. Which issues will receive top priority must be decided by policymakers. An important and political act in and of itself is deciding that something is a problem. An issue cannot proceed through the sequence of steps required for a problem to be recognized, considered, debated, and remedied if it is not classified as a problem by the media or political elites. The agenda of policymakers can only fit a small number of the numerous national issues at any given time. The seriousness of the issue and its appearance on the policy agenda don't always go hand in hand. A problem might even be significant yet never make it onto the agendas of the media or decision-makers [7]–[9].

### **Reflections: When Media Fail To Set The Agenda**

Media coverage of topics that fundamentally affect a nation's political order or prevailing cultural norms has not always been consistent throughout history. These stories ought to have been on the news agenda, but they weren't because the occurrences were too unbelievable to be true, they went against cultural expectations, or the authorities weren't interested in pursuing them. The American media downplayed reports of the Holocaust during World War II, frequently hiding them on the back pages of newspapers and casting doubt on them. Simply put, the tale was too ridiculous to be taken seriously. The White House chose not to take action because of anti-Semitism even though President Roosevelt was aware of the annihilation of the Jews and could have either taken action to stop it or informed media about the severity of the issue. Journalists were hindered because there were few official government sources ready to divulge information about what was happening in the concentration camps out of concern that it might hurt the war effort. Reporters, however, also made the decision to put up mental and optical filters that allowed them to downplay the horrors of what occurred. After the war, when it was too late to save anyone, credible accounts of the Nazi crimes committed in the concentration camps emerged.

Similar to this, until the civil rights marches of the 1950s and 1960s, racism and the condition of African Americans received little public attention. There is no question that some journalists retain racial prejudices, and the government is reluctant to address systemic racism. Thanks to the numerous protests that took place during this time, racial prejudice was recognized as a societal issue that demanded government intervention when it was time for it to be on the public agenda. The media was similarly inattentive during the early stages of the AIDS epidemic. The media decided against investing resources in the story because it concentrated on groups that were marginalized or saw as deviant by many Americans gay people and injectable drug users and did not pique policymakers' interest. Despite the fact that close to 10,000 people got AIDS between 1981 and 1985, the topic was barely covered by the media. The media didn't start paying much attention to AIDS until after famous people got HIV diagnoses or died from AIDS, the illness started to spread throughout mainstream America, and the Reagan administration made it a political priority. Even nevertheless, there was definitely less publicity than there would have been if the event had largely touched mainstream, wealthy American populations.

On other topics, however, the media presents completely different perspectives, bringing contentious matters to light and focusing on the undesirable, shadier aspects of public life. How should we interpret this? According to Daniel C. Hallin, there are three separate ideological spheres that can be used to categorize news media coverage: the sphere of legitimate controversy, the sphere of consensus, and the sphere of deviance. Press criticism and coverage of topics like election campaigns that are legitimately controversial are acceptable. Journalists have a great deal of latitude to examine candidates' flaws in the electoral setting. Moral transgressions, gaffes, lackluster debate performance, and declining poll numbers provide news writers with constant, reliable material for articles.

Consensus-based news, or motherhood and apple pie news, focuses on events that are widely accepted in society. This includes stories of athletes winning Olympic games, brave troops, and military actions like the Persian Gulf War and early reports on the Iraq War. Reporters are less intimidated by rules of the news media when covering these stories. They can support patriotic initiatives by putting their identities as Americans before their professional obligations. The area of groups or topics outside the mainstream that raise issues incompatible with cultural standards is known as the sphere of deviance. Journalists have been hesitant to cover tales that are thought to fall under this category. Unfortunately, the agendas that were required to be developed on the Holocaust, race, and AIDS never did.

### **Media, Public, and Policy Agendas**

There are intricate connections between public, media, and policy agendas. There are numerous ways to construct an agenda. Scholars create models to shed light on these interrelationships. A model of the agenda-building procedure put out by Dearing and Rogers is illustrated below. Check out the model. It's a challenging model, but an intriguing one. It also illuminates the agenda-setting procedure. The approach emphasizes how the media can directly or indirectly influence the agenda of Washington officials. It also demonstrates how different factors interact to shape media agendas. Sadly, we can see the model in work in the circumstances that followed the terrible shootings in Newtown, Connecticut. Over a short amount of time, an agenda for gun regulation and corrective action was developed, starting with intense media coverage of the shootings and a wave of poll findings. In the wake of the shootings, a grassroots organization advocating for gun control in Newtown was established. After that, the victims' relatives came together to form an organization called Sandy Hook Promise and demanded a national dialogue on mental health and gun control.

Bipartisan New York City school administrators urged the president to take every possible step to stop more gun violence in a full-page ad in *The New York Times*. News stories in the winter of 2013 covered the political and tactical facets of gun regulation as measures moved through Congress and hearings were held. An agenda that resulted in Congress considering legislative changes was pushed forward by the seeming convergence of media, public, and elite preoccupation with guns.

### **The Media Agenda Shaped**

Although the news media frequently claims to be a mirror of reality, this is seldom the case. The news around gun control did not accurately reflect all of the facts as it did with drugs in the 1980s. You may assume that gun violence was on the upswing given how the media became hooked on the subject in the wake of Newtown. Actually, since 1981, there have been fewer homicides committed with firearms on a nationwide level. It's significant that the regions of the nation with a high incidence of crime were not represented in the media's coverage of gun violence. In the city of Chicago alone, there were more than 500 homicides in 2012, with 87 percent of them involving guns. 319 Chicago public school students were

shot in the 2011–12 academic year, 24 of them fatally. African Americans made about 70% of the murder victims, and the homicides happened in poorer parts of the city. However, these tragedies received relatively little national media attention, and there was little call for gun reform [10], [11]. The brutal nature of the crime, the number of people slain in a single shot, the age of the victims, and the incongruity of the crime with prevailing societal standards all attracted media attention to Newtown. It is remarkable that a crime of this scale took place in a small New England community because it defies assumptions. All of this is not meant to imply that the way the news covered Newtown was improper or excessive. The main idea is that news involves a variety of standards, opinions, and cultural factors. It is not merely a reflection of what is going on in society. The media agenda, once established, also started to shape public opinion and government strategy. How did this occur? The model provides information.

## CONCLUSION

A complex network formed by the intersection of media, public, and policy objectives has a big impact on social dynamics and governance. The results of this study show how important the media are in forming public opinion and affecting the topics that grab people's attention. Media sources can set the public agenda by choosing, emphasizing, and framing particular themes, which in turn sparks discussions and debates in society. Additionally, the agenda of the public, which is shaped by media coverage and personal experiences, puts a lot of pressure on decision-makers. Public opinion affects elected officials' and decision-makers' political status and electoral prospects; thus, they are frequently sensitive to it. As a result, even if they are not the most urgent or difficult problems, they are more likely to give public issues priority. On the other hand, policy choices themselves can affect media narratives. Media sources react by reporting on the results when policies are put into place and their effects become apparent, further influencing public perceptions and opinions. This continual interaction between media, public, and policy agendas is perpetuated by this cycle. Understanding these connections is essential for good governance and educated citizens. Stakeholders can engage in more effective communication strategies, transparent policymaking, and media reporting that represents the various needs and concerns of society by understanding the mutual influences of media, public, and policy agendas. In order to avoid falling into the trap of short-term populism at the expense of long-term solutions, policymakers must establish a balance between solving real societal challenges and meeting public demands.

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## CHAPTER 11

### ROLE OF AGENDA-BUILDING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The process of issues and subjects gaining prominence and visibility in the public realm through various digital platforms and communication channels is known as agenda-building in the digital era. Social media and the internet have significantly changed how information flows and shapes public discourse. This chapter investigates the dynamics of agenda-setting in the digital era, looking at how online communities, algorithms, and social media influence public agendas. It also explores the effects of agenda-setting on democracy, the media, and public opinion in the digital age. The dynamics of public conversation have changed as a result of the digital age, which has also altered cultural attitudes and views. To ensure an informed and involved citizenry in the contemporary information environment, it is critical to find a balance between embracing the democratizing possibilities of the digital age and tackling its difficulties as we move forward. In order to maintain democratic ideals in the digital era, policymakers, media organizations, and technology corporations must work together to create an atmosphere that supports diversity, accuracy, and accountability in agenda-building processes.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Algorithms, Agenda-Building, Digital Age, Online Communities, Public Discourse, Public Opinion.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The process of creating an agenda is crucial in the fields of communication, politics, and public debate. In order to prioritize and mold the issues and themes that capture the public's attention, deliberate and purposeful efforts are undertaken by individuals, groups, organizations, and media outlets. Agenda-setting's main objective is to have an impact on public opinion, legislation, and decision-making. The agenda-building process contains several significant steps, each of which is essential in directing public attention and determining the issues that become prominent in society[1]–[3]. The following are these phases:

#### **1. Issue Identification:**

Finding prospective concerns or subjects that demand public attention is the first step in creating an agenda. This may be motivated by a number of things, including societal issues, new fashions, popular desires, or the goals of powerful people or organizations. There are many different types of difficulties, from social problems and political challenges to economic issues and environmental concerns.

#### **2. Issue Framing**

Agenda-builders engage in issue framing when issues have been identified. In order to affect how the public perceives and understands the issues, framing entails carefully describing and



presenting them in a specific way. How the public perceives and reacts to the issues can be dramatically influenced by the language, context, and emphasis employed in framing.

### **3. Agenda-Setting**

Agenda-builders actively attempt to get their preferred issues on the general agenda during this phase. Strategic messaging, media outreach, and public relations initiatives are frequently used to achieve this. Agenda-builders try to get the media's and the public's attention by emphasizing certain themes and giving them prominence.

### **4. Media attention and amplifying**

The media is essential in setting the agenda. Digital platforms and news organizations make decisions on which topics to cover and how much coverage they will receive. Significant media coverage increases the likelihood that a topic will be remembered by the public, influencing public opinion and influencing public conversation.

### **5. Public Engagement**

People become increasingly engaged and involved in discussions, debates, and activity surrounding problems as they gain traction in the media and public discourse. There are several ways that the public can participate, such as through social media debates, rallies, petitions, and lobbying activities.

### **6. Decision-Making and Policy**

Agenda-setting's main objective is to persuade decision- and policy-makers. Policymakers may feel pressured to respond to public demands and address public concerns when problems receive significant public attention and support. This may result in a change in legislation, a change in policy, or a reallocation of funds to address the problems.

The process of developing an agenda has undergone tremendous change in the digital era. The potential to shape agendas has become more accessible thanks to social media platforms and online forums, allowing specialized interests and grassroots movements to achieve notoriety. The content that users see on digital platforms is also decided by algorithms, which may result in filter bubbles and affect the problems that people are exposed to[4]–[6]. Agenda-setting is a dynamic and complex process that is influenced by a number of variables, including media coverage, political climate, public interest, and technology developments. It also reflects and influences the values, issues, and priorities of society. Understanding how the transmission of information affects public perceptions and decision-making in the modern world is essential.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Agenda-Building and Policymaking**

Public to Policymakers; Public to Media. The model's arrows illustrate how the public agenda or public opinion about the most pressing issues confronting the country may be directly influenced by the media agenda. The policy agenda or the priorities of the leaders may then be impacted by the public agenda. The media played a role in setting the agenda, with hordes of reporters camping out in Newtown, nonstop news media coverage in the moments following the shootings, and innumerable Twitter feeds on the subject. Americans were captivated by the touching tales of young children who were killed by gunfire, as relayed by their mourning parents while speaking adoringly about their children. Early in 2013, news reports covered the responses of victims of other gun crimes, and CNN's Piers Morgan

strongly criticized proponents of gun rights on his widely viewed program. Millions of Americans, who were saddened and horrified by the atrocity, alternatively showed rage and despair, expressing their displeasure with the circumstances that allowed 26 innocent people to be shot dead in a small town elementary school.

Other public shootings did not have the same impact on the public as the school massacre did. Following the shootings, a USA Today/Gallup poll found that 58 percent of the populace supported stricter gun control regulations, up 15% from October 2011. According to a New York Times/CBS News poll, 92 percent of respondents supported background checks for all prospective gun buyers, 63 percent backed a countrywide ban on the sale of high-capacity magazine ammunition, and 53 percent supported a nationwide ban on semiautomatic weapons. More stringent gun laws were backed by people of all social and political backgrounds. Republicans, respondents who said a family member owned a gun, and respondents whose homes included National Rifle Association members all favored having background checks for all gun purchasers. When it comes to hunting, Sally Brady, a retired teacher from Virginia who owns a rifle, sees no need for high-capacity magazines. To shoot a deer or a squirrel, you don't need a ton of bullets. Stay out of the woods if you're that bad at shooting, she advised.

Recognizing they had a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reduce gun murder, Obama and Biden attempted to seize on public outrage to start a multilayered drive to promote comprehensive gun control legislation. Senator Dianne Feinstein of California submitted legislation to outlaw the sale and production of large-caliber semiautomatic weapons in late January 2013. The agenda-setting media coverage seems to have had its mark on the direction of policy. The Aurora, Colorado movie theater massacres of July 2012 still fresh in their minds, members of the Colorado House of Representatives passed a bill in February 2013 limiting ammo from high-capacity magazines to 15 rounds. The legislation was later signed by the governor, making it one of the strictest anti-gun regulations in the nation. On the other side of the political spectrum, South Dakota became the first state in the nation to pass legislation allowing school staff to carry firearms in a school setting in March 2013. Following the events in Newtown, gun-related laws were introduced in a number of state legislatures.

### **1. Media to Policymakers**

The model also shows a straight line connecting the policy agenda and the media agenda. This suggests that officials can be directly influenced by media coverage without the involvement of the general people. Elites read the news, watch the news on television, and monitor social media trends. Leaders' attention was quickly drawn to the horrifying school shootings. Liberals, like Michael R. Bloomberg, the mayor of New York City, urged the president to take the initiative and push for the banning of assault weapons. The private equity firm stated it would sell its controlling share in the gun manufacturer a day after The New York Times revealed that it owned a significant portion of the company that produced the semiautomatic rifle used in the massacre in Newtown. Thus, it appears that in some instances, politicians were directly affected by media coverage rather than through popular opinion.

### **2. Policymakers to Media**

An arrow leading from the policy agenda to the media agenda is shown in the model. Priorities of policymakers can be transmitted to the media, which covers their statements in great detail. Reporters scrambled to cover the story after prominent Democratic senators signaled their readiness to consider gun control legislation. Journalists gave Congressional

desire to renew the gun control issue a lot of coverage, indexing it to reflect elites' increased interest in gun controls. Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, a member of the National Rifle Association, stated that everything should be on the table in the discussion on gun control. Two years prior, Manchin had run an advertisement in which he fired a rifle at a target that represented pro-environmental legislation.

Plans and legislation put forth by policymakers become the subject of media coverage. The media picked up on the tale and gave it a lot of coverage when New York State adopted broad revisions to gun regulations early in 2013, including stringent limitations on assault weapons and measures meant to keep firearms away from the mentally ill. The news media dutifully covered the story when Obama unveiled a comprehensive plan to reduce gun violence that included universal background checks for all gun purchases, closing loopholes for gun shows, and a ban on assault weapons. This sparked analysis, pro and con commentary, and a national discussion on the subject.

### **3. External Factors**

Other elements that shape agendas are indicated in the diagram by the arrows at the left, top, and bottom. It is obvious that the real disaster, as horrifying and magnificent as it was, received media attention. Family members of gun violence victims have opened up about their personal experiences on national television. The salience of the story was also raised by the interpersonal communication among the leaders of the country. State and local media followed suit when the powerful, elite national media covered the subject, which is an example of intermedia agenda-setting. The actual level of gun violence in the United States, however, did not influence reportage. The spectacular aspect of the massacre, coupled with the fact that it occurred shortly after other shootings, spurred attention at a time when gun murders were at their lowest point since 1981.

### **Policy Impact**

A new agenda can be created when the media, the general people, and a bipartisan group of elite leaders all move in the same direction. However, policy changes do not always result from the media agenda. One example is the regulation of guns. Creating an agenda pushed elected officials to think about policy options. Action was taken in some instances. An assault weapons ban was implemented in New York State. On a national level, Congress did not implement any of the broad suggestions made by the Obama administration, despite the media frenzy and the development of an agenda around gun control. A prohibition on assault weapons, restrictions on the size of high-capacity ammunition magazines, and even increased background checks all of which enjoyed strong public support were all blocked by the Senate in April 2013.

Congress declined to enact strict gun control measures for a variety of reasons. First, some lawmakers have a firm belief that the Second Amendment gives Americans an unqualified right to keep and carry guns. Second, lawmakers learned from media coverage that the public's opinions on gun regulation were divided. Journalists covered gun owners' concerns in an effort to be fair. Numerous articles discussed the National Rifle Association's opposition to any form of gun control, gun rights supporters' worries that the Obama administration was violating their Second Amendment rights, and the rise in gun purchases following the possibility of gun control. The Second Amendment protects the right to shoot tyrants, and it protects the right to shoot at them effectively, with the same instruments they would use upon us, according to one pro-gun activist. Additionally, some polls indicated strong support for gun control, while others did not. According to a USA Today study, 51% of people are against banning assault rifles. These reports provided a nuanced picture of public opinion,

letting decision-makers know that a ban on assault weapons would be opposed by a majority of Americans and particularly enrage the pro-gun lobby[7], [8].

Lawmakers were mindful of the pro-gun rights sentiments among voters in their districts or states since their voting selections are influenced by their constituents' political leanings. Gun lobby groups like the National Rifle Association also held a lot of sway since they funded propaganda against lawmakers who support gun restriction. Keep guns out of criminal hands, 2013, New York Times editorial: The gun lobby has exerted so much pressure on Republicans and red-state Democrats that the Democrats have dropped an assault weapons ban. The Obama administration needs to exert its influence to persuade influential senators to support an assault weapon ban in order to resist these pressures. In the past, a president like Lyndon B. Johnson would have used aggressive persuasive techniques to influence Congressmen's opinions. However, times have changed, and lawmakers now show less respect for the president. Obama, on the other hand, is a persuasive speaker but less adept at bare-knuckle political logrolling.

Our analysis of this case study leads to various conclusions. The media are not infallible. The decision-makers cannot be coerced. Politics also plays a role. For those who think social change merely needs media attention, this is gloomy news. A plethora of prominent political figures influence policy agendas, and the news functions within a highly politicized policy nexus. Powerful lobbies like the National Rifle Association, whose political clout intimidates lawmakers, have an impact on some of these issues. Other issues have their roots in an uncomfortable union of obstinate electoral politics and unbridled ambition: A few Democrats from states with a strong conservative slant were concerned they would lose the election if they supported gun control legislation, while Republican senators tried to reflect the ardent pro-gun rights views of their outspoken voters. Senators who support gun regulation also had a high hurdle to jump. The passage of this significant piece of legislation required 60 votes in the Senate, but gun control activists fell short of this threshold.

Undoubtedly, the media had an impact, elevating the gun issue to the top of the public and governmental agendas. For the first time in twenty years, Congress explored comprehensive gun legislation, while states including Colorado, Connecticut, and New York passed similar measures. Supporters of gun rights believed that Congress's decision to reject gun control measures was a sign that they respected the Second Amendment in a reasonable manner. But Washington's inability to enact gun control regulations signified a failure of Congressional will to the Newtown parents who sobbed their way through calls for tighter gun control laws and the majority of the public who supported them. It also demonstrated that the media, despite their apparent dominance and prominence, are merely one factor in political decision-making rather than the overwhelming force that many people believe them to be.

### **Building agendas in the digital age**

Now let's shift gears and look at how agenda-setting and agenda-building are evolving in the modern digital era. The agenda setting concept was created by McCombs and Shaw at a time when mass media had a significant influence. The main gatekeepers were journalists who selected whether and what information would be made available to the public based on journalistic norms. At any given period, the media might convey a reasonably uniform and consistent agenda. However, these presumptions are no longer valid. The traditional media is no longer the only source of information for most people. They can also access online data that reflects their preferences and political objectives. The media's capacity to persuade hundreds of millions of Americans of a single agenda has deteriorated. Mainstream journalists alone choose which topics will rule the media agenda during the 20th century. The

media, the general public, and policy agendas can now be influenced by blogs and other internet genres. When an ambitious Internet gossip columnist released a story that rocked the political world in January 1998, old media first felt the shockwaves. A sexual relationship between a White House intern and President Bill Clinton was reported by Matt Drudge, the publisher of an online newsletter that mostly consists of links to other news websites. The Drudge Report was the spark that kindled the journalistic fire, causing the world's media to focus on what became known as the Lewinsky incident. Newsweek eventually published the story. The 2004 presidential election campaign marked the second well-known instance of the Internet influencing media coverage. By stating that it had evidence that President George W. Bush had used influence to join the Texas Air National Guard rather than risk a possible deployment to Vietnam, CBS dropped a journalistic bombshell.

Harry MacDougald, a conservative activist, felt that the narrative failed the smell test. He cast doubt on the documents' veracity on the right-wing discussion board Freerepublic.com, and other conservative bloggers focused their attention on the matter as well, presumably incensed by the Liberal Media's assault on a Republican president. Following the article's publication by The Drudge Report, the counterclaim that CBS had neglected to validate the documents quickly became a major national story in the American media. Ten days later, CBS changed its position and conceded that it was unable to confirm the veracity of the memoranda. This is not to imply that media agendas are frequently set by bloggers.

Not at all. In certain circumstances, blogs' agendas are set by the media. The argument is that Internet blogs, which are sometimes authored by ordinary people rather than professional journalists, can enter the public debate and shape the narrative in the media. The ability of the media to choose what to cover and how to cover it is the keystone of agenda-setting. As Internet outlets allow individuals more control over news information, this power is being diminished. The titles of social news websites like Reddit and Digg, which play on word games, were invented by Internet geeks a few years ago. Users are able to upload text, links, and images on these websites. A computer formula or algorithm utilizes the popularity data to determine the order in which stories will show on the site's home page. Users decide collectively the material they prefer. In other words, decisions are made by people. Reddit continues on. Articles that do not consistently obtain positive feedback disappear from its pages. The chapter that the person enjoys and those that are popular among other registered users can both be found on a specific person's page [9], [10].

The group decides on the agenda, which is then expertly adapted to suit consumers' preferences. On these websites, the traditional model in which media gatekeepers set the agenda has been replaced with one in which the audience is given authority while giving specific respect to each person's unique inclinations. This creates issues of public policy. On the one hand, blogs and social media enable grass-roots organizations that were previously marginalized to have more influence over the public agenda. That's excellent for democracy, isn't it? Or is it preferable to let journalists, whose opinions are grounded in depth and knowledge, choose which stories should receive the most attention? Furthermore, how will people ever be exposed to viewpoints that differ from their own if tailored news ever becomes commonplace?

### **Traditional media are still important**

You should be aware that political communication has not yet reached this point as you consider these issues. Sites like Reddit and Digg are more focused on providing amusement than political information. Even the growing number of people who access their news online visit websites run by traditional media firms. When choosing which news items to display,



news aggregators like Google News use automatic computer algorithms rather than human judgment. Google, however, searches through thousands of major news websites to choose which stories to post online. The New York Times, The Washington Post, Reuters, BBC, and Voice of America are examples of traditional news organizations that frequently fall under this category. As a result, Google and other online aggregators continue to be influenced by the decisions made by gatekeepers at reputable media institutions.

In conclusion, agenda-setting in the media still has value. However, the landscape of political communication is shifting, and new technologies are altering the interactions between the public, the media, and policy objectives. According to recent academic research:

1. The media agenda is no longer primarily set by traditional journalists. Blogs and online news sources have the potential to affect the news agenda that spreads throughout the political world in certain circumstances the precise circumstances are still to be determined.
2. The influence of established political forces on the formulation of policy can be strengthened through social media. Rich lobbyists have the means to use social networking sites to rapidly communicate with lawmakers, and they can use social media to gain more access to decision-makers.
3. In a similar vein, the Internet provides individuals and social protest organizations with more ways to have an impact on the public and political agendas. The Occupy Wall Street protests were sparked and forged in part by social media messages. They might also have contributed to the dissidents' message that helped bring down the Egyptian government in 2011, while it's important to be cautious when generalizing about social media effects. Early in 2012, Americans flooded Twitter, Tumblr, and Facebook to express their outrage over a decision by the nation's top breast cancer advocacy group to stop funding Planned Parenthood in most cases. A day after the demonstration was widely covered, the group made a U-turn and resumed its collaboration with Planned Parenthood.
4. Traditional media are still vital and significant. The traditional media helped Occupy Wall Street, the Tea Party, the Arab Spring of 2011, and other social movements broadcast their message and tell their tales to the general public and policy elites. New online gatekeepers may have helped the messages spread to the general public, but media coverage helped shape the conversation and had an impact on the decision-makers. After doing extensive research, researchers Shehata and Strömbäck came to the conclusion that despite significant changes in media environments, the media are still surprisingly successful in influencing what issues the public perceives to be important.

The media are not an unconnected entity. The shaping of media agendas takes place within a larger cultural, social, and political framework. An important and political activity in and of itself is determining that something is a problem. An issue cannot proceed through the sequence of steps required for the problem to be contemplated, considered, discussed, and hopefully solved if it is not recognized as a problem by the media or political elites. Agenda-building, which studies the interplay of media agendas, public agendas, and policymaking, is responsible for these more general questions. Agenda-building is the process by which the media and the general public have an impact on the political elites' governing agenda. There are intricate connections between the public, the media, and policy objectives, with the media both directly and indirectly affecting public opinion. A problem does not necessarily warrant significant media attention just because it exists. The media's agenda is shaped by a number of political, societal, and journalistic variables. A significant, albeit not the only, aspect of the



larger policymaking process is the creation of media agendas. It is never a sufficient condition for the adoption of a change in policy; the media can cover a topic till the cows come home, but nothing will be done unless there is a favorable environment, open-minded policymakers, and workable suggestions. Agenda-setting is fundamentally a political process.

The fact that a topic does not always stay on the agenda must be emphasized. It can only remain on the shelf for so long. The Occupy Wall Street problem, which attracted a lot of attention in the fall of 2011, completely disappeared from the media by March 2012. Journalists lost interest in the demonstration when participation dropped significantly, and the narrative lacked any original or noteworthy elements. This is standard. A story that has dominated the national discussion for a while will eventually fade from public awareness. There are further issues. The media starts to drift away. The current issue captures the attention of the people. Politicians react to lobbyists selling alternative policy ideas. The president concentrates emphasis on issues that have the potential to be politically advantageous, and grassroots organizations form to draw attention to fresh issues.

An issue that has to be fixed has a limited shelf life, and if action is not taken when the moment is right, change may not happen for years, if at all. This was one of the reasons Obama tried to act immediately in the wake of the tragedy in Newtown. The degree to which the system is democratically run is a topic of discussion among academics. Some contend that affluent people and companies abuse the system because they can afford to pay lobbyists to influence legislators to prioritize their concern. Some mention the effectiveness of grassroots organizations like Mothers against Drunk Driving. Driving to seize media attention, garner support from the populace, and encourage political action on the part of legislators. Blogs and social media have expanded the news industry's role in setting agendas in the digital age. Social media and bloggers can increasingly have an impact on media, public, and policy agendas. However, we need to be honest about how they affect the agenda.

Based on their research, Shehata and Strömbäck came to the following conclusion: The traditional news media agenda still counts for public opinion dynamics at the aggregate and individual levels. The findings also lend credence to the hypothesis that the use and availability of substitute online news sources is diminishing the influence of traditional news media on setting agendas. Controlling the course that the nation follows and defining a policy agenda are the two main goals of agenda-building. It's a crucial conflict. While many people complain that political games must be played, democracy is endemic to them. Democratic societies must decide which issues to put first, which to put second, and how to come to an agreement on matters of public policy. The setting of agendas involves the media significantly. The growth of blogs and social media gives people hope that they will be able to influence the process more than people who are connected to powerful lobbies yet care about social and economic issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

The process of creating agendas has been completely transformed by the digital age, which has both potential and difficulties. Social media platforms have become effective instruments for establishing agendas, enabling topics to gain traction quickly and be seen by audiences throughout the world. The automatic curating of content on these platforms, however, raises questions about filter bubbles and echo chambers and may limit the variety of knowledge and viewpoints that users have access to. Additionally, because agenda-building on the internet is decentralized, online communities can play a big part in deciding which concerns are prioritized. This dynamic gives local groups and specialized interests more power, but it also makes people more skeptical of the veracity and reliability of information sources.

Traditional media sources are facing increasing difficulties in retaining their relevance and impact as agenda-setting in the digital era picks up speed. They still have a significant impact on how the public discourse is shaped, but they must change with the media environment and keep up with the pace and virality of digital news. Agenda-setting in the digital era has significant political repercussions. On the one hand, it increases public participation and engagement and gives people more power to directly shape the political and social agenda. On the other side, the democratic process is threatened by the dissemination of false information and the swaying of public opinion through digital media.

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## CHAPTER 12

### FRAMING: A KEY FOR HUMAN COMMUNICATION

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

A key component of human communication and cognition, framing is essential for influencing attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. It entails presenting data in a manner that affects how people interpret and comprehend problems, events, or concepts. The notion of framing, its underlying mechanisms, and its importance in a variety of contexts, including politics, the media, and public discourse, are all examined in this chapter. This research seeks to provide insight on the ways in which framing might influence public opinion and decision-making processes through an analysis of existing literature and studies. It also examines the moral ramifications of framing and the obligation of communicators to provide truthful and impartial information. In the end, making a conscious effort to frame ethically can help to promote a more open and democratic society.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Communication, Framing, Frames, Political.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The presentation and perception of information in human communication is governed by the fascinating and ubiquitous concept of framing. It is crucial in determining how people interpret and comprehend different problems, occasions, or concepts. By purposefully choosing and emphasizing some informational elements while minimizing or eliminating others, framing affects how people interpret the information that is provided. Across academic fields like psychology, sociology, political science, media studies, and communication, the subject of framing has drawn a lot of interest. Its broad ramifications in forming public opinion, affecting decision-making procedures, and even molding the discourse surrounding important societal issues have been acknowledged by researchers and academicians. In a world where information diffusion and perception can have a significant impact on society's trajectory, it is imperative to understand how framing functions and its possible effects [1]–[3].

In this chapter, we delve into the complexity of framing, examining its basic principles and the nuanced ways it functions in various situations. We aim to identify the mechanisms by which framing effects human cognition and behavior through analysis of existing literature and empirical data. As communicators have a duty to provide information honestly and responsibly, we also seek to understand the ethical dimensions of framing. The definition of framing as a concept clarifies how crucial language, context, and presentation are in determining meaning. The nature of objectivity and subjectivity in communication, as well as the function of the media, political actors, and other powerful actors in framing narratives, are all significant issues that are brought up by this. Additionally, the study of framing encourages people to become more astute information consumers and to evaluate the messages they come across on a daily basis.

We are aware that framing has the potential to be a tool for empowering meaningful communication as well as a means of deceit and propaganda as we begin this investigation of framing. In order to promote appropriate communication in a world that is becoming more interconnected, it is important to comprehend the subtleties of framing and its widespread influence. By doing this, we add to the larger discussion on the influence of language and perception, ultimately working toward a society that is more informed, transparent, and democratic. A noun is frame. The image is enclosed in a picture frame. The foundation of a home is its frame, which offers crucial support. A verb is frame. A policy, a response, or an innocent person might all be falsely implicated. A present participle is to frame. A hip California shop advertises its services by mentioning that it frames needlework, old photos, and even sports jerseys.

All of these many grammatical structures signify how an entity defines and organizes dependent tangible or intangible items, which is what they share in common. A frame is described as a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them in the social sciences, where framing has been used to explain a variety of phenomena. Scholars of political communication offer a more specific definition. They describe framing as: choosing and emphasizing some aspects of events or problems, and drawing links between them to support a specific interpretation, assessment, and/or solution. Similar to social beliefs, frames have various characteristics. Entman claims that fully developed frames are made up of various components with the following four essential qualities: problem definition; hypothesized cause; moral assessment; and proposed treatment. All of this is conceptual, yet as we shall see, frames draw on a wide range of vivid, deeply held beliefs. You may understand this by looking at the context of 9/11 and the war on terrorism.

Each has four sub-components: a perceived issue, a reason for it, an assessment, and a solution. Framing functions on various levels. Political elites use frames to advocate a certain definition of an issue in the hopes that this will pass a law or sway voters during an election campaign. When using broad concepts to structure factual details, journalists use frames. Political issues are interpreted by citizens in terms of broad principles that aid in structuring and organizing the political universe. Both the relationships between the various objectives of these players and the relationships between elite, media, and citizen frames are complex.

The core of political speech is framing. According to Donald R. Kinder, Governmental concerns and the political events that shape political life are always open to several readings; they can be interpreted in different ways. The use of frames, or terminology very similar to them, should be commonplace in political discourse. By outlining the proper method to think about politics, frames influence how citizens interpret current affairs. Frames imply what, if anything, should be done by stating what the key issue is and offering ideas for how to think about it. And that is what politics is all about. If you're looking for a short, modern word to describe frames, consider spin. Consider perspective if you want a more general substitute. Communication academics David Tewksbury and Dietram A. Scheufele provide a more academic perspective by pointing out that frames are rhetorical strategies that create connections between concepts. Information serves as the foundation, but frames make connections and create important associations that encourage people to interpret an issue in particular ways. They thoughtfully note that Frames link issues to specific beliefs that carry with them concepts for interpreting the origins, implications, and treatment of the issue.

You can easily see frames at work if you consider some of the most significant and divisive issues on the political horizon. For instance: There has been a lot of discussion on affirmative action, with framing as its focal point. Affirmative action advocates strongly emphasize the

need to permanently eradicate the stain that racism has left on the nation's history. They point out that the egalitarian American ideal necessitates that the country treat minorities fairly in light of historical transgressions. Fairness is the major concern of opponents, who argue that it is unfair to grant minority citizens benefits that are not extended to similarly qualified individuals who are not minorities. Additionally, opponents point out that it is unethical to discriminate against one person in order to aid another and that it is un-American to treat someone differently based on their race or ethnicity[4]–[6].

Some of the bitterest framing battles have taken place around birth control. When the Obama administration unveiled new requirements in 2012 requiring businesses to provide coverage for contraception in the health care plans, they provide to their employees, it set up a ruckus. The government thought it had a compelling philosophical argument when it framed the issue in terms of women's access to healthcare and the health advantages that contraceptives provide women. No, several Catholic bishops argued. They asserted that the regulations, which required women to pay for birth control, a practice they vehemently oppose on religious grounds, violated their First Amendment rights by adopting a freedom-of-religion framework. The Obama administration changed its proposal in response, indicating that religious organizations would not be required to provide the coverage. Instead, women would receive free contraception directly from their insurance companies. After receiving criticism from Catholic bishops as well, this idea eventually became law, but not before comedian Stephen Colbert made fun of the fact that a woman's health decisions are a private matter between her priest and her husband!

## **DISCUSSION**

The issue of gun regulation has long been a source of contention. Frames sharply diverged after the mass shooting in which 20 young children and six adults were killed in a Connecticut elementary school in December 2012. Liberals placed the blame on the prevalence and ease of access to powerful guns; they demanded restrictions on semiautomatic weapons and tighter background checks. Conservatives have argued that those with concealed carry permits should be allowed to carry their firearms on school and college campuses since restrictions on gun owners' freedom do not result in a decrease in crime. Others countered that the issue was more fundamental and stemmed from a society that idealized violence in media and video games. Still other commentators described the catastrophe as a spiritual crisis, stressing that the country was adrift and devoid of the moral principles that restrained violence. As these illustrations imply, frames are hotbeds of debate, with varying frames drawing on various problem definitions. Election frames are the topic of discussion. Depending on the validity and resonance of the frames that candidates choose, elections can be won or lost. A group of American Muslims revealed intentions to build an Islamic community center in downtown Manhattan, just two blocks from Ground Zero. In May 2010, a \$100 million project was unanimously approved by a New York City community board. The next day, however, take-no-prisoners blogger Pamela Geller published a vehement condemnation of the initiative.

What could be more demeaning and embarrassing than a monstrous mosque next to the World Trade Center structures that were destroyed by Islamic terrorism, she questioned. A week later, a well-known New York City newspaper writer took up the cause and called the endeavor fundamentally incorrect using Geller's words. The essay was titled *Mosque Madness at Ground Zero*. Following suit, several family members of 9/11 victims referred to it as a gross insult to those who were killed on that terrible day. The narrative of insensitivity to 9/11 victims started to spread, shocking the conservative media. Sean Hannity, a right-leaning Fox News anchor, requested Geller to speak on his show, and a Washington, D.C.



newspaper expressed concern about the mosque. After the events of September 11, 2001, former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani expressed out and referred to the mosque as a desecration. There was a significant inferno to cover as a result of Republican leaders like Sarah Palin and Newt Gingrich delivering statements of denunciation and tempers escalating.

In the spring and summer of 2010, criticism grew. Then August arrived, and a counter-frame started to dominate the national dialogue. Mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg and President Obama both gave heartfelt support of the mosque proposal. In contrast to conservatives, Bloomberg and Obama placed more emphasis on religious freedom in their analysis of the situation. Particularly emotional, Bloomberg urged the following on September 11: Because certain bloodthirsty extremists did not want us to be able to freely declare our own beliefs, express our own opinions, chase our own ambitions, and live our own lives, 3,000 people were killed. The ability to practice our religion however we like may be the most significant of all of our priceless liberties. Whatever your opinion of the proposed mosque and community center, a fundamental issue has been overlooked in the fervor of the discussion: Should government try to restrict people's ability to erect a house of worship on private property based on their particular religion? While it might occur in other nations, it should never occur here[7]–[9].

Two contrasting viewpoints on the matter reverberated throughout the nation. And as a result of the various perspectives, or frames as scholars prefer to refer to them, the mosque dispute has been interpreted and viewed from many different angles. Encouraged by the argument about the freedom to worship, supporters underlined that the Islamic cultural center was a part of a top-notch community center that would welcome visitors of any creed. Two additional mosques that were close to Ground Zero were mentioned as having been in operation for some time. However, the proposed cultural center would feature a mosque, a space for Muslims to pray, according to opponents. American Muslim doctor: Ground zero shouldn't be about promoting Islam.

The envisioned facility is still under construction. The broader project is expected to be completed within the next few years, according to the space's developers, who unveiled it in September 2011 with a picture exhibit. However, the controversy it sparked and the several frameworks that formed via the combative process of political communication are more interesting than the actual development of the institution. The dispute surrounding the mosque demonstrates the influence of the so-called framing. The contest for public opinion and policy change can be compared to a jousting match between opposing political ideologies to determine who will win the most elite and popular support. Over the years, there has been a lot of research on framing, and for good cause. It gets to the heart of the meanings that individuals associate with political communication, identifies the functions that symbols serve in the procedure, and illuminates political campaign tactics.

Beginning with an explanation of the idea and various instances, this chapter will introduce the main components and impacts of framing. The second section compares framing to other terminology and clarifies the evidence for framing effects while stressing social scientific challenges.

The final section takes a deeper look at framing and examines how it functions in the context of policy, where frames can actually have an impact. The emphasis is on how frames functioned during the global war on terrorism that followed September 11, opening up window on the interconnections between frames and power dynamics. Human communication and cognition are permeated by the idea of framing, which affects how people interpret and comprehend information. It describes how information is presented in a certain way to



influence people's perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and decision-making processes. The study of framing dives into the subtle yet potent mechanisms that affect how people and society interpret and digest messages. This essay seeks to provide a thorough examination of the concept of framing, as well as its ethical consequences and underlying principles.

## 1. The Essence of Framing

The context, emphasis, and salience of the content are all impacted by how information is packaged or presented, which is at the heart of framing. In the framing process, particular facets of a topic are chosen while eliminating others, changing the message's focal point. People may see the same information differently as a result of this filtering and focus, which may even cause them to change their views and behaviors. The following are the essential components of framing:

- i. **Contextualization:** Framing gives information context and establishes the scene for how it will be interpreted. The value and applicability of the knowledge can be affected by the context, which might direct people to concentrate on particular facets of the issue.
- ii. **Emphasis and Salience:** How the information is presented impacts which features are highlighted and given priority. By highlighting particular components, framing helps direct people's attention, increasing the likelihood that they will remember and take action on those components.
- iii. **Perspective and interpretation:** When different frames are used to analyze the same data, various interpretations result. By encouraging others to view a situation from a specific perspective, framing can have an impact on people's attitudes, beliefs, and views.
- iv. **Influence on Decision-Making:** Framing can have a big influence on how decisions are made. The perceived dangers and rewards of a problem or issue might change depending on how it is presented, which can affect the decisions people make.
- v. **Priming and Cognitive Accessibility:** Framing can trigger associations and concepts in people's thoughts, making relevant information more readily available in their minds. This priming can affect later decisions and thinking.
- vi. **Public Opinion and Persuasion:** Framing is a potent instrument in influencing public opinion. When messages are presented in a specific way, they can be more persuasive and impactful, which changes people's views and behaviors.
- vii. **Media and communication:** The framing of messages and information depends heavily on the media and communicators. The framing of the narrative is influenced by the way stories are told, the language that is used, and the details that are chosen.
- viii. **Cultural and social influences:** Cultural norms, values, and beliefs have an impact on framing. The audience will be more receptive to messages that fit the cultural context.
- ix. **Cognitive Biases and the Effects of Framing:** Framing interacts with cognitive biases, such as anchoring and confirmation bias, enhancing the effects of both. People frequently accept narratives that support their preexisting opinions, which can produce polarization and reinforcement.
- x. **Ethical Issues:** The effectiveness of framing also brings up moral issues. Negative ramifications for society can result from manipulative framing strategies that mislead or deceive audiences. In their framing strategies, ethical communicators put truthfulness and transparency first.

## 2. Understanding Framing Mechanisms

- i. **Priming and Accessibility:** Framing can prime particular associations or mental concepts, impacting how easily people can access relevant knowledge in their brains. For instance, framing a political issue as one of national security encourages people to concentrate on security issues and may result in a more conservative stance.
- ii. **Emphasis on Gain or Loss:** Viewing a situation in terms of prospective gains or losses can have a big influence on how decisions are made. When faced with prospective losses, people are more risk-averse, and when faced with potential benefits, they are more risk-seeking.
- iii. **Temporal Framing:** How people view the urgency and significance of a problem or choice depends on the time frame in which it is presented. Long-term framing stimulates thought about greater ramifications while short-term framing may result in urgent actions.
- iv. **Cultural Framing:** People's perceptions and interpretations of framed messages might be influenced by their cultural origins and beliefs. Culturally appropriate messages frequently have greater persuasive power.

## 3. Framing in Politics

Public impressions of policies, politicians, and events are shaped through framing, which is a critical component of political communication. Political actors construct issues in order to gain support, sway public opinion, and forward their own agendas. Media coverage, policy discussions, and election campaigns all use political framing. For instance, the public may find it more enticing to hear a tax proposal described as tax relief rather than reducing government revenue. We examine the many facets of framing in politics here:

- i. **Frames for Political Issues:** To evoke various responses from the general public, political topics can be framed in a variety of ways. Politicians and media outlets can portray difficulties as opportunities, challenges, dangers, or serious concerns by choosing particular perspectives and terminology. For instance, certain demographics may respond well to presenting immigration as an economic opportunity, while others may respond well to portraying it as a national security issue.
- ii. **Framing Politicians and Candidates:** The framing of political candidates and leaders is also included. Positive framing emphasizes their successes, leadership abilities, and empathetic traits, whereas negative framing could concentrate on their flaws, inconsistencies, or prior errors. As their reporting has a huge impact on popular opinions and support, the media is essential in determining how candidates are framed.
- iii. **Frames for Policy Proposals:** Politicians employ framing to enhance the perception of their policy recommendations. Politicians try to attract public support and form coalitions by portraying policies as solutions to urgent issues or matching them with people's ideals. For instance, using the phrase putting money back in the pockets of hardworking Americans instead of a technical discussion of the tax proposal may be more appealing.
- iv. **Political Campaign Framing:** Political campaigns make extensive use of framing to develop an emotional narrative that appeals to voters. The goal of campaign messaging is to appeal to voters' emotions, reflect their values, and set the candidate apart from the competition. Attack advertising and other forms of

negative framing are also employed to denigrate rivals and draw attention to their perceived shortcomings.

- v. **Political discourse and media framing:** The way that political problems, politicians, and campaigns are presented is crucial. The audience's perception of events and candidates can be influenced by the choice of stories, headlines, and language used in reporting. Public opinion can be shaped by media framing, which also helps to polarize political dialogue.
- vi. **Framework and Bipartisan Politics:** Framing becomes a crucial tactic in highly polarized political contexts to mobilize the party's base and win over swing voters. Both political parties use framing strategies to frame debates in ways that support their respective ideologies and viewpoints.
- vii. **Framing and Popular Attitude:** Framing has a big impact on public opinion because it affects how people interpret and process political information. Divergent readings of the same events based on different frames might help people build their own political opinions and attitudes.
- viii. **Ethics Considerations:** Politicians' use of framing presents moral questions. Concern should be expressed about manipulative framing that distorts the truth or appeals to the public's emotions. In their framing strategies, ethical communicators should put honesty and openness first.

#### 4. Framing in the Media

Media outlets make a big difference in how the public conversation is framed. How audiences view and comprehend situations can be affected by the media's choice of stories, headlines, and phrasing when reporting events. Public opinion, attitudes toward certain groups, and crisis responses are all influenced by media framing. For instance, how you frame a protest for instance, as a riot or a peaceful demonstration can influence how the audience responds [10], [11].

#### 5. Framing and Social Issues

Discussions of social topics including immigration, climate change, and healthcare frequently use framing. Framing strategies are frequently used by advocacy groups to sway public opinion and public policy. For instance, presenting immigration as a business opportunity might increase support for lax immigration regulations.

#### 6. Cognitive Biases and Framing Effects

Confirmation bias and anchoring are two cognitive biases that can interact with framing to increase its influence. Frames that are consistent with people's preexisting views are more likely to be accepted, which can result in polarization and reinforcement. An initial framing can have an impact on later judgments and still have an anchoring effect.

#### 7. Ethical Considerations

The persuasiveness of framing prompts ethical questions about its application and potential abuse. Utilizing manipulative framing strategies can encourage the spread of false information, discrimination, and social division. To prevent misleading or deceiving audiences, ethical communicators should give priority to accuracy, transparency, and fairness in their framing.

## 8. Responsible Framing

To enable people to identify and reject manipulative framing, and critical thinking education are crucial. A more discriminating and informed populace can be created by educating the general population about cognitive biases and framing strategies.

- i. **Supporting Objective Reporting:** Responsible framing guarantees that communicators and journalists deliver information objectively, free from personal prejudices and covert intentions. As a result, audiences are better able to base their opinions on reliable information and develop a sense of trust for media sources.
- ii. **Preventing Sensationalism and disinformation:** Media outlets can prevent sensationalism and the propagation of disinformation by framing news reports and events properly. This is essential for safeguarding the public's right to accurate information as well as the integrity of journalism.
- iii. **Balancing Perspectives:** In order to give viewers a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, responsible framing requires presenting several perspectives on complicated subjects. This promotes logical thought and well-informed judgment.
- iv. **Reducing Polarization:** Polarizing or sensationalistic framing can deepen societal differences. On the other hand, responsible framing aims to encourage fair reporting and lessen the likelihood of contentious language.

## 9. Empowering Media Literacy

- i. **Developing Critical Thinking Skills:** People who are media literate are better able to analyze and challenge the information they find in a variety of media sources. People with critical thinking abilities can spot prejudices, propaganda, and logical fallacies.
- ii. **Recognizing Framing tactics:** People who are media literate are able to recognize various framing tactics, including language usage, selective reporting, and visual components. This makes it possible for viewers to distinguish between unbiased framing and objective reporting.
- iii. **Understanding Media Ecosystems:** Knowledge of media literacy aids people in understanding the complexities of media platforms and associated biases. They may now seek out other viewpoints and confirm information from dependable sources thanks to this expertise.
- iv. **Promoting Civic Participation:** Well-informed citizens are more inclined to take part in civic duties including voting, speaking up in public forums, and supporting social causes. Active citizenship is greatly facilitated by media literacy.

## CONCLUSION

Framing is a potent tool that influences how people and communities perceive and absorb information. Its influence is felt in a wide range of areas, including as politics, the media, and public discourse. People create ideas, make decisions, and react to various circumstances in very diverse ways depending on how information is presented to them. Understanding how language and presentation can subtly affect how information is understood and interpreted is possible through the study of framing. However, the influence of framing also prompts moral dilemmas. We have an obligation to deliver information in a fair, accurate, and unbiased way as communicators, whether we work in the media, politics, or another area. The misuse of framing strategies to sway public opinion or spread false information can have negative effects on society as a whole. Future research on framing is required to comprehend its mechanics and results better and to create standards for ethical communication practices.

People can become savvier information consumers and contribute to a more informed and fair public debate by becoming aware of framing tactics and their possible effects.

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## CHAPTER 13

### A STUDY ON FRAMING WARS: THE WAR ON TERROR

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The role of the media in influencing public opinion and discourse during the War on Terror is thoroughly examined in *Framing Wars: The War on Terror*. This study examines how various framing strategies used by media sources affected how the general public saw the conflict, its causes, and its effects. The research provides light on the tremendous influence of framing on forming public opinion and governmental decisions during this crucial time of global history by looking at significant events and prominent media coverage. This study also emphasizes the value of media literacy and critical thinking in resolving complicated international disputes. The framing that media outlets give must be challenged and examined by the public in order to acknowledge the inherent biases and agendas that each perspective contains. Policymakers, journalists, and people alike must be conscious of the power of framing in influencing perceptions and decisions as civilizations continue to struggle with the effects of the War on Terror and encounter new difficulties on a global scale.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Framing, Media, Public, Political, War.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

According to the findings mentioned above, media messages shape public opinion. Even though these findings are intriguing, they are experimental and only provide evidence that frames theoretically have these effects when all other factors are equal. Never assume that things are equal, especially in politics. We are reminded by the constructionist study discussed that citizens are not a blank canvas when it comes to framing. Instead, they have a wide range of viewpoints on various subjects, some of which are well-developed and others which are more haphazardly assembled. When media frames are in line with or connect with individuals' preexisting views, they should have the greatest impact on them. This idea was supported by research done by Edy and Meirick in 2007, which concentrated on two different frames for the events of September 11.

There was a war frame that declared September 11 to be a war crime. This point of view said that the Americans slaughtered on that awful day were simply victims and that the aggressors should be put to death on a battlefield. A crime frame highlighted that the deceased should be seen as murder victims and the offenders should be brought to justice. The researchers argued that frames should be more persuasive when they resonate with people's preexisting viewpoints and predicted that in the fall of 2001, support for the Afghanistan War would be stronger among those who used a war frame than among those using a crime frame for punishing the 9/11 perpetrators. This theory received substantial support from Edy and Meyrick's research [1]–[3].

They discovered that people did not blindly accept the frameworks that the media emphasized. While broadcast media networks largely framed the events of September 11 in terms of war, respondents were more likely to frame the matter in terms of a crime,



considering it as a horrific crime indeed. Some people took a conflicted perspective, regarding the deceased as war casualties but still wanting to see the offenders put on trial. Media cannot impose frameworks on their audience members' brains, just as they cannot invent agendas out of thin air. According to research, the values that people bring to the media interact with media framing effects. When frames are congruent with people's underlying values and views about the political world, framing effects are more likely to occur.

After reviewing these and other studies, a number of conclusions may be drawn concerning the influence political frameworks have on people:

1. When a problem is fresh or innovative, media coverage is likely to be more significant. People often bring their own frames to the media when discussing various topics and don't always embrace media or elite frameworks wholeheartedly.
2. Strong partisans typically do not have their attitudes altered by frames.
3. When the framing aligns with the political ideals of the audience, it has a higher impact. As a result, communicators frequently try to persuade listeners that an unclear frame is compatible with their preexisting beliefs.
4. A frame cannot function in an empty space. Frames work in a political environment where there are many different voices. The impact of a certain frame may be diminished when there is competition among frames.

### Macro Aspects of Framing

A multi-layered notion, framing. In terms of how citizens frame political concerns, it can function independently and on a micro level. Up until now, this has been the main topic of discussion. Framing can also be used on a large scale. Journalists' choices of political frames can have an impact on the public and decision-makers. Political elites deliberately select frames, using them to consolidate their position, advance causes, and steer the direction of legislation. We can look at frame-setting and frame-building in the same way that we looked at agenda-setting and agenda-building. On the national stage, various frames contend for attention in the same way that numerous issue agendas do.

Influencing political elites, media gatekeepers, and common people to choose one framing over another is a key component of power. There are some frameworks that never reach the national level, making it impossible to characterize a problem in a specific way. Therefore, contrary to what Schattschneider claimed, power is not just the capacity to define the alternative. It also requires the capacity to spin and frame the alternative in a specific way. But who actually exercises power? Does the government make all the decisions, affecting how the White House frames matters in the media? Do media outlets adopt the government's narratives, neglecting to express the kind of skepticism necessary for democracy? Or do the media present issues in a different, opposing light? These issues are clarified by three theoretical stances. As follows:

1. Hegemony is the idea that political authorities can impose their will on the general populace by obtaining permission and using mass media to further their political goals.
2. Indexing is the concept that political media organize news in a way that closely resembles the variety of viewpoints taken by political elites. This theory holds that the news media adjust their reporting to reflect the claims of important elite officials [4]–[6].
3. Cascading activation is a theory that holds that political messages propagate from the White House via other significant elites, the media, and finally to the general

population, with each actor having an impact on and being impacted by political communication. The White House exerts influence over other significant elite groups, such as Congressional leaders, and the general public, as determined by opinion polls, according to a cascade activation model. It's interesting to see that influence may move up, from the general populace to the White House.

Of the three strategies, hegemony presupposes that the government has the tightest control over mass media and can influence public opinion through a range of coercive political means.

Hegemony frequently exists in non-democratic cultures where the state may manipulate public opinion through coercion and force. Hegemony, however, can also exist in democracies like the United States. You may contend that AIDS in the early 1980s and the absence of news coverage of the Holocaust and racism until the middle of the 20th century all followed a hegemonic pattern.

As will be discussed, there is rarely a straightforward hegemony in which the government manipulates the media through coercive and persuasive tactics. Journalists exert significant autonomy in democratic cultures like the U.S. by depending on their own judgements and media habits rather than blindly following official directives. Indexing gives media more liberty, but claims that they only repeat or reflect what elites say. If government officials are generally in agreement about a matter, the media will present that frame and suppress any opposing views. The media will present opposing points of view, illustrative of the diversity of elite discussion, when the government is divided and different elites frame the subject in different ways.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Initial Horror and Response**

America was in a state of shock and startled disbelief immediately following the dreadful September 11 attacks. There were thousands, if not more, deaths of innocent individuals. People wanted to know what had happened, how it could be explained, who was to blame, and what should be done next. According to Jim Kuypers, Repeated exposure to graphic images on television and in print cemented them in the collective memory of Americans, who were hour by hour growing more concerned for their safety and wondering whether there would be another attack. The government has to inform its citizens of cause and effect as soon as possible. This was the issue that most needed framing, if ever there was one.

President George W. Bush expressed his opinions in a speech to the country while he and his advisers pondered and came to an agreement on how to react. The Bush administration came to the conclusion that the country needed to fight terrorism as a battle between good and evil. As a result, the symbolic significance of an American president speaking to his countrymen on the evening of September 11 was supported by the media. The president had unwavering support from the populace.

Bush won praise for his tough, forceful response to the attacks. As hegemonic detractors may assert, did the government compel consent through coercive social influence? No. But it wasn't necessary.

The Bush administration used deft political persuasion and displayed awareness of popular opinion. Bush's popularity was also influenced by the public's time-honored propensity to support the president, at least temporarily. Because of this, the White House had influence over how events were characterized, presented, and interpreted

## **2. Indexing and News Media Subservience during the Military Build-Up**

The Bush administration decided to continue the fight against terrorism in the months that followed 9/11 by deploying soldiers to Afghanistan and laying the groundwork for an invasion of Iraq. The Bush administration launched a full-court effort to support the Iraqi military action after realizing that it needed Congressional approval to strike Iraq and that members of Congress would be reluctant to support military action if their people opposed it. Advocates complimented the administration for putting up a compelling argument to the public. They claimed that Bush had developed a clear strategy and that the United States needed to react to the 9/11 attacks vigorously. According to the Bush administration's detractors, a sales pitch, which was delivered loud and clear throughout the news media, was falsely promoted by the administration. According to journalist Frank Rich, it was the greatest story ever sold.

The administration sent out influential figures to argue that there were believable ties between Iraq and the 9/11 attackers. Vice President Cheney and other Bush Cabinet members said that Iraq had WMDs that could produce a mushroom cloud that would kill tens of thousands of people. Secret intelligence files collected years before Bush was elected president had indicated as much, and the Bush administration claimed that it had based its decisions on data gathered while Bill Clinton was in office. According to the Bush administration, a war was required to compel regime change in Iraq so that a democratic framework could be established that might serve as a model for other Middle Eastern states. As it turned out, a lot of the classified data regarding Iraqi WMDs was dubious. It turned out that Iraq did not have the WMDs that the news faithfully claimed it did. The news provided a narrative supportive of the pro-war perspective of the Bush administration during the lead-up to the conflict.

The indexing hypothesis contributes to the explanation of the news media's reticence to voice opposition to the war. Indexing places a focus on how closely news coverage in the media matches the variety of frameworks put forth by top politicians. Only a small number of lawmakers, including prominent Democrats, had vocally opposed the war. Journalists could find only a few government sources that publicly questioned the administration's masterframe, with a large number of legislators and officials supporting the president. It emphasized the famous remark made by the academic Leon Sigal in 1986 that news is not what happens, but what someone says has happened or will happen. As a result, pro-war ideologies were heavily promoted to the American population. Depending on how you feel about the situation, this might be beneficial or terrible. Danny Hayes and Matt Guardino conducted a thorough analysis of CBS, NBC, and ABC network news coverage of the lead-up to the Iraq War and discovered that Bush administration officials were referenced twice as frequently as alternative sources. Democratic lawmakers who opposed them were hardly audible, and the overall thrust of coverage favored a pro-war perspective, according to the report. Contrary to indexing, disagreeing frames received a lot of press. On network news stories, representatives of foreign governments who supported a diplomatic resolution were frequently cited.

## **3. News, indexing, and the Abu Ghraib horrors**

A few American soldiers ridiculed and mistreated Iraqi POWs during the Iraq War. They beat the inmates with a chair and a broom handle while also pouring phosphoric liquid on them. In one incident, troops stripped a prisoner naked inside his cell and made him crawl on his stomach as they peed on him. Later, two female police officers threw a ball at his genitalia while sodomizing him with a police stick. The Bush administration began a framing

campaign as soon as photos of the events at the Abu Ghraib jail were widely available. Although the president highlighted that these were only a few instances of mistreatment and abuse on the part of low-ranking American soldiers, he expressed regret for the humiliation Iraqi captives had to endure. Human rights experts and independent media condemned the actions, calling them torture and even a continuation of a long-standing US policy of coercive interrogation of detainees in the fight against terrorism. However, members of Congress, even prominent Democrats, held back from harsh criticism of the American interrogation strategy and refrained from referring to the actions as torture. Legislators followed the president's example and refrained from questioning his overall stance, either out of concern for appearing unpatriotic or out of fear of the repercussions of a political uproar.

To reveal information, journalists rely on sources. Few high-level sources were ready to use the word torture, therefore the media was unable to portray the events at Abu Ghraib in this way. According to the indexing theory, the press should index its coverage to reflect the opinions of the ruling class at the time, and this is exactly what happened. Bennett et al. discovered that just 3% of news items in a prominent national newspaper, *The Washington Post*, classified the incidents as torture. However, graphic photographs from the incidents were also shown, including one showing a hooded man standing on a box that was connected to electrical lines. Notably, 81 percent of the publications referred to the incidents as abuse instead of using a derogatory term to describe them[7]–[9].

#### **4. News Media Challenge the Status Quo in Cascading Frames**

After 2004, media perspectives evolved, becoming more critical of the Bush administration's conduct of the Iraq War. Some of this is explained by indexing. A significant Congressional debate on terrorism and torture was spearheaded in 2005 by John McCain, a powerful Republican senator who was also a victim of torture during the Vietnam War. This gave reporters a chance to formally report on a hearing that included criticism of Bush's policies. There was discussion among top officials about the president being challenged by powerful members of Congress. Conflicts among split leaders provide acceptable material for media coverage when the government is divided. Policymakers on both sides are openly stating different things, and there is a valid public controversy to address. As a result, the media presents critical coverage of the problem while attributing coverage to the split administration. But indexing wasn't the only thing at play.

Throughout the Abu Ghraib scandal, the media provided vivid, visual depictions of the events, highlighting the photos on newspaper pages and the evening news. Even though they focused more on abuse than torture, the abhorrent, vile treatment of captives screamed volumes and delivered a message that was more visceral and terrible than any words could. Investigative journalism accelerated over the course of the following year, driven by the moral outrage that drives crusading journalists, professional press norms that emphasize exposing the unfavorable aspects of governmental policy, media routines that favor stories showcasing drama and conflict, and professional rewards that are given to journalists who reveal wrongdoing at the White House.

Following the Abu Ghraib revelations, numerous major magazines ran in-depth articles that examined the use of torture in the War on Terror and described harsh maltreatment of Iraqi inmates in dramatic detail. Soon after, further critical reporting appeared. The National Security Agency was secretly given permission by the Bush administration to eavesdrop on Americans in order to look for potential terrorist activities without obtaining the court-ordered warrants typically required for domestic espionage, according to a report by *The New York Times* that won a Pulitzer Prize. The media started to redefine the debate, abandoning

the freedom against tyranny framework that typified early coverage of 9/11 or the claim that the Iraq War was an essential engagement in the ongoing war on terrorism. Instead, the new framework appeared to imply that the danger to America was not only posed by the violence that terrorists threatened, but also by US government actions that endangered civil freedoms.

The news media's dissemination of alternate counter-frames is compatible with the cascading activation concept. As the journalistic frames cascaded upward, they drove policymakers to think about difficult issues. Americans' support for the war also sharply decreased as Iraqi casualties increased, from more than 75% in 2003 to under 50% in 2006. The Democratic victory in the 2006 Congressional elections was aided by public discontent with the war. It's possible that public opinion had a cascading impact upward, alerting political authorities and the media to the general population's dissatisfaction of the war effort. However, the public was mostly reactive, responding to framing used by policymakers and the press, as is usual in modern media democracy.

### **Summary and Assessment**

The debate demonstrates the intricate, dynamic interplay among the president, Washington, D.C. elites, the media, and the general population. Various parties exert various regulating influences on framing, causing frames to slip and change. This results in many deductions:

1. The president can exert influence over the prevailing frame that is used to define events in the wake of a national crisis and perceived threat to security.
2. When there is agreement among national leaders, the prevailing White House framing is reinforced, and more critical coverage is provided when disagreements arise among policymakers. The news media index coverage to reflect the spectrum of elite debate. In this way, the media reflect the opinions of influential decision-makers.
3. When the argument reaches a certain point, the news media actively participate in the framing process, contesting the views of the elite and providing opposing viewpoints on public policy.
4. Through elections and polls, the public can also impact the framing process. The public, on the other hand, typically reacts, ceding ground to the narratives propagated by the press and officials.

What is the conclusion? Did framing aid democracy amid the post-9/11 foreign policy crisis? Did the media improve democratic performance? The standards used to judge political communication vary widely. One may argue that everything went according to plan, with the majority of the stories presenting skepticism and criticism and only a few tales being overly enthusiastic or overly critical of the conflict. In fact, long after the general public's interest in the story started to wane, the media kept looking into abuses at Abu Ghraib and continued to publish the gory photographs that broke the story. It is the responsibility of academic critics to hold the media accountable, and there is little doubt that they might have done a better job. Critics claim that the media should have acted more rapidly to present opposing frames to the prevailing one rather than just reflecting official discourse. Bennett et al. write that the press can and should present the public with coherent counterperspectives when an administration is making a concerted effort to sell its policies to the public, even in the name of national security.

Framing aids in illuminating the exercise of power. Agenda-setting and priming, which concentrate on the perceived importance and approachability of topics, take a different approach than framing. It examines how issues are put forth and the organizational ideas used to set up the political system. It is explained by agenda-setting and priming how certain problems come to dominate public discourse. Framing goes a step further by examining what



transpires as topics begin to encircle the center of public discourse. It investigates how various political players' frame works affect public opinion and policy. A frame is used as the main unifying concept to give political events context. In order to promote specific interpretations and solutions, framing involves picking out specific aspects of problems and tying them together [10], [11].

Frames function on several levels. They are created by elites, supported by the media, honed by activists, and protected by the general public who use them to make sense of the political landscape. These several groups' frames can collide and conflict with one another. Politics is a fight for the perspective, with many players vying for control over how certain topics are highlighted and presented. Frames are not a panacea. When they are in line with the residents' underlying political ideologies, they have a better chance of influencing them. In the macro arena, where citizens, political leaders, activist groups, and the media compete for influence and power, frame-building takes place. Hegemony, indexing, and cascade activation are the three models that have been put forth. The tendency of White House frames to exert influence early in a foreign policy crisis may be explained, to a certain extent, by hegemony, but its heavy-handed rhetoric overlooks the significant degree of latitude and autonomy that media and other players have in a media democracy.

According to Indexing, the news media largely plays a passive role in the construction of frames, taking cues from the intensity of contention expressed in elite circles and tailoring its coverage to the debate's leading public voices. This opinion has some backing. Frames from the White House typically flow downward, but they might also flow upward, according to cascading activation. This paradigm gives media a more active part in creating frames. It provides a livelier perspective on the frame-building procedure. When a foreign policy crisis endangers national interests, the White House normally has an easier time managing the narrative. However, the president also has a significant impact on how domestic concerns are framed. The vast majority of television news reports on the Bush tax cuts between 2001 and 2003 included quotes from members of the Bush administration and the Republican-controlled Congress. The coverage placed more emphasis on tax cuts' potential to spur economic growth than on their potential to widen economic inequality.

The opinions of academics on how well frame-building supports democracy vary. Conservative academics frequently fault the media for undermining the president in situations where the nation is at war with a foreign adversary. Liberal critics, on the other hand, cite occasions where the media resisted propagating viewpoints that questioned established powers. According to normative theories, a democratic society requires a wide range of frames that allow for a variety of interpretations of current policies. There are valid concerns concerning the extent to which the media assisted in disseminating viewpoints that contested the government's definition of the issues confronting the United States after 9/11, as was covered throughout the chapter. Undoubtedly, news reports that questioned the overreach of American government anti-terrorism policies set new precedents. Government misdeeds were undoubtedly discovered by journalistic inquiries. With hindsight being 20/20, there were other instances where the media could have challenged the prevailing account of events more immediately. They may have added other perspectives to the national tableau in this way.

Whatever the case, democratic societies undeniably exercise power, sometimes in oppressive ways but generally in more active and reciprocal ones. It is debatable how much influence the general populace has and how much influential elites sway public opinion. The news is an important element, a driving force behind influence, setting the agenda, creating the agenda, and framing topics differently for the general people and elite leaders. So it makes sense for us to comprehend what drives news [12]–[14]. The next two chapters are centered on this



query. Be prepared: When discussing the news, a clamor of opinions and conversation is introduced. The conversation will be loud and clamorous, at times clashing with opposing viewpoints on how news is shaped in the modern media democracy.

### CONCLUSION

In addition to being fought on the front lines in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other places, the War on Terror was also framed in the public eye by the media. This study has drawn attention to the media's crucial role in influencing how the public views and comprehends the conflict. The way the War on Terror was framed was crucial in influencing public opinion, winning support for military operations, and influencing the policy choices made by governments all over the world. Whether deliberate or accidental, framing strategies used by media outlets have a significant impact on popular perceptions of civil rights, foreign policies, and counterterrorism initiatives. By framing the conflict as a war of good versus evil, fear-mongering language, selective reporting, and binary narratives polarized public opinion and silenced dissenting viewpoints. Additionally, attempts to promote understanding and collaboration were hampered by the way some events were framed and how some groups were portrayed, which reinforced preconceptions and widened gaps. In order to encourage a better informed and sympathetic public conversation, it is crucial to work toward fair and impartial reporting, accept different points of view, and encourage open discussion.

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## **CHAPTER 14**

### **A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: NEWS MEDIA BIAS**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The impact of news media bias on the public's perception and democracy has been a contentious issue in the field of journalism. This chapter seeks to analyse news media bias by examining its different manifestations, causes, and social effects. This study illuminates the complications of media bias and its possible effects on the democratic process by reviewing current literature, case studies, and empirical data. In order to convey all sides of an issue and differentiate between factual reporting and opinion and analysis, journalists and news organizations should aim for balanced reporting. In order to ensure a larger diversity of opinions, media outlets should also diversify their newsrooms by hiring people from different backgrounds. Regulators and legislators must simultaneously implement steps to fight misinformation and increase media accountability while being careful not to impinge on press freedom. The research ultimately highlights the value of media literacy, critical thinking, and ethical journalism in promoting informed citizenship and safeguarding the integrity of democratic institutions.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Journalists, News, Media, Public, Political News.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The news media is essential for influencing public opinion, educating the populace, and keeping authorities accountable. However, in recent years, there have been more and more doubts raised about the objectivity and impartiality of news reporting. The topic of news media bias, in which journalists and media organizations convey information in a biased manner to support certain ideologies, political parties, or interest groups, has drawn a lot of attention and discussion. The problem of media bias has expanded as a result of the proliferation of news sources and the quick transmission of information made possible by digital platforms. This has an effect on how the general public consumes, shares, and interprets information. Media bias can appear in many ways, from subtly political reporting to overt framing of news stories. Editorial choices, journalistic personal convictions, ownership structures, or even external business forces can all be sources of bias. Media bias can occur intentionally, motivated by a desire to influence public opinion, or it can happen unintentionally as a result of unconscious prejudices or editing mistakes[1]–[3].

The effects of bias in the news media are extensive, impacting not just how the public perceives current events but also the overall structure of democracy. Citizens may have a mistaken understanding of complex subjects when given slanted information, which can result in polarization, disagreement, and a lack of consensus on important issues. Since an informed and involved populace is crucial for the smooth operation of a healthy democratic society, the erosion of media trust can also have significant repercussions for democratic processes. It takes a multifaceted examination that takes into account journalistic conventions, technological effects, and socio-political dynamics to comprehend the intricacies of news

media bias. It calls for an investigation into the causes of bias and possible solutions to lessen its influence on democratic values and public dialogue.

This chapter explores the issue of bias in the news media, illuminating its manifestations, causes, and effects. We aim to provide a thorough analysis of this urgent subject by drawing on current literature, case studies, and empirical data. We'll also look at possible tactics for reducing bias and promoting responsible journalism in the digital age, with a focus on the fundamental importance of media literacy and critical thinking for helping the general people understand the complex landscape of news media and make educated judgments. By doing this, we seek to advance knowledge of the problems caused by news media bias and emphasize how crucial a transparent, impartial, and responsible media environment is to sustaining democratic principles and fostering a lively and informed public conversation. You would likely label news as biased if someone asked you to. Even if you prefer to think of yourself as impartial, this one is fairly obvious, right? Don't you think there is prejudice in the news today? You would have a large number of compatriots if you stated this. Americans agree when pollsters ask them what they think of the news: It's skewed! The population as a whole thinks that news reports are often erroneous. Eight out of ten Americans feel the press is often swayed by influential interests, and more than three-fourths of Americans believe the media tend to favor one side [4]–[6].

Does it represent the idea that news is biased, unfavorable, or erroneous in some way? Or is prejudice a whole other concept? These queries bring to bigger ones like: What drives the news? How is political news shaped? News either confirms the existing quo or questions the authority. These inquiries speak directly to the core of recent events. They aid in our understanding of how and whether news is skewed. They aid in the analysis of political news. It is appropriate to move on to the substance of the regularly significant news now that you are aware of the impacts of news how it shapes events and determines agendas. This chapter debunks common misconceptions about news and explains why the idea of bias is oversimplified. analyzes the basic causes that underpin current news once the haze of common ideas of news has been lifted.

## DISCUSSION

I use theory to assist me work through these problems. The first question Shoemaker and Reese posed was whether the news media, in the words of a legendary CBS network executive, hold a mirror up to society and try to report it as faithfully as possible. Questions regarding bias and the major factors affecting political journalism are rendered irrelevant if the news is an accurate reflection of reality. News only informs us of the state of affairs. Because news is fundamentally the same as reality, bias is a myth. This chapter and the one that follows investigate the many influences on news, starting with the mirror idea. Forces operate in many ways, operating at various scales throughout the social structure continuum, ranging from small-scale, individual-level influences to larger, macro-determinants.

This is the most dynamic and divisive area, and it forces us to address the issue of liberal and gender bias in the media. The second level is concerned with the routines or professional procedures that journalists utilize to carry out their duties. We next investigate the effects of organizational, economic, and social system elements on news as we go up the sociological ladder to larger macro forces. This chapter focuses on contentious problems of news bias as well as individual-level drivers of news. The case study of an uncommon news report that opens the first section of this chapter challenges the notion that the news accurately represents reality. I then go into detail on why journalism cannot and should not simply reflect global events. The definition of the contentious phrase news bias is the subject of the

second part. The third section of the chapter is where I provide the arguments in favor of and against liberal bias. The fourth segment examines gender prejudice in press coverage of the presidential election.

### **News Present Actuality**

The news was flooded with the tale. The neighborhood media was enthralled by it. It received extensive coverage on Cleveland's TV stations. The Plain Dealer, a daily newspaper in Cleveland, concurred. Shidea Lane, 25, and Artis Hughes, a bus driver who was more than twice her age, got into a yelling fight on September 18, 2012, and it seems that things went out of hand. Lane reportedly got on the bus, claiming she had left her bag behind and couldn't afford the fee. While paying the bus ticket, she insulted Hughes. After a disagreement, Lane is said to have yelled at Hughes and grabbed his neck. The last straw was that. Hughes informed the bus passengers, She wants to be a man; I'm going to treat you like a man. He then went on to violently swing his arm at the lady, punching her in the jaw with an uppercut before throwing her to the ground. A passenger's cellphone may have captured the *melée*; the footage was then uploaded to YouTube and went viral on October 11, garnering attention throughout the country. It quickly rose to prominence in the local news, receiving extensive attention from the broadcast media.

Nobody disputes the incident's reality. But let's acknowledge that passengers board Cleveland buses at various hours of the day, drivers collect their fares, and then the bus driver drives the vehicle through several streets all throughout the city. They've been doing this for a long time. The nightly news is seen to be too dull and uninteresting to cover the realities of bus riding. Unexpectedly, a weird, abnormal episode receives significant coverage on local news and makes the top page of the Plain Dealer the next morning. When compared to the plethora of other issues that Cleveland and Northeast Ohio residents face, such as educational shortcomings in Cleveland schools, housing foreclosures that are destroying the fabric of urban neighborhoods, or even the dismal track records of Cleveland professional sports teams, especially the Cleveland Cavaliers after LeBron James took his abilities to the t Furthermore, it pales in comparison to concurrent political events like the repercussions of the vice presidential debate, which happened just the night before the story went viral, and positive regional developments like the ways the auto bailout reduced unemployment in Northeast Ohio[7]–[9].

These problems, as well as less unusual occurrences, are a part of daily life, but they were not given the same local attention as the bus driver incident. Unusual and newsworthy, a man bus driver hitting a young girl passenger is unquestionably unusual. But what about the main topic that is continually covered by national media? One would have to say that if news stories correctly and closely represented the reality of life in Cleveland, Ohio, this occurrence would have to be considered the main, most important event on that specific day, with the largest consequences for Clevelanders. However, it was obviously not. Because it was unique, dramatic, and a YouTube sensation the latter of which represents yet another way that media genres shape news judgments the news media covered it.

There is a lot of evidence that the news does not accurately represent reality on a larger scale. Instead of covering the whole population, more than 70% of news articles concentrate primarily on a small number of well-known or already-prominent individuals. Because the financial and cultural elites do their business on the East and West coasts, television network news concentrates there more than in other parts of the nation. After the 2012 Newtown shooting, the issue of gun violence in America dominated the media, although during the previous 40 years, household gun ownership has decreased. News does not accurately reflect

reality in the political sphere. Numerous wacky and intellectually intriguing third- and fourth-party presidential candidates are running, but neither the media nor the public acknowledge them. The Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary get a lot of media attention, yet these states' demographics do not accurately represent the variety of the United States, and they only provide a tiny share of the delegates required to win the major party primaries. There are hundreds of local, regional, and state-level elections held throughout the United States each year that result in decisions that have a more immediate impact on people's lives than the presidential contest, such as raising property taxes and altering school financing. However, the presidential race draws almost all of the interest.

Stenography is not the news. It is not comparable to the meticulous court stenographer-transcribed transcripts of court proceedings. News entails making a number of judgements about the crucial current events and matters that all members of a democracy should pay attention to. There is no way to possibly cover all that happens in real life. Even though people's daily activities are fascinating, the public would not be served if news focused more on, for instance, soccer moms and dads supporting their kids' sports teams than on income disparities or the family instability in the working class that jeopardizes the fabric of the culture. The electorate in 2012 would have been poorly served if journalists had decided that their coverage should precisely reflect the entirety of American political campaigns, leading them to lavish as much attention on candidates like Jack Fellure of the Prohibition Party and Jerry White of the Socialist Equality Party, who both pledged to emphasize the working class's resistance to capitalism.

News always entails a process of eliminating certain stories, choosing others, determining how much time or space should be given to each chosen item, and slanting the message in accordance with predetermined standards. Gatekeeping is the phrase used by academics to describe the process of a mass communication system selecting the information that will be sent to its constituents as a whole. Gatekeeping, according to Shoemaker, is the procedure by which the billions of communications that are accessible in the globe are condensed and changed into the hundreds of messages that are sent to a specific individual on a given day. David Manning White, in research carried out more than 60 years ago, detailed the actions of a particular gatekeeper. He concentrated on a wire editor at a morning city daily who chose items for the next day's newspaper by sorting through the national and international news on the teletype wires from the Associated Press, United Press International, and International News Service.

The editor selected only 1,297 inches a tenth of the roughly 12,400 inches of domestic and foreign news that came over the wire for publication in seven editions of the newspaper. His decisions were based on a variety of factors, some professional and others more aesthetic. White's key results were reproduced some 40 years later, although this time with a female wire editor. Making decisions as media gatekeepers is quite acceptable. The media is relied upon by citizens and authorities to sort through billions of communications and distill them into insightful summaries of the global scene. Investigative tales may reveal political wrongdoing while analytical pieces might educate. Gatekeepers may be considered outdated by some readers, especially those who get their news from Yahoo! or political blogs. You'll see that individuals now choose select articles to read and links to click. We control our own entrances.

However, this fails to take into account the reality that a large portion of the political news you read online originates from media outlets like newspapers, magazines, and network news that have filtered and chosen the content that is broadcast over your computer. Google and other news aggregators use computer algorithms to choose which news to show. But many of



the news articles delivered by conventional news sources are included in the population of news stories that the algorithms analyses. How does everything work? What determines the substance of news if it does not provide a literal depiction of reality? What considerations are taken into account by media gatekeepers when they meticulously edit certain articles and reject others that are destined for print, broadcast, or online transmission each day? These topics are looked at in the talks that follow [10]–[12].

### **What Is News Media Bias?**

Do journalists include their own opinions into the news? Does the news include bias? Many individuals believe the solutions to be apparent. Simply read the New York Times articles written by Paul Krugman. Thoughtful in his remarks, his liberal leanings are obvious. Except for Mitt Romney, he allegedly told an ABC News interviewer that all of the 2012 Republican contenders are fools and clowns! George Will, a conservative writer, is similarly intelligent but also quite outspoken on the opposite side of the political spectrum. Hosts of cable talk shows often make direct, controversial statements. Glenn Beck, a conservative, likened Obama's economic plan to Nazi Germany. In 2010, the Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts named Scott Brown was dubbed as an irresponsible, homophobic, racist, reactionary, ex-nude model, tea-bag supporter of violence against women and against politicians with whom he disagrees by the liberal former MSNBC host Keith Olbermann. Oh, and don't forget about radio, where Rush Limbaugh memorably referred to a Georgetown University law student who, in 2012, supported a regulation requiring insurance companies to provide contraception as a slut and prostitute. These remarks maintain the proud or vituperative, depending on your point of view tradition of partisanship that extends back to the Revolutionary War and are nothing if not fiercely political and prejudiced.

The public seems to perceive more media bias now than they did 25 years ago because to the apparent increase of opinionated remarks in recent years. But does this really imply that political bias permeates the news firms' coverage of current events for Americans? Does this suggest that the news that journalists report is influenced by their political views? The solutions are more intriguing and complex than is commonly supposed, contrary to what many detractors presume. For starters, the persons indicated above Krugman, Will, Beck, Olbermann, and Limbaugh are pundits hired to deliver views rather than news reports, and sometimes the more venomous the ideas, the more viewers their shows attract. Do the reporters and editors who compile and analyze the information, known as journalists, skew the news? There isn't a straightforward one-to-one relationship between journalists' political views and the news, which makes this a distinct matter. Bias is a difficult and usually obscure concept as well. Is positive coverage of a national economic recovery that takes place during a president's watch biased since there is so much good publicity available? Or is it just right and reasonable in view of the duty of journalists to report the facts in a particular circumstance? Is biased press coverage of a political controversy a result of the salacious and unfavorable stories? Or is it specifically the kind of coverage that the circumstance demands?

There is bias in all news, even at the most fundamental philosophical level. Nobody is impartial. When a reporter chooses one adjective over another to summarize a candidate's performance in a political debate, bias is present. When a photographer chooses a camera position that shows a candidate striking a more appealing stance than an unflattering one, bias is present. When news outlets focus on negative rather than good elements of public life, bias is shown. Everyone acknowledges that the news has biases. These, however, are not the prejudices that drive critics. They are referring to ideological or politically driven biases that favor one political point of view over another. This is when things become complicated.

Because bias entails more than just determining if a news outlet favors one side of the debate over the other, it is difficult to quantify. According to researcher C. Richard Hofstetter, two difficult factors are needed to provide a compelling argument for bias: there must be an independent, reputable source of information about the reported matter; and there must be evidence that the reporter was aware of a discrepancy between the authoritative version and the account under scrutiny. A definition of news bias is provided to assist distinguish reality from fiction in this contentious field based on this and another research. In situations when it may be legitimately claimed that there are different viewpoints on the topic that are equally worthy of attention, news bias arises when there is a persistent media pattern in the presentation of an issue, in a manner that dependably favors one side or reduces the opposing side. There are several considerations.

First, the kind of coverage must follow a predictable pattern. A biased report that benefits Democrats over Republicans may not really be biased. Second, prejudice may manifest in a variety of ways. It may happen as a result of the deliberate omission of information, the disproportionate amount of time devoted to one side over another, the tone of the reporting, the language used, or even the way a news outlet chooses to frame the story or set the agenda. Third, the pattern in coverage must be amenable to trustworthy empirical technique verification. The biases should be the focus of a scientific inquiry using the methodical content analysis approaches. The same pattern in news coverage should be visible to observers from various angles.

Fourth, there must be more acceptable viewpoints on the subject that are ignored or marginalized because the journalist or media outlet in question seems to have a political bias. Fifth, and linked to the previous point, the alternative viewpoints need to merit attention. We wouldn't say that since there was compassion for the victim, the news coverage of the gruesome murder of an innocent person was biased. It would be absurd to claim that the narrative was biased because the individual who acknowledged stabbing the victim 50 times wasn't given a sympathetic portrayal. It is necessary to include viewpoints that are consistent with societal norms and common sense. Let's analyze the concept of bias before moving on to the issue of whether journalistic attitudes influence news and the function of political bias. The assertion that news is liberally biased is made in the first section of the following paragraph, and this claim is then critically reviewed and examined in the second half.

### **Positioning Essential Questions Regarding Liberal Bias**

The liberal bias thesis has two parts: journalists are liberal; and they incorporate their liberal views into their profession, resulting in news that is biased to the left. Now let's attentively and critically examine each point. A thorough analysis of the literature supports the idea that top Washington journalists actually have liberal viewpoints on a variety of social problems. What about national journalists and editors, though? Are they liberals as well? The study David H. Weaver and his colleagues have done over the last three decades on the traits of American journalist's yields a number of answers. Their findings imply that national journalists are more conservative than Washington, D.C. reporters. While 36% of the journalists they surveyed in 2002 identified as Democrats, 18% identified as Republicans, and around 32.5 percent identified as Independents.

You can hardly label journalists as extreme liberals when more than 50% of respondents identified as Republicans or Independents! Additionally, media executives and owners, who are the employers of reporters, are businesspeople with more conservative outlooks that prioritize the bottom line. Liberal journalists may be compelled by their instructions to highlight more traditional viewpoints in their reports. However, there is a more significant

issue at play. Journalists strive to be professionals in their field. They understand that adding their own prejudices to news stories is unethical and goes against journalistic ethics. Additionally, it will alienate conservative customers and may even get them fired.

Let's examine the second argument: News reports push a leftist agenda. The fact that so much of the defense's evidence is anecdotal presents a challenge. Although intriguing and illuminating, it does not provide strong evidence to support the concept. In their books, Ann Coulter and Bernard Goldberg who were referenced at the outset of this section offer a plethora of instances, but they seem to have been chosen specifically to support their claims or may be overwhelmed by a barrage of opposing evidence. For instance, Goldberg said that the media focus on feminists but ignore conservative abortion opponents in the second clip cited at the beginning of this section. How can we be sure he is right? He could be, but he might also have conveniently ignored all the times when pro-life opponents of abortion were shown positively on television. His argument may have been true in the past, but more recent coverage that benefited the pro-life position may have buried it.

Conducting content analysis in the manner described above is the only method to conclusively show that the volume or tone of coverage favors one political perspective over another. You wouldn't want to rely on just one person to code material since they can have highly distorted views of the world. Instead, one would ideally engage a range of different people and encourage them to adhere to a strict code guide that used scientific methods to assess the favorability of coverage. Researchers that have used this approach have found results that are far different from what conservative opponents have indicated. A thorough investigation was done by two experts into how the important 1980 election between Republican Ronald Reagan and Democrat Jimmy Carter was reported by United Press International and CBS News. Reagan prevailed in the election and was given somewhat more favorable press coverage than Carter. The bulk of the articles were impartial or balanced, the study found. In its depiction of the field and of the individual candidates, CBS and UPI were both generally fair.

A detailed analysis by Dave D'Alessio and Mike Allen in 2000 produced more convincing evidence against leftist prejudice. The authors carried out a meta-analysis, often known as a study of studies, in which social scientists examine several empirical research papers and using statistical methods to determine if the conclusions are reliable or suspect across studies. The meta-analytic analysis by D'Alessio and Allen concluded that there was little evidence for bias. D'Alessio and Allen found no newspaper biases that benefited Democrats or Republicans after reviewing several quantitative analyses of media presidential campaign stories from 1948 through 1996. Newsmagazine biases were minimal, although there was a little pro-Republican slant in the reporting. A slight, though not fully consistent, tendency favoring Democratic candidates might be seen on television.

Even when a certain person or group is negatively portrayed in the media, this does not always indicate that the reporting is biased. A communicator who is biased has a deliberate aim to slant the news in a certain direction. For instance, Lichter and his associates believed that press reports that highlighted important concerns about the safety of nuclear power plants were biased. However, this need not have implied a desire to cast doubt on the nuclear problem in order to further a liberal anti-nuclear agenda; rather, it was only an effort to raise awareness of a social issue, which is a duty of journalists to society. The desire to educate the public about a subject that journalists felt had been ignored by authorities may have been the driving force behind articles expressing worries about radiation effects, environmental dangers, and catastrophic accidents, particularly in the wake of a 1979 accident at the Three

Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania that resulted in the release of radioactive gases into the environment.

In other cases, the story is shaped by the events. After the 2008 financial crisis, which happened under Bush's watch, departing President George W. Bush and Republican presidential contender John McCain were subjected to difficult questioning. After his extramarital relationship with Monica Lewinsky and refusal to acknowledge his actions, Democrat Bill Clinton was exposed to a barrage of unfavorable press. The financial crisis and a president's lied revealed under oath, however, did not represent biases so much as journalistic urges to hold people responsible for major effects. The liberal bias argument is overblown, to sum up. In American media, conservatives are well-represented. There is a conservative David Brooks opinion article for every liberal one written by Paul Krugman in *The New York Times*. On Fox, Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity present conservative viewpoints. While Fox is respectable with conservatives, traditional liberal publications like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have significant respect among liberal progressives. In addition, it has received greater ratings from viewers than the other well-known 24-hour news networks, CNN and MSNBC. On the internet, the Left has a sizable following for the site Daily Kos, while the Right has enough of persuading liberal criticism on RedStateDiaries.

Romney repeated the standard criticism that the media unfairly covered Republicans throughout the 2012 spring primary season, claiming that he was the victim of a vast left-wing conspiracy. In fact, according to a content analysis by the Pew Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, Romney received significantly more favorable press in the first week of April 2012 than his Republican rivals, and all of them did so more favorably than Obama. Because of his management of a faltering economy, Obama got a lot of negative coverage throughout the 2012 general election campaign. There are significant flaws in the perennially popular liberal media bias argument. There is not much proof to back it up. The political news in American media reflects a diversity of opposing viewpoints rather than a mostly liberal one. However, as stated by Weaver et al., conservatives are true that journalists have more liberal political views than the majority of the population. Additionally, they have given illuminating anecdotal examples of instances in which journalists have covered social topics with a liberal bias. Actually, media critics have made journalists approach their job from a different viewpoint than they could have otherwise, which has often resulted in their creating more informed assessments of current affairs by consistently bringing reporters' feet to the fire.

## CONCLUSION

Unquestionably, news media bias is pervasive in contemporary culture. This study has shed light on the various manifestations of media bias, including covert and overt manifestations that might affect public perception and impact political debate. The persistence of bias in news reporting is influenced by a number of factors, including ownership structures, business pressures, ideological leanings, and even the impact of social media algorithms. The effects of media bias are extensive. Public faith in the media can be eroded by misinformation, polarization, and the dissemination of party views, which can also be detrimental to democratic processes. By only reading news that supports their pre-existing opinions, citizens may become more and more prone to echo chambers and filter bubbles, escalating social differences. Bias in the news media must be addressed in multiple ways. To rebuild the public's trust, media companies must place a high priority on fact-checking, transparency, and ethical journalism. The public has to be taught media literacy and critical thinking skills so they can recognize biased information and seek out different viewpoints. In the end, a

knowledgeable and critical populace is necessary for a democracy to work successfully. Societies may promote a more inclusive, educated, and participatory public debate, bolster democratic institutions, and defend democracy's core ideals in the digital era by detecting and aggressively combating news media bias.

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## CHAPTER 15

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF STEREOTYPES AND GENDER BIAS

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#### ABSTRACT:

Stereotypes and gender prejudice are persistent social constructions that have a big influence on people's lives and continue to support gender-based inequality. This chapter examines the causes and effects of stereotypes and gender prejudice, emphasizing how commonplace they are in areas like media portrayal, employment, and education. By actively confronting their own prejudices, encouraging candid dialogues, and supporting laws and programs that encourage inclusion and equal rights, people may play a significant part in the fight against gender bias. The research clarifies the negative consequences these prejudices have on people's self-esteem, opportunities, and general well-being by looking at the psychological processes behind them. Additionally, in order to promote a more equal and inclusive society, this research suggests viable approaches to combat stereotypes and gender prejudice.

#### KEYWORDS:

Candidates, Gender, Media, News, Stereotypes.

#### INTRODUCTION

Other journalistic biases other than political ideology have been mentioned by critics. Over time, racial bias has had an impact on reporters. When waves of lynching raced across America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the press applauded the savage deed, sensationalizing coverage and abstaining from denunciation. Later, when Jesse Jackson, a pioneer in African American civil rights, campaigned for president in 1984 and 1988, the mass media avoided giving his bid substantial consideration. His portrayal in the media as a performer and an accomplished orator led to his being described as an almost ornamental presence. Other academics hypothesized that minor racial biases may have been present, despite some defenders of the coverage pointing out that Jackson was never a serious candidate for the Democratic candidacy. Twenty years later, during the 2008 campaign, there was a flurry of incorrect information about Obama's religion and racist nonsense on the internet [1]–[3].

The mainstream media presented Obama's 2008 campaign in a completely different, far more impartial, and even friendly light. In 2012, racial issues hardly ever came up, albeit they did in the context of coverage of how Obama skillfully balanced the presidency with initiatives meant to meet the concerns of African Americans. The subject of gender now comes up. Critics, academics, and feminists have asserted that the news media often portrays female candidates in sexist ways, provides condescending evaluations, and frames stories in sexist terms. The prejudices against modern female politicians, according to some researchers, have virtually vanished. They argue that disparities in how male and female candidates are reported are due to news ideals and accepted journalistic procedures. The analyses on gender roles and presidential politics are based on a wide range of empirical research as well as



books by Erika Falk, Regina G. Lawrence, and Melody Rose. We should be able to sift through the maze of these contentious topics using the researchers' findings and come up with some solutions.

### **Historical Perspective**

This is how it was in the past. Equal rights advocates urged more women to run for political office as the Women's Movement gained momentum in 1972. Some mentioned the possibility of a woman being president one day. However, because it was the 1970s, sexism was widespread. One guy made the observation that: Women are not qualified for this high office, typifying the viewpoint shared by many Americans. If a woman were to ever be elected president, she would have to rely solely on the counsel of the males she chose to fill important executive posts. In the case of conflict, may heaven protect us? She was unable to manage the enormous tasks. There were many of the same prejudices in journalism. Geraldine Ferraro was the first woman to be selected for vice president in 1984, according to NBC anchor Tom Brokaw, who made the announcement as she proudly stood in front of the delegates at the Democratic National Convention. Between 1982 and 1986, female candidates for the Senate received less publicity in the media than male candidates did. Over 90% of the time in their advertisements, female Senate candidates emphasized their masculine qualities, such strength, but just 40% of the time in news coverage.

In 1972, 1988, 2000, and 2004, female presidential candidates received less press than their male rivals. According to media reports, female presidential candidates' campaigns had a lower chance of success than those of similar male contenders. The media used stereotypical portrayals of the female presidential and vice-presidential candidates, characterizing them in more emotive terms and drawing attention to their attire and gender while placing greater emphasis on the age and look of the male contenders. 2008 is now in view. When Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin campaigned for president and vice president, was this stereotypical coverage still in effect? Or did it vanish, a vestige of a bygone era? These issues are clarified by two methods. The first places a focus on journalistic standards and procedures. The second focuses on the influence that gender-role preconceptions and stereotypes have on news reporting.

Our judgments, attitudes, and actions toward others depending on their gender are shaped by stereotypes and gender prejudice, which are firmly embedded in society. While gender bias refers to the unfair treatment and opportunities given to people based on their gender, stereotypes are oversimplified and sometimes wrong judgments about a certain group. These ideas have broad repercussions and stand in the way of social justice and gender equality.

#### **1. The Origins of Stereotypes and Gender Bias**

Stereotypes and gender prejudice can result from historical and cultural norms and are reinforced by institutional practices, media portrayal, and socialization. Children are exposed to gender-specific responsibilities and expectations from an early age, which causes them to internalize these prejudices. Advertising and the media often support gender stereotypes by depicting certain roles as acceptable for particular genders, which may have an impact on attitudes and goals.

#### **2. Impact on Well-Being and Self-Identity**

The self-identity and wellbeing of a person may be severely impacted by stereotypes and gender prejudice. People might experience feelings of inadequacy, decreased self-esteem, and a lowered sense of self-worth when they are routinely exposed to unfavorable stereotypes or

treated unjustly based on their gender. Additionally, it may result in mental health problems and a vicious cycle of self-fulfilling prophecies.

### **3. Career and Educational Possibilities**

Opportunities for specific genders may be constrained by gender prejudice in the workplace and in school. In certain countries, males may feel pressure to steer clear of traditionally feminine occupations while girls may be discouraged from pursuing STEM disciplines. This adds to the gender wage gap and maintains gender segregation in professional routes[4]–[6].

### **4. Taking the reins and making decisions**

Gender stereotypes often have an impact on leadership and decision-making responsibilities. Women are underrepresented in leadership positions because they are sometimes regarded as being less capable or forceful. A lack of different viewpoints may stifle innovation and advancement within businesses and across society.

### **5. Media Reinforcement and Representation**

The media has a significant impact on society standards and views. Unfortunately, media portrayals often perpetuate gender stereotypes by painting women as weak, emotional, and only concerned with their beauty, while men are portrayed as powerful, logical, and in charge. Such portrayals not only reinforce prejudice but also limit the variety of opportunities and responsibilities available to people of all genders.

### **6. Intersectionality with a Variety of Biases**

It's important to understand that gender prejudice does not exist in a vacuum. Based on their color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other intersecting identities, people may experience numerous layers of prejudice. Because of the complicated relationships between many types of prejudice highlighted by intersectionality, it is essential to address biases holistically.

### **7. Fighting Gender Bias and Stereotypes**

It takes group efforts at the individual, institutional, and social levels to combat stereotypes and gender prejudice. The key to eliminating prejudices is education, and schools should promote an inclusive culture that questions conventional gender roles. Employers are required to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace by providing all workers with equal opportunity and respect. Media creators should strive to reflect a variety of gender roles that are realistic and avoid damaging stereotypes. Promoting good role models and exhibiting a variety of experiences may also aid in dispelling preconceived notions.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Clinton And The Press**

Senator Hillary Clinton electrified millions of supporters, particularly women, who had long waited for the day when a woman could take the helm of the American presidency with those words, which she announced on her website on January 20, 2007, two years before the day a new president would take the oath of office in 2009. Her candidacy also generated a number of difficulties for the news media. Few questioned Clinton's intelligence and expertise. She was a former first lady, a Yale-educated attorney, and a champion of her husband's health reform legislation in the heady days of 1993. She was also a twice-elected senator from New York. Clinton had the political swagger and intellectual fortitude to win the Democratic nomination. Her comments to a reporter at the beginning of her husband's 1992 presidential campaign that she would not act passively like some little woman standing by my man like

[country singer] Tammy Wynette enraged many voters who had traditional sex-role attitudes. But during the subsequent years, Clinton seemed to have won over a majority of these people, winning praise from her Senate colleagues. She was seen as the undisputed front-runner for the Democratic presidential candidacy as the 2008 campaign drew closer.

### 1. Journalistic Viewpoint

How did the media cover Clinton, then? The journalistic perspective highlights how much journalists had advanced from the sexist prejudices of the 1970s and 1980s. It highlights that news ideals and professional journalistic practices, which guided journalists to concentrate on issues other than gender, eventually define the news. This viewpoint is supported by evidence. In general, Clinton had far better press than her predecessors who were women. Additionally, there was almost any difference in the amount of publicity she provided compared to Obama, her main rival. Her viewpoints on the topics were mentioned just as often as Obama's, and there was no discernible difference in the number of physical descriptors she and Obama got in the print media.

She received almost the same amount of TV news coverage that Obama did. However, quantity was just half of the tale; at this point, additional troubling, divisive issues arise that need for a serious, comprehensive examination of the news. Prior to and throughout the 2008 primary season, Clinton received much more unfavorable coverage than either Barack Obama or John McCain, the ultimate Republican candidate. In compared to Obama and McCain, 23 percent of the reports between October 2007 and June 2008 included at least one disparaging statement regarding Clinton. In comparison to Obama and McCain, Clinton was mentioned negatively in a news report a lot more often than they were. The press coverage of Clinton was more negative than that of Obama and McCain [7]–[9].

A more sociological perspective that places greater emphasis on journalistic traditions claims that Clinton's more unfavorable coverage was not biased towards women. The character of her publicity may be explained by a number of factors outside gender prejudice. She had previously been the Democratic front-runner. This indicated that she had a strong chance of winning the party's nomination. In order for voters to consider these concerns while casting their vote, reporters think it is their obligation to press frontrunners with difficult questions. They point out that voters have a right to be aware of the flaws of their party's probable candidate. This is one of the reasons why press articles about Clinton's mistakes or political shortcomings were more prominent than they may have been had she been seen as the underdog. Additionally, her campaign made noteworthy strategic mistakes. Clinton allowed her husband, who is typically a master political strategist, to interfere with her campaign, detracting from her candidacy. By making fun of Obama's long-standing opposition to the Iraq War and then downplaying the importance of his decisive victory in the South Carolina primary, which had been aided by his ability to win three-quarters of the Black vote, he outraged African Americans. A thrilled Obama adviser referred to this as divine intervention. Due to widely publicized employee disputes and damaging in-fighting, Clinton's campaign also started to fall apart.

Third, Clinton lost ground as the Obama campaign gained traction following a string of stunning victories in Democratic primary contests and the support of the party's royalty, including Caroline Kennedy, the daughter of President Kennedy, and her late uncle Edward Kennedy, a former senator from Massachusetts who wielded enormous influence among rank-and-file Democrats. Clinton started to fall behind as the tide started to turn in Obama's direction. Her position as the front-runner abruptly vanished as Obama gained respect among party officials. Obama's mostly positive press serves as a contrast to Clinton's more

unfavorable coverage. Some of the causes of the disparity were deeply rooted in accepted journalism standards. Reporters are drawn to the novel and the new, and Obama was a captivating candidate with an engaging story. Political communication scholar Gadi Wolfsfeld said, He was just a terrific news story.

## 2. A View from the Gender Role

Another interpretation exists. Contrasting perspectives on Clinton's 2008 press coverage highlight the persistence of the same old sex-role prejudices, sometimes shown discreetly and other times rather clearly. The gendered interpretation is based on theories and studies that demonstrate how language affects behavior. Voters' assessments of candidates may be influenced by the labels media assign to politicians. Reporters who make gender-based distinctions between candidates and use stereotypical traits while addressing male and female candidates risk having an ongoing negative impact. Additionally, if a candidate is not covered by the media because she is a woman or if a politician's chances of winning an election are downplayed because the media believes that no one will ever vote for a woman, this may lead some voters to view female candidates less favorably than their male counterparts.

The sexist belief that women cannot be both professionally competent and feminine creates a psychological dilemma for female applicants, according to the gendered worldview. Candidates are expected to exhibit stereotypically male qualities like strength, power, and decisiveness by voters. Women confront a challenging challenge from the start if society believes it is unacceptable for women to exhibit certain traits, preferring instead that they act in stereotypically feminine ways. The difficulties female candidates confront in being elected to public office increases if the press promotes and perpetuates this dilemma. How was Clinton covered in the news? An in-depth analysis of the 2008 press coverage reveals that some of the sex-role stereotypes that were present during previous elections were present in the news.

Clinton was first characterized in more physical terms than the norm for prior male presidential hopefuls, despite the fact that print stories supplied about the same amount of physical descriptions of her as of Obama. Eyebrows were raised by several of the physical descriptions. The neckline [of a black shirt] lay low on her breast and featured a delicate V-shape, according to a much debated Washington Post piece. After barely a fleeting gaze, the cleavage became apparent. The likelihood that an article would refer to Clinton by her first name was higher than the likelihood that it would refer to Obama as Barack or her main rival John Edwards as John. Commentaries on radio and cable television removed their gloves. They used the b-word freely and with impunity. Glenn Beck, a conservative radio personality, referred to Clinton as a stereotypical bitch. She was described as bitchy on an MSNBC broadcast by the late liberal writer Christopher Hitchens. The news film, which showed a McCain fan asking openly, How do we beat the bitch? and McCain affirming it by saying, That's an excellent question, may have justified calling a presidential contender by a derogatory name. By accessing the double-bind that regards femininity as excluding competence, the use of a demeaning animal image seems to imply that female leadership is unnatural [10]–[12].

Images of castration were also used. Clinton received a lot of offensive mail based on gender. For instance, when she appeared on another show, Tucker Carlson, a former host of the CNN program Crossfire, said, I have often said, when she comes on television, I involuntarily cross my legs. There is proof that rampant sex-role prejudices still persist when you look at the plethora of opinionated remarks on radio, television, and especially the Internet. Social media platforms provided a plethora of demeaning representations. More than 41,000 people joined

the Facebook page Hillary Clinton: Stop Running for President and Make Me a Sandwich in March 2008. Another had more than 3,000 members and advocated that Clinton Shouldn't Run for President, She Should Just Run the Dishes.

## **Palin And The Press**

How was Sarah Palin covered by the media? Definitely more vividly and colorfully. As was said in the opening chapter, Palin was a key figure in the presidential campaign. She captured the attention of the media, inspired conservative Republicans including women who could relate to her life story and served as a focal point for criticism from liberals and right-leaning media pundits who thought she was unqualified to serve as vice president. Less academic research has been done on Palin's campaign than on Clinton's. But the study clarifies how Palin was seen and covered in 2008. Both the journalistic and gender roles perspectives may be used to analyze Palin's news coverage.

### **1. A Journalistic Perspective**

Was the press against Palin? According to the journalistic perspective, it wasn't. She earned more than twice as much publicity on Internet blogs as her Democratic rival, Joe Biden, in contrast to earlier generations of female candidates who could have been sidelined by the media. Why then was the criticism of her so harsh? As Amy M. Bradley and Robert H. Wicks highlighted, Palin was new to the political sphere, journalists may have attempted to 'dig up the dirt' on her life and career. And there was plenty of dirt to be uncovered, including the pregnancy of her teenage daughter and the humiliating admission that the Republican National Committee had funded Palin's pricey campaign outfit. But they dug it up because journalism is often unpleasant and concentrates on unexpected, unusual concerns, not because she was a woman.

### **2. A Gender Role Perspective**

In several of the news reports, Palin's gender took center stage. But because Palin mixed masculine issue stances with a feminine manner, the representations were more nuanced than Clinton's. She adopted opinions on issues that are often associated with men while wearing the trappings of femininity stiletto heels, silk shirts, and pearls, along with, of course, lipstick. She embraced the stereotypically feminine virtue of parenting while supporting vehemently Republican principles. This self-described hockey mom, who appeared to embody their challenges and ideals, was a figure that some working-class women could relate to. A few males openly brandished placards that said, Palin Is a Fox. A method based on gender emphasizes the variety of media perspectives and takes a nuanced look of Palin's coverage. According to Linda Beail and Rhonda Kinney Longworth, Sarah Palin was many things to many individuals and was presented in the media in startlingly different ways.

She was portrayed in the media as a tough frontier woman, a political outsider, and a former beauty queen who was at ease in both her own skin and stylish clothing. She was also referred to in news reports as a hockey mom. As one media observer put it, Ms. Pain is a wife and mother who also happens to be a politician; Senator Clinton is a politician who also happens to be a wife and mother. Many working-class women who felt left out by elites connected with Palin's down-home, one of us, hearth-and-home narrative. She evoked conflicting media frames as a contemporary achiever, competing in a patriarchal political environment, unafraid to flaunt the traditional trappings of femininity, and a throwback to a time when women only cared about adhering to male ideals of beauty. However, to others, she remained a loaded, controversial figure.



It is hard to separate the frameworks that Republicans prominently stressed, Palin actively promoted, and the press alone accentuated. Conservative detractors said that Palin was suppressed by the media, which snobbishly downplayed her gaffes, conveniently ignored her down-home religious appeal, and exaggerated her physical attributes. There is scant indication that mainstream journalism mirrored this stereotype, despite the fact that certain media commentators exhibited these characteristics. At the same time, Palin was portrayed by the media in a number of ways, some of which were brought about by her own self-presentation, some by journalistic traditions, and still others by the confluence of her gender role and political views.

This chapter explored the idea of bias by looking at it from many angles. The majority of Americans claim that the news is biased, yet it is unclear what they mean by this. They likely have several ideas in mind. Given how often the shady, unpleasant aspects of life are presented in the news, some people could think that it is biased. This is not truly a prejudice, since it is the responsibility of journalists to reveal aspects of the world that people do not often see or would want to keep hidden. Others may think of opinionated news anchors, cable TV brawls, or political blogs. They may justifiably label this as prejudiced, which it is, and extrapolate this belief to the rest of the news, which is typically more impartial, or at the very least more casual. Others believe that prejudice depends on who is seeing it. Some news consumers have strong political opinions and exhibit the all-too-human propensity to attribute bias to information they find offensive. People are correct in other instances as well, such as when news is biased in favor of a significant interest group. And in other cases, individuals can assert that the news media are prejudiced because they have heard this argument repeated so often. Media bias has become a myth in both urban and rural areas, and if you've heard someone else say that the news is biased, you could say it yourself when an interviewer asks you what you think about the subject.

A social scientific method simplifies things by providing a detailed explanation of bias in the news media. In situations when it may be legitimately argued that there are different viewpoints on the topic that are equally worthy of attention, news media bias arises when there is a persistent media pattern in presentation of an issue that dependably favors one side or reduces the opposing side. It's not always indicative of prejudice when a political person is portrayed favorably or unfavorably in a piece. In order to be biased, gatekeepers' views must be consciously and repeatedly inserted into the news narrative. One theory is that the news that appears in print, TV, and online is influenced by the political views of the journalists themselves. The common belief that news is biased to the left is a consequence of this idea. In actuality, journalists especially those covering Washington, D.C. are more liberal than the general people.

It is also true that certain social issue articles have been presented by media sources with a left-liberal orientation, highlighting a description of the issue that is more agreeable to a liberal than a conservative perspective. However, the liberal bias theory exaggerates and falsifies. Theorists of the liberal bias hypothesis often use selective evidence to bolster their claims, relying more on data obtained by political groups than social scientific research. You will struggle to uncover evidence of a systematic bias in favor of liberal causes when you examine the media as a whole rather than individual media entities. Likewise, the widely accepted though fallacious argument that news is liberally biased has had the positive impact of motivating journalists to include a variety of points of view in their reports.

The news, according to critics, also exhibits other biases including racial and gender-based ones. A number of derogatory stereotypes regarding female and African American candidates have already been conveyed in the press. Though there is still disagreement, especially about



the issue of gender prejudice, the situation has undoubtedly improved. A journalistic viewpoint stresses the importance of journalistic traditions, but a gender-bias perspective argues that the legacy of sex-role discrimination still exists and results in both subtle and overt prejudices against female candidates.

The journalistic method highlights the volume and positive kind of coverage that both Palin and Clinton got, demonstrating the progress that has been achieved in recent years.

The gender-bias viewpoint emphasizes how journalists evaluated Palin and Clinton in terms of their genders and draws attention to the severe sexism on websites and in social media. It would be fascinating to observe how media representations alter in the years to come given that more women are expected to compete for president and that a record 20 female senators are now representing people.

## CONCLUSION

Our culture is still plagued by stereotypes and gender prejudice, which uphold injustices and restrict people's potential depending on their gender. The complexity of these notions and their negative impacts on people have been emphasized in this essay, especially on women who are often the targets of widespread prejudices in a variety of spheres of life. Progress toward a fully equal society is hampered by gender prejudice in important sectors including education, the workplace, and media representation. A coordinated effort from several parties is needed to address these problems. Gender-sensitive curriculum must be used in educational institutions to combat stereotypes from an early age. Employers should undertake activities that promote equality for all genders and diversity. By bucking the status quo, media should strive to represent gender roles in a varied and fair manner. We can create a more equal society where people are free to follow their dreams regardless of their gender by jointly tackling stereotypes and gender prejudice. This will help to create a world that embraces variety and allows everyone to realize their full potential.

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## **CHAPTER 16**

### **A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: UNPACKING THE POLITICAL NEWS**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The chapter Unpacking the Political News explores the difficulties and ramifications of the current political news environment. It explores the difficulties that media organizations, journalists, and the public have in comprehending and interpreting political news. The research demonstrates the effect of media bias, political agendas, and disinformation on moulding public opinion via an examination of the elements influencing news coverage. It also examines how social media and digital platforms are used to spread political news and how it could affect democratic processes. The goal of the research is to provide readers a thorough grasp of the complex system of political news transmission and the value of exercising critical thought while reading political news. The research also clarifies the dangers of echo chambers, in which people are only exposed to material that supports their own ideas, and the role that social media plays in amplifying political news. Digital platforms need to understand their role in content curation and halting the propagation of false information.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Journalists, Media, News, Political News, Reporters.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Political reporters were aware of the procedure. Heck, they had already heard the speech several times. They were aware of the crucial phrases, tones, and occasions when Obama and Romney would go straight to the point and say something that would elicit applause. When they got back to their computers, they also knew how to compose the narrative. They would have to write rapidly since they wouldn't have much time. They would make a short note of the speech's venue, audience numbers, and any responses from the audience. They would make sure to choose a speech quotation that was particularly memorable. They would make careful to mention any unexpected events that occurred, such as a heckler yelling an aggressive question. Any disagreements that arose for example, between the heckler and the candidate or even between two members of the campaigns staff who were debating whether the optics would be good for television would undoubtedly be included in the account. The reporters would mention how crucial it was for a candidate to win Ohio's 18 electoral votes since this is Ohio, the swing state of swing states [1]–[3].

After hearing three Ohio journalists discuss their experiences covering the 2012 presidential campaign, I wrote these comments. They provide a rough picture of the usual, ritualistic traditions of journalism that the reporters tacitly referred to when they reflected on their coverage of the Ohio presidential election. One of the main elements affecting political gatekeeping is routine. This chapter examines how media practices, organizational dynamics, economics, and social systemic elements affect political news in a more comprehensive manner. You may be surprised by the debate since it looks at topics that aren't often on

people's minds when they think about the news. However, these elements news values, economics, and features of the political system have a significant impact on modern political journalism.

The chapter's first section examines how journalistic practices affect the collecting of political news. The second section examines the function of organizational forces, a subject that directly connects us to the debates surrounding Fox News. The third segment investigates how various economic elements affect news, and the last piece examines the intricate ways that the greater political structure affects news, especially how recent conflicts are covered. Important topics are mentioned at the conclusion of each segment. The many journalistic techniques evolved from Shoemaker and Reese's work shed light on the reasons why news has the color and hue that it has.

### **Media Routines**

Routines probably conjure up a variety of uninteresting images: the routine and predictable errands of daily life; employees going about their 9 to 5 jobs' workday activities, such as shuffling papers, checking email, sending attachments, and performing other monotonous but necessary tasks. In this regard, journalists are no different from other professionals. They do a variety of mundane tasks as part of their employment, which academics usually classify as news work. But make no mistake, these endeavors are crucial. According to research, media gatekeepers' daily activities better predict newspaper coverage of political problems than do reporters' individual-level traits. This is a crucial discovery since it actually shows that the demands of the work have a greater influence on the creation of political news stories than do the sentiments of the reporters[4]–[6].

What do media rituals entail? According to Shoemaker & Reese, they are those patterned, routinized, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their jobs. Routines help reporters gather information effectively from a professional standpoint by offering tried-and-true techniques to choose which material should pass through informational gates and which should be ignored. There are three main routines: journalistic news values with an ethical foundation; reliance on sources; and reliance on informational channels.

### **News Values**

News values are based on moral principles. Reporters should: According to the Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics:

- i. Search for the truth and communicate it in ways that are honorable, just, and brave;
- ii. Exercise independence by being free of obligation to any interest other than the right of the public to know; and
- iii. Reduce damage by respecting sources and being compassionate toward anyone who could be negatively impacted by news reports.

The standards and practices of journalism have an impact on news values as well. The principles that guide reporters' choice of sources and creation of news articles are known as journalistic news values. Important values include:

#### **1. Importance in society**

Events of great social importance are covered by news, where social relevance is defined as having an impact on the political system, the economy, and the health and well-being of individuals. In addition, given its far-reaching consequences for the provision of essential

medical services, insurance, and doctor-patient relationships, the Supreme Court's 2012 ruling on the Obama health care plan received a lot of media attention.

## **2. Timeframes**

A newspaper must be published the next day, a television network's website or Facebook page must be updated often to reflect evolving events, and journalists are required to update blogs on a regular basis. Deadlines now arrive every hour rather than multiple times per day since reporter's tweet updates regularly in the age of Twitter. Events are more likely to be covered if they fit the media's deadline framework. When deadline pressure is present, journalists are susceptible to errors. This occurred in June 2012 when Fox and CNN jumped the gun and reported that the Supreme Court had overturned Obama's health care law when, in fact, it had only ruled that it was constitutional in order to be the first to break the story of the decision.

## **3. Newness**

This follows from the adage that states that if a dog attacks a man, it is not newsworthy since it occurs often enough to not be shocking when it does. But if a person attacks a dog a guy or a woman that is a story because it is out of the ordinary and unexpected. Dogs have really been bit by men! A rabid dog was once held down by a guy in southern India, who then bit the creature in the neck. When information is the result of fresh, innovative, or uncommon developments, it is newsworthy. This is one of the explanations for why the news of the Cleveland bus driver striking out a passenger received so much attention.

## **4. Discord**

Conflict makes for great news. Group disputes, such as those between Republican and Democratic congressional leaders, labor and management, and Occupy Wall Street protesters and authorities, are often in the news. Conflict creates a fun, dramatic framework for discussing topics while also implying that something significant is happening and that there is a problem deserving of attention. When there are various points of view on a topic, news often reduces disagreements to only two sides by weaving a cogent story around them.

## **5. Feeding frenzy and pack journalism**

When a public figure is involved in a scandal or issue, reporters might move quickly, seeking fresh leads and continuing to cover the topic nonstop until the person responds, steps down, or there is no more news to report. Because so many journalists believe it is worthy of their attention, the story is assumed to be more noteworthy. It's referred described as a feeding frenzy by academics.

## **6. Negative details**

When anything differs from the usual, it is considered noteworthy. Positive results are not remarkable because people anticipate or believe that life will turn out well in the end. Positive occurrences are the usual; negative news is unexpected and, as a result, gets more attention. Thus, candidate gaffes, errors, and rude conduct are highlighted. Press coverage of economic downturns is sometimes greater than that of rises in domestic production.

# **DISCUSSION**

The ethical standards and journalistic ideals of journalists influence news gathering. These are susceptible to strong impact from other elements, such as the desire for profit. Many news organizations have slashed employees and funding for travel as a result of economic

challenges on the industry, which has sometimes made them more reliant on wire services or other eminent media groups with more pockets[7]–[9].

### **Who Says It: Channels and Sources**

According to Leon Sigal, news is not what happens, but what someone says has happened or will happen. Reporters are seldom able to see events firsthand; instead, they must depend on other parties' perspectives. They refer to the others as sources, and these sources are almost always senior government personnel. Almost three-fourths of all news sources cited in articles in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* were local and foreign government officials, important figures in the political elite, according to a classic research by Sigal. By any accounting, the conclusion is inescapable: Even the best journalism in the land is extremely dependent on the political messages of a small spectrum of official news sources, Bennett said on page 108.

Similarly, journalists typically use official or conventional routes to get political information. There are three types of information channels: enterprise, informal, and formal. Congressional hearings, news conferences at the White House, press releases from the government, and planned events like speeches and ceremonies are examples of formal channels. Background briefings are typically a part of informal channels. Information is released by a government press officer on background, enabling it to be described but not given a specific source. Reports from other news outlets and leaks information that a government employee knowingly gives to a reporter for a variety of purposes, such as exposing corruption or humiliating a political foe also fall under the category of informal channels.

The third information source is enterprise reporting, which is what we often associate with a combative press. Enterprise channels provide investigative reporting, including as in-depth exposés of corruption, as well as lengthy, reporter-initiated conversations with political officials and spontaneous incidents that were really seen. Sigal found that formal routes explained 58 percent of the articles, enterprise reporting explained 26% of the stories, and informal channels explained around 16% of the stories in a study of front-page stories in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. He found that 72% of the routes were official, 20% were informal, and just 8% were commercial when he examined reports that only originated in Washington, D.C. These results have been supported by further research.

### **Critical Issues: Pros and Cons of Media Routines**

Routines have a purpose. They support the work that journalists conduct. News organizations and journalists must sift through a deluge of events and information before they can be assembled into news. Routines reduce effort, say Shoemaker and Vos. News values make it easier for journalists to go about their everyday tasks by assisting them in determining what is noteworthy and what is not, which stories should be featured extensively and which should never be revealed. However, they do have shortcomings. As will be described in Chapter 13, the media's relentless attention on political candidates' tactical disagreements may obscure news of longer-lasting relevance, such as the merits of the candidates' positions on various subjects. Pack journalism enables the media to swarm on a politician embroiled in scandal, helping to unearth corruption and dirt.

On the other side, it might draw attention to unsightly problems that are not deserving of public scrutiny by shining a spotlight on a candidate's personal vices. Similar to this, modern technology enable journalists to obtain information instantly, keeping the public informed of events as they happen. However, they may also result in false reporting. Back in the day, a



bogus blog post claimed that South Carolina Governor Nikki R. Haley was under investigation for tax fraud. The news went viral shortly after it was posted on a blog and spread to mainstream media through Twitter. The governor was forced to defend herself in the face of a rumor that was unwarranted. The increasingly permeable barriers between journalists and people add even another dimension to the role technology plays in ordinary political journalism. It's not simply professional reporters that write reports about significant events or crises based on journalistic standards and news principles like deadlines.

Online users publish content, tweet it, repost it, and send images. These messages then spread online, affecting both common people and trained journalists. Thus, regular folks using a computer or a mobile device could make and distribute news. This sometimes has advantageous effects. Popular social news website swiftly disseminated correct information on the identities of the dead and the number of people admitted to local hospitals shortly after the July 2012 shooting atrocity in Aurora, Colorado. Again, there have been other instances when grave mistakes have been made. Three days after the Boston Marathon bombings, a Reddit user shared images that seemed to show a 22-year-old college student who resembled one of the real bombers as one of the perpetrators. A reporter, hundreds of Twitter users, including Perez Hilton, who has millions of followers, tweeted out the student's identity in response to the post and other online actions, which sparked a virtual and actual explosion of tweets and comments. However, despite the fact that the student had nothing to do with the bombs, the discoveries had a number of unfavorable and disastrous effects.

### **Structural Forces**

Routines are complemented by organizational variables. They make reference to the many ways in which a media outlet may affect the angle that journalists take on stories and the specific subject that a series covers. You may understand that organizations have their own rules, rituals, prescribed procedures, often termed norms, and power dynamics if you've ever worked for a huge corporation or downtown business. The same is true of news outlets. Reporters may be allocated to certain specialized areas, known as beats, and there may be a separation of duties between editors, who may be categorized as management, and reporters, who may be unionized and assigned to beats. Large news organizations are bureaucracies with administrative structures, several divisions, and separate social norms and even territories that must be respected in each. By creating news gathering teams that build a series on a specific issue, with personnel providing experience in diverse areas, such as in-depth reporting, research, graphic design, and website editing, an increasing number of news organizations have blurred job divisions.

#### **1. Socialization**

Journalists rapidly learn what is expected of them when they start working for a news organization, internalizing both the stated and tacit principles of the company culture. Warren Breed, a sociologist, explored the mechanisms by which a news company socializes its reporters, communicates social positions, and imparts norms for development in his seminal research of social control in the newsroom, which was published more than 50 years ago. Breed said, The new reporter is not informed of the rules until he begins work. And he is never informed. Breed famously said that instead, he learns policy by osmosis, observing that reporters learn about responsibilities and norms via observation and covert instructions from management.

Reporters eventually acquire the preferred techniques to collect and aesthetically present news as they establish their identity as journalists at a certain news organization, feeling a connection with journalistic colleagues. Reporters are acutely aware of organizational

regulations and practices that may obstruct opportunities for professional progress, just like other members of other companies. For instance, a political writer at a suburban daily would be reluctant to critically examine a sacred-cow, prominent local company out of concern for upsetting the well-connected, upwardly mobile publisher.

## **2. An Application at Fox News**

Investigating Fox News' internal operations can help you understand how organizational processes function. Fox's mission was to attract a market of news consumers who were underserved in the marketplace people who lived between New York and Los Angeles, who waved their flags with pride and had a different perspective than Washington's elites. Fox accomplished this goal by using a variety of tactics, including symbolic ones, personnel-based ones, and, in some cases, skewing news coverage of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars to the right. Fox's managing editor Bill Sammon, who had become well-known at conservative media sites, wrote reporters a letter in 2009 during the national discussion of Obama's health care proposal that contained the following instruction. Please, wherever feasible, refer to government-run health insurance or, if brevity is an issue, government option. Another way to put it is as follows. The government-run plan, or the public option.

Obama's health care proposal, with its focus on competition among insurance plans and preservation of private sector insurance firms, would have been difficult for many health economists to characterize as government-run healthcare. Undoubtedly, the Obama plan, which became law in 2010, did implement new government regulations controlling health insurance, including a ban on insurance companies excluding individuals with pre-existing medical problems. However, it is customary for journalists to remain neutral in these discussions. Fox showed its support for conservatives by urging journalists to refer to the Obama health care proposal as government-run health insurance, implicitly linking it to Big Government, a bogeyman in the eyes of many Americans and conservatives. From an organizational standpoint, the Fox News edict probably had the effect of informing reporters that they were expected to politicize their descriptions of Obama's health care proposal.

## **3. Critical Issues**

According to evidence, Fox provided the Obama health care plan some unfavorable attention while also offering Republican candidates some better press than other channels. The organizational bias persisted and cut both ways throughout the 2012 election. According to a Pew Research Center survey, just 6% of Fox News's coverage on Obama were positive from the end of August to the end of October of 2012, while 46% tended to be unfavorable. On the opposite side of the political spectrum, the Pew survey found that just 3% of MSNBC reports about Romney were favorable during the fall election, while 71 percent were hostile. There was evidence of organizational bias in some of the reporting from both Fox and MSNBC. Fact and opinion have become more muddled in cable news' coverage of politics [10]–[12].

It's critical to distinguish between the bias that a news company exhibits and that of a single journalist. Reporters often make a lot of effort to avoid including their own thoughts in reports. However, news media companies under the direction of editors have sometimes pushed for certain viewpoints, tacitly or overtly urging that reporters present their articles in a manner that supports these viewpoints. The history of this approach in American journalism is illustrious. It includes publications like *Time* magazine, whose editor Henry Luce promoted a pro-American, anti-Soviet communist stance in foreign news reporting, *The New York Times*, which adopted a liberal viewpoint and might place more emphasis on the injustices of the death penalty than the suffering of the victims, and even bloggers, who might instruct their assistants to rely excessively on partisan sources.

In different media channels, various organizational elements are at play. News is shaped by the format, staff size, management style, and organizational culture of the news media executive. We don't often consider how something as amorphous as the organization may affect news. However, it very definitely does. As any employee who has found herself dressing appropriately, asking colleagues for advice on how to handle an unkind client, and going out of her way to thank a supervisor in an email can attest, the workplace can occasionally affect the attitudes and behaviors we exhibit. It takes place in historic newsrooms, banks, high-tech computer companies, and factories.

## CONCLUSION

Unpacking the Political News highlights the urgent need for a more critical method of political news consumption in the contemporary period. The flow of knowledge has accelerated and expanded with the growth of social platforms and digital media, but not without difficulties. The public's perspective might be distorted by media bias and false information, which would be detrimental to democratic processes that depend on educated citizens. The research underlines the need of ethical reporting and fact-checking since journalists and media outlets have a significant influence on how political news is portrayed. To go through the sea of data and pinpoint reliable sources, readers must also develop critical thinking abilities. To develop a more thorough and complex knowledge of political events, it is crucial to interact with many points of view and be aware of one's own prejudices. In the end, Unpacking the Political News is a call to action for the general people, technological corporations, media professionals, and lawmakers. In order to achieve a more educated, involved, and resilient democratic discourse, society must actively promote openness, honesty, and critical thinking while realizing the complexity and difficulties that come with reporting on politics.

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## **CHAPTER 17**

### **DETERMINE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEM INFLUENCES**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

The study investigates the complex interaction between the social and economic systems and how they impact one another. It explores how economic considerations affect social structures and how these influences intersect to have a significant effect on society. This study offers important insights into understanding the dynamic character of economic and social systems via a thorough assessment of the current literature and empirical data, eventually adding to the overall knowledge of societal evolution and change. The study also emphasizes the need of encouraging inclusive economic development that takes social factors and inequities into account. Societies may achieve more equal and long-lasting results by implementing policies that put a priority on social safety nets, healthcare, and education. A greater understanding of the complex interaction between the economic and social systems might also result from encouraging communication and cooperation among many stakeholders.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Economic, Media, News, Social System.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The news is influenced by economic forces in a free enterprise capitalist society in many different ways. Fundamentally, as two academics point out: The system through which supply and demand are balanced is the market. The news media that provide a product that matches consumer demand are rewarded by the market. Sensationalism is provided if the market requests it. A certain political interpretation of events is provided if the market requires it. It's just basic media economics. News content is influenced by three market variables: audiences, interests in economic growth, and macro financial markets [1], [2].

#### **1. Audience Factors**

In plain economic terms, marketers buy audience exposure to media shows. In general, media outlets may charge advertisers more money the bigger the audience and the more purchasing power they have. Because this is what the majority of the audience want to see, local news is thus often loaded with reports of fires and drive-by killings as well as tips on how to protect your children from predators and lengthen your life. Or, given the restricted selection of local news, these are the stories that captivate television viewers the most. How about the political industry? The media, particularly cable television, revels in scandals because people appear to like the titillating and scandalous. They covered the Clinton-Lewinsky controversy extensively on the radio in the late 1990s, and they also heavily covered the sexting scandal of 2011, in which a member of Congress sent a number of sexually explicit images to women online. The wife of former French president Nicolas Sarkozy and former supermodel Carla Bruni, who dated musicians Mick Jagger and Eric Clapton, was the focus of gossip publications in France during the 2012 election.

The question Will she stay with Sarko? was raised by the publications when Sarkozy was ousted in May 2012. Prior to this, the French press, like the rest of the world's media, had dedicated a lot of attention to the downfall of French politician Dominique Strauss-Kahn, who had been accused of sexual assault by a New York hotel maid in May 2011. The ongoing phone hacking scandal, which began when executives at newspapers owned by media mogul Rupert Murdoch were widely accused of listening to the voicemails of a teenage murder victim and the families of British soldiers killed in Iraq as well as hacking into the phones of politicians and celebrities in order to pursue stories, they believed would be popular with the British public, dominated the British press. Critics point out that this is a case of chicken-and-egg: Do people follow scandals because they are the most interesting stories reported in the media, or do they follow scandals because the media covers them? Would people pay attention to news events if they were covered more often by the media in interesting ways?

## **2. Local Communities' Interests in Economic Development**

Most people think of the Big Media Fox, CNN, ABC, The New York Times, and TV news websites when they consider political media. Local news that is carried by neighborhood newspapers, radio stations, and websites is not something we consider. We ought to. Politicians and the general people may be significantly influenced by local media. And how they report political topics depends heavily on economics. In local communities, news media serve crucial roles. Instead of acting as crusading muckrakers or as bulwarks of investigative journalism, news organizations typically serve as urban boosters, publishing favorable articles on brand-new public initiatives. The benefits that civic developments like convention halls, sports stadiums, and museum complexes may have on the metropolitan area are well known to news executives. They also understand that the newspaper or nearby TV station may profit from these events.

A 1991 book by Phyllis Kaniss on this subject, which is still relevant today, states that: Since the news organization's profits depend on audience size and advertising revenues, the larger the local area's overall population and the stronger the local economy, the more potential readers or viewers and advertisers the news organization can hope to attract. It is suggested that because of this desire in expansion, the neighborhood news media often adopts a booster role, acting much like a local chamber of commerce, aggressively pushing the types of laws and initiatives that would lead to the region's economic growth. This hypothesis contends that publishers or media owners may stifle reporters' critical reporting on certain holy cow public development projects that could encourage growth at the price of environmental quality or the sacrifice of other socially beneficial uses of public cash [3]–[5].

There are several examples. The San Jose Mercury aggressively promoted airport development many years ago, in the late 1960s, despite the fact that it would have a negative impact on the environment. According to Kaniss and Rubin & Sachs, the editors seem to have believed that the airport would promote air travel, which would benefit the area and increase airline advertising for the newspaper. The Los Angeles Times backed downtown redevelopment in 1975, despite accusations that it was a tax rip off that would benefit downtown economic interests significantly at the expense of the surrounding area. A few years later, the newspaper took things a step further by giving the proprietors of the Staples Center, a sports arena in Los Angeles, a portion of the proceeds from a special Sunday magazine feature promoting the venue. The Plain Dealer, Cleveland's daily newspaper, and other local media outlets enthusiastically covered initiatives like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and a casino that would support the city's flagging downtown. Critics wonder whether the developments live up to the promises made by developers and if, in the case of the casino,



social costs exceed monetary gains, despite the fact that both do support downtown businesses.

What is wrong, you may wonder, with the news media exerting every effort to advance local interests? Isn't it excellent that they contribute to the revitalization of the city's core and downtown? This makes us wonder just what we mean when we say something is good. New civic initiatives may undoubtedly benefit society and the economy. However, this must be weighed against the costs to the environment and local communities. One may argue that these initiatives result in more total benefit than damage, and in many instances, this argument would be valid. This, however, obscures the following issues: Is it the role of the news media to support the status quo? Who will challenge a project's feasibility and social consequences if the press doesn't do so? Who will make sure that worst-case situations don't burst through the city's gates if local news serves more as a lapdog than a watchdog watching for dangers on the horizon?

### **3. Large-scale economic forces**

The news media are large enterprises that benefit not just from stock dividends but also from the financial markets and advertising. The media are conglomerating that profit when they acquire other businesses and when the value of their shares rises on Wall Street. Owners and senior media executives may get significant incentives as a result. Newspaper concentration has grown over the last several decades as major newspaper chains, like the Gannett Company, have absorbed additional daily newspapers. The majority of American newspapers are owned by seven chains, and the 21 largest group owners' control approximately 70% of daily newspaper readership in the country. In the cities where they are distributed, 99 percent of chain-controlled newspapers are monopolies. Large media conglomerates have combined more frequently: ABC was purchased by Capital Cities Communications, which later merged with Disney. RCA was purchased by General Electric, and as a consequence, NBC.

After Westinghouse purchased CBS, the illustrious network was sold to Viacom four years later. The bulk of American newspapers, periodicals, broadcast stations, and movie studios are owned by five multinational corporations, most notably the Walt Disney Company and Time Warner. Many U.S. newspapers are owned by firms like Tribune, McClatchy, and Avista Capital Partners, yet they typically behave more like Wall Street businesses that only care about their bottom line than like organizations dedicated to the principles of a free press. The business of news is commerce, not news, according to these publicly traded media corporations, who control more than 40% of daily newspaper circulation. According to Cranberg, Bezanson, and Soloski, their publications are managed and regulated for financial success, not news quality. Many media companies now base their existence on increased profitability, strong stock performance, maintaining a strong credit rating, and conformity to market demands, leading them to steer clear of controversy, avoid risky journalistic exposés, and instead rely on safe, status quo-enhancing stories.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Influences of Political And Social Systems**

The press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates, communication academics tell us. The nature of a country's economy, political system, relationships between economic and political institutions, and ideological worldview all have a significant impact on political news. In a society with a capitalist economic structure, like the U.S., audience demand will have a significant influence on news. As a result, news organizations will avoid items they believe would alienate their readers,

such in-depth interpretative articles on a country's financial problems. Election coverage will often focus more on parties in Mediterranean nations like Italy than in the United States, where a candidate-centered entrepreneurial model predominates. In these nations, political parties have a big effect on electoral politics[6]–[8].

News is likely to be more politicized and explicitly opinionated in nations like Greece where publications are ideologically motivated and affiliated to parties. Furthermore, you will discover far less news that criticizes the nation's leaders, let alone governmental actions, in nations like China where the government suppresses the free press. This argument is developed further by proponents of a social system viewpoint on news. They contend that the media are not really free, even in supposedly free nations like the United States. If businesses want to survive, they must adapt to the demands of the market. They can't go out on a political limb if they want to preserve credibility with their more politically moderate audience members, and they must respect the political power structure if they want to continue getting news from influential sources.

Hegemony is the general term used to characterize the propensity of a country's news media to adopt and disseminate the viewpoints of the governing structure. The American media serve to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity, according to Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's argument. Do the media support the ruling class, as these arguments claim? Or do they challenge the status quo? Focusing on news coverage of topics that constitute a danger to the country's main interests, particularly foreign policy crises and conflicts, is one method to explore the questions. If hegemony is true, the media should seize the initiative and provide a wartime perspective that is biased in favor of the country's rulers. We may evaluate this theory from the perspectives of three conflicts.

### **1. Vietnam**

Between the early 1960s until the fall of the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon in 1975, the little Southeast Asian nation of Vietnam was torn apart by a sad, debilitating war that killed more than 58,000 Americans and hundreds of thousands of civilians. A series of American presidents committed money and soldiers to Vietnam out of concern about the danger presented by Soviet and Chinese communism. Given the large influx of American soldiers into Vietnam in the middle of the 1960s, hegemony proponents and those who believe that the media supports the powers-that-be in military conflicts said that the media would provide a favorable picture of the fight. And for a while, that's precisely what occurred. The American troops were referred to as brave men and the greatest soldiers in the world by reporters. The United States and its allies in South Vietnam were the good boys, while the North Vietnamese were the evil ones.

Then, in 1968, the Tet onslaught, a series of conflicts in which the North Vietnamese launched a huge onslaught, altered everything. Even though the U.S. ultimately defeated the North Vietnamese on the battlefield, many journalists had a decidedly negative view of the battles due to the high death toll, gory battle footage seen by millions on television, and official estimates of the North Vietnamese military strength. Leading television broadcaster Walter Cronkite stepped out of the objective journalistic bubble and said that the United States was mired in stalemate based on his views from South Vietnam. Reporters transitioned from an upbeat portrayal of combat to increasingly pessimistic coverage of the war, encouraged by Cronkite and other prominent journalists as well as by the gory battlefield reports. It was no longer our national endeavor, one that was rooted in the history of World

War II, but rather a struggle that was clouded in dispute and had real repercussions for America.

News outlets offered critical images of military activities as a result of sources disseminating unfavorable information about the conflict and new technology developments enabling television to provide more rapid coverage of fights. It is challenging to say that the media was under the influence of America's governing class or that the media blindly accepted the party line in the face of the constant barrage of bad news, which includes graphic images of everyday devastation. Regarding the journalists' treatment of Vietnam, three presidents voiced annoyance and fury. The bad news emphasizes how, following a pro-war media honeymoon, the press broke with the country's leaders in how it portrayed the conflict, providing a more nuanced image of media depictions than that offered by hegemonic proponents.

## **2. Persian Gulf War**

After Vietnam, the next big conflict was radically different since it was brief and characterized by traditional notions of nationalism, patriotism, and American bravery. After Iraqi President Saddam Hussein invaded the nation in 1990, the Persian Gulf War of 1990–1991 was declared to have as its avowed objective the liberation of Kuwait from Iraq. The conflict was wonderfully brief. The United States managed to rescue Kuwait from Iraqi control in under seven months. The news used as a weapon in the conflict. White House representatives tried to characterize the conflict in ways that would benefit American interests while speaking with media. Despite several unexpected developments in the story's coverage, the news often supported the White House's interpretation of the conflict.

President George H.W. Bush likened Saddam Hussein, the leader of Iraq, to Adolf Hitler, stating that Hussein had ruthlessly repressed his people and, in earlier conflicts, had used poison gas assaults on his adversaries in a way that reminded many of Nazi experiments during World War II. Invoking the journalistic value of what the president says being news, the media emphasized the Hitler comparison.

American citizens all around the country raised the flag, donned yellow ribbons, and donated blood as the scene was prepared for the expected deployment of American soldiers to free Kuwait. According to the cascade paradigm, the media embraced popular culture and supported the military. TV hosts in Buffalo donned yellow ribbons. When the conflict started, the amazing U.S. military technologies in particular, Patriot missiles became the war's technical heroes, their amazing success being documented in real-time media reports by astonished television reporters. Many Americans but not all viewed the war as a legitimate military endeavor, and the press had nurtured patriotic themes and gathered support for it.

News organizations were not forced to participate by the White House. Instead, the government had fought an amazing war for symbols that considered journalistic principles and journalists' reasonable desire to align themselves with the majority of public opinions. Dissenting opinions were not silenced by the news media.

It made public the recommendations made by Congressional members for a more circumspect approach to Iraq. There was no hegemonic media supporting the president in unity.

Nevertheless, evidence that backed with the White House's account of events received more attention in the media than information that refuted it. Throughout the seven-month conflict, American triumphs and military superiority were lauded by the media.

### **3. The War in Iraq**

Twelve years later, in 2003, the United States was at war with Iraq once again, ironically under the leadership of George W. Bush, the son of President George H.W. Bush, who had successfully led the battle to free Kuwait in 1991. The conditions were different this time. The Bush administration waged a strategic political information campaign to persuade the public and important elites to support an invasion of Iraq by claiming that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein dislodged from Kuwait but still firmly in power had stockpiled weapons of mass destruction that posed a threat to the United States. Again, obtaining positive press attention was crucial to the administration's endeavor.

Bush administration officials claimed that Iraq would soon acquire nuclear weapons, which could have catastrophic repercussions for the Middle East and the United States. They did this by strategically leaking information to *The New York Times*, whose reporters were more than happy to be the first to break the story. The information was seen as trustworthy and very noteworthy since it came from high-level White House officials through unofficial methods. The news contributed to a convincing argument for why war was necessary. However, as was mentioned in Chapter 8, there was an issue, one that goes right to the core of how unreliable journalists' habitual dependence on their sources is. The information on Iraq's procurement of nuclear weapons turned out to be completely false. Weapons of mass destruction had not been obtained by Iraq. The press media, which reflected a pro-war tilt compatible with hegemony, had adopted the White House stance.

However, the hegemony model was only partially accurate. The television networks did cover Bush administration sources significantly more than adversaries during the lead-up to war. When war broke out, the news carried dramatic photos that demonstrated the amazing achievements of American forces in repulsing the Iraqi Army. For a while, the media promoted long-standing misconceptions about American military might. The spectacular tale of Private Jessica Lynch, who, according to reports, fought off Iraqi assailants, suffered severe injuries, and was later rescued from an Iraqi hospital by a special army unit, was appropriately reported in the media in 2003. The report turned out to be somewhat false. Lynch was not struck by bullets or stabbed with a knife. She was being treated at the hospital when the special force barged in, also looking for other American soldiers. Even if the factual inaccuracies had been fixed, the war effort had benefited from media support[9]–[11].

However, as the conflicts continued, opposing political figures and the populace became agitated. Attacks against the strategic initiatives of the Bush administration grew. Anger increased over the deaths of Iraqi and American civilians. The news aired extensive critical coverage of the war in Iraq in response to elite criticism and the obvious devastation of war. Television networks showed graphic images of American forces torturing Iraqi inmates at Abu Ghraib, but the media avoided framing the incident as torture. Newspapers exposed allegedly unlawful actions the Bush administration used to combat terrorism, as was mentioned.

### **4. Critical Issues**

The political system has an impact on media coverage. Even in the very democratic United States, news outlets may adopt the tenets of political ideology. In times of conflict, the media may provide information that supports the White House's view of the facts. This may be problematic if the news omits to give opposing viewpoints on a political matter. In a democracy, presenting a variety of opinions is crucial because it clarifies difficult policy problems and may improve the quality of deliberative discussions. However, persuasion, not compulsion, serves as the guiding paradigm here: The American government is not

compelled to have favorable coverage of events in the news media. Instead, news organizations make the decision to do so, guided by the knowledge generated by elites and their exploitation of common channels.

Hegemony provides an explanation for atrocious historical media coverage of the Holocaust and racial issues, but it is a less accurate model of current news. The hegemony model has the drawback of oversimplifying a very complex process. Furthermore, it is notoriously difficult to demonstrate falsehood. Hegemony has developed as a thorny notion in social science research, where theories must be able to be validated with actual data and shown untrue based on statistical testing. It might be phrased so ambiguously that the supporting or contradictory nature of the evidence depends on how you read it. Sometimes hegemony proponents reject evidence that demonstrates hegemony to be incorrect. Media reports often run counter to official statements and undercut government activities.

The indexing and cascade models provide more believable perspectives on how news media depict international conflicts. When national leaders deviate from the White House norm, as was the case with all three of the aforementioned conflicts, the press will present competing viewpoints, indexing coverage to reflect the diversity of voices stated by political elites. The press provides extensive coverage of happenings when public opinion starts to shift against a war endeavor. Additionally, a more tenacious press has published critical exposés of the government's actions throughout the conflict. Social media and the 24/7, international media also enable the public to see images and learn about behind-the-scenes activities that previous generations were not privy to. WikiLeaks is a prime example.

A series of investigative pieces were published in 2010 by The New York Times and other top newspapers in Europe with the help of WikiLeaks, a non-profit committed to disclosing secret data. The editors decided to publish the pieces because they believed that they would provide people with useful knowledge about the inner workings of democratic governments' foreign policy. The publications provided details concerning covert government operations as well as the many civilian deaths that occurred throughout the Afghan conflict. The material exposed a different view of American foreign policy than the administration intended, exposing once again fallacies in theories that hold that the media always supports the establishment.

What function should the media fill during a war? Radical critics seem to contend that the news media of a country should, in general, oppose a government's conduct of war, concentrating instead on exposing the truths that the government would want to conceal. Others, especially conservative critics, would adopt a more patriotic posture, pointing out that it is the responsibility of a country's media to support leaders and the military during times of war. There are undoubtedly instances when going to war is the only option for a country to resolve issues that are crucial to its national interest or to defend its people. In these situations, military efforts may be jeopardized by media exposures. On the other hand, the media are essentially the only accessible check on power when leaders manufacture information or start businesses that serve their interests rather than the interests of the people. Answers to the question of what function the media should serve during a conflict are neither easy or glib. These concerns highlight the intricate, multidimensional responsibilities that news organizations play in democratic societies.

This chapter focused on a number of broad, macro-level elements as it continued the investigation of the factors that influence political news. News coverage is significantly influenced by media habits. Political news is shaped by news values, dependence on sources, and informational outlets. As workers in a bureaucracy, journalists are subject to



organizational influences as well. Their news articles are sometimes impacted by the political agendas of news executives, depending on the workplace. It is generally believed that reporters' daily actions reflect their own personal prejudices; however, this undersells the ways in which organizational and contextual factors influence news.

The economy has a variety of effects on news. In a capitalist culture, local news outlets pander to reader interests and often fund community initiatives that advance the greater metropolitan area. News may be influenced by macroeconomic factors, such as business objectives to boost profits for investors. Following these requirements may encourage news companies to avoid controversy and to provide unbiased, uniform coverage of a political subject. Despite the strength of these influences, there are news organizations who produce shocking exposés and go against the grain. In the press, there is conflict between pandering to forces that uphold the current economic system and fostering the time-honored tradition of speaking truth to authority.

The political framework and ideologies of the social order are reflected in the news. This is also complicated. When a nation is at war, news may support existing interests by providing a lot of favorable coverage. Although a wave of favorable publicity helped to convince people to go to war, the media does not always follow the White House's lead and has harshly criticized military operations in previous conflicts. As a result, the issue of news bias is far more nuanced than is often believed. In a certain sense, you might argue that there are a variety of biases present, which are influenced by the attitudes, habits, organizational aspects, economics, and social systems of reporters. Although they do make decisions about what is noteworthy and how to frame events, journalists are not exempt from these more powerful societal pressures.

The next time someone asks you what makes news interesting, you may respond with a wide range of criteria. Perhaps you can also see that, despite all their imperfections, the news media regularly highlights problems with government policy and raises the issue of opposing and alternative viewpoints. As an institution, journalism strives to accomplish admirable objectives. As noted by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel in 2007, journalism's first obligation is to the truth, [and] it must serve as an independent monitor of power. According to media critic David Carr, the constancy of a daily paper and the ongoing availability of other media on computers and in living rooms serves as clear indicators that someone is out there watching.

## CONCLUSION

An intricate interaction that profoundly affects the course of civilizations is shown through research into the effects of economic and social systems. The results show that social structures and economic systems are intricately interwoven and have a significant impact on one another. Economic systems do not function in isolation. Changes in society norms, values, and hierarchies follow changes in economic policies and practices. Similar societal influences on economic results and wealth distribution include culture, education, and government. It becomes clear that both policymakers and scholars need to take an integrated approach to comprehending economic and social processes. If the interdependence of these systems is ignored, actions may be ineffective or poorly planned. Recognizing that economic choices may have significant effects on social justice and cohesiveness is essential to promoting sustainable development and social well-being. The research emphasizes the need of seeing economic and social systems as interdependent systems rather than as separate entities. Societies may aim for better peace and prosperity and move toward a future that benefits all community members by acknowledging and using the power of this



interconnectedness. The results of ongoing study in this field will help us make better decisions and comprehend the complexity of human development.

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## CHAPTER 18

### A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: PAST AND PRESENT SCENARIOS OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

Political campaigns have considerably changed throughout time as a result of societal, technological, and communication channel advancements. This chapter analyses political campaigns' methods, tactics, and effects on the political landscape in both the past and present. This research offers insight on the evolution of political campaigning and its effects on democratic processes via a historical review and a comparative examination of contemporary campaigns. Modern political campaigns also have a tendency to be more divisive and packed with passion. It is now normal practice to motivate supporters and undermine opponents by using negative campaigns and polarizing speech. This change has the potential to undermine productive policy discussions and undermine public confidence in the political process. While technology developments have improved political communication, they have also made it more difficult to ensure campaign openness and honesty.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Candidates, Campaigns, Media, Political.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Will Ferrell as Cam Brady, a slick politician in Hollywood's most recent attempt at politics, in the film *The Campaign*. Early in the movie, Cam remarked about his hair, my hair could lift a car off a baby if it had to. Until he is found making an offensive phone conversation, Brady seems to be a lock for a fifth term, which raises concerns among the powerful people who support him. Shortly later, Marty Huggins, portrayed by Zach Galifianakis, a pot-bellied, ungainly opponent, declares his desire to take on Cam Brady. As the campaign progresses, the originally sincere Huggins becomes into a typical politician, eager to use deceit to humiliate Brady. Brady responds by wooing Huggins's wife, which seems to boost Brady's poll ratings. Huggins eventually becomes governor with a commitment to helping the populace. Huggins declares his intention to work on a problem that he thinks is crucial for the neighborhood as the movie comes to a conclusion. But in doing so, he makes it clear that he still has no idea how he will really represent his citizens. He exhorts a jubilant gathering of followers, Let's get rid of daylight savings time because I hate when it gets darker earlier[1]–[3].

The movie is humorous and received favorable reviews. It catches several facts, as any good satire should: consultants play to win, some politicians will say anything to win an election, the media love to report on political scandals, and people may be duped. The movie simplified politics, choosing a clichéd version over the more nuanced, complex truth. However, Hollywood film is not Washington, D.C. reality. It chose easy targets: the sexual appetites of politicians, which it said were the primary source of political scandals, and the tainting effect of huge money on politics. But there are many factors that contribute to

scandals, of which sex is just one, and the connection between money and politics is more nuanced than wealthy cats dictating policy from atop Money Mountain. The movie fails to capture the ebb and flow of presidential politics, including the dynamic interactions between candidates and the news media, the zealotry of political party activists, the importance of ideas in campaigns, the efforts of candidates to create mediated appeals that voters find compelling, the acrimonious partisan conflicts that highlight ideological differences, and the wrenching domestic and foreign policy issues that are at the heart of campaigns.

The chapters in this section of the book concentrate on the confluence of politics and communication in America's four-year election extravaganza as they dig into the fundamental problems in campaigns. The two chapters that follow provide an overview of the story. This chapter provides a brief overview of the historical precedents for the current campaign and outlines its essential characteristics. This topic is expanded upon in Chapter 12 with a more thorough explanation of the key elements of the campaign, including polls, political parties, and campaign financing. The historical predecessors of the current campaign are described at the beginning of this chapter. The chapter first discusses similarities and differences between the past and present before outlining seven characteristics of modern campaigns, with an emphasis on internet campaigning.

### **Ages of Presidential Campaigns before Television**

Today, we have come to anticipate that our presidential contenders will make a big announcement about their intentions to become the next president of the United States more than a year before the election. It wasn't always like this. As noted by historian Gil Troy, presidential candidates were formerly expected to stand for election rather than run. They did not speak at all. They didn't exchange handshakes. They took no attempt to conceal even the tiniest desire to hold public office. Candidates were expected to follow George Washington's example and remain in respectful quiet on their farms until the call of the people. Campaigning for public office was something the Founders despised. Openly asking for votes? Aggressively pursuing a position in politics? These reeked of a loud ambition that the idealistic founding fathers' thought was unworthy of those living in the new country.

Additionally, they worried that a small group of ambitious, dishonest campaigners would mislead the electorate. The early leaders believed that popular campaigning was inappropriate, illegitimate, and superfluous in addition to being harmful[4]–[6]. This was short-lived. Political squabbling, vicious assaults between candidates for office, and openly combative presidential campaigns eventually became the norm. A persuasive form of presidential politics, in which politicians ran openly for office, progressively superseded a courtly, aristocratic paradigm. Today's media-driven campaign was preceded by three periods: elite party and press politics, popular, biased politics, and party-managed whistle-stop campaigns.

#### **1. Party and Press Politics of the Elite**

Presidential candidates metaphorically sparred via the newspaper medium in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Politics was a game for the wealthy, and it was played with a courtly façade that masked the competitive underside of presidential politics. President John Adams and his opponent Thomas Jefferson never left their farms throughout the 1800 election. However, their backers weren't as submissive. The two new political parties of the time, the Federalists of Alexander Hamilton and the Republicans of Thomas Jefferson, each sponsored publications that promoted their respective ideologies. Federalist President John Adams was maligned by pro-Jefferson newspaper editors who said that he planned to establish a dynastic succession with his sons.

Jefferson was condemned as an atheist and a traitor by Federalists. Jefferson said, The press is the engine. He said, every man must lay his purse and his pen under contribution, implying that candidates needed to use the power of the pen if they wanted to be seen by elite newspaper readers. So, when the two political parties the more pro-government Federalists and the libertarian Republicans diverged considerably on the issues, candidates wrote scathing comments disparaging their opponents. But there was still a bright spot. Despite the party disputes, significant advancements were taking place. Political parties were starting to emerge, and its leaders were expressing their ideologies via recognized channels. Opponents were not guillotined to death, as they were during the French Revolution. The opposing party didn't stage a takeover. In the midst of ferocious, colorful political debates, power peacefully transitioned from one party to the other. But if we failed to mention the fact that a basic injustice existed just below the surface, we would be negligent. Only landowners were eligible to vote. Women and people of color could not vote.

## **2. Political Popularity and Prejudice**

Another derogatory campaign started in 1828. Andrew Jackson, who was well-known for his military achievements in the War of 1812, ran against John Quincy Adams, the second president's son, an aristocratic contender. Friends of Jackson's who worked as newspaper editors made up stories about Adams, claiming that he had called the Dutch the stupid Dutch. Editors who supported Adams retaliated by asserting that General Jackson's mother was a common prostitute. However, politics was starting to get more personal as Jackson's military bravado enthralled large numbers of people, who coined the moniker Old Hickory one they would never have dared to use for a Southern gentleman like Jefferson or James Madison. Jackson's allies committed their efforts to winning the favor of newspaper editors, who acted as the era's political power brokers. Jackson had backing from more than half of the 600 American newspapers, giving him a platform to criticize his opponent.

Jacksonian democracy, as it came to be called, broadened the scope of politics and inspired a large number of people to participate in politics more actively than they had in the past. As many states abolished the restrictions on voting only being available to property owners, the number of eligible voters substantially increased. When visiting America in the early 1830s, the French author Alexis de Tocqueville was struck by the commotion and the clear joy Americans had in gathering in social groups to debate political matters. The super-wealthy and highly educated elites were no longer the only ones active in politics; everyday people were now becoming involved. The political party served as the organizational force. Parties started reaching out to the general public and organizing it, rallying voters behind party candidates.

## **DISCUSSION**

In 1840, it came into being. According to Troy, Popular politics became the new American religion as two and a half million men streamed to the polls ten times the number enrolled in churches. No matter how ridiculous the plan, it had to engage the electorate in some way. The winner was William Henry Harrison, who was really a terrible candidate but the first to give a stump speech while running for office. Harrison competed against President Martin van Buren by positioning himself as a representative of the people. In contrast to the pompous Martin Van Buren, he advertised himself as the log cabin hard cider candidate who was plain, simple, down-to-earth, and very much of, by, and for the people. The campaign was quite a spectacle, with crowds of people flocking to Whig Party rallies, chatting at parades that stretched for miles, and waving campaign hats, badges, and shaving cream all named after Harrison's now-contentious battle against Shawnee Indians in Tippecanoe, Indiana.

If this had happened today, a cynical political press would have ridiculed it as image-based campaigning or ridiculous political branding. The press, however, was not cynical in 1840 and was sponsored by political parties; many of these newspapers backed Harrison. Harrison made his mark on the political campaigning process despite passing away while in government. His campaign sparked political interest, increasing the number of voters who had previously taken part in electoral politics. It also served as a warning that populist, catchy campaigns were here to stay. But there were significant drawbacks. The candidates utterly failed in their attempts to get significant problems on the political agenda, just as they would in the great majority of 19th century elections that would come after. Inequality, urban filth, or the evil of slavery were not mentioned [7], [8].

Political parties evolved become a conduit between the populace and its elected officials. Parties created infrastructure to link the public with political leaders, including professional groups, ideological frameworks, conventions, and fervent campaigns. They assisted in planning magnificent rallies and jubilant torchlight parades through the streets during presidential elections. The parades, which were organized by political organizations made up of immigrants who worked in blue-collar occupations, included barbeques and large crowds of men walking through the streets in a military formation while carrying lighted kerosene torches, with a brass band leading the way. During the second half of the 19th century, up to 25% of voters actively engaged in campaigns, and 77% of voters—mostly White males, to be sure—cast ballots in presidential elections. Discussions on the rights of immigrants and minor grievances, such as bias against Germans because they drank beer on Sundays, were the topic of intense, but sometimes prejudiced debates. Talk about terrible laws that denied African Americans the right to vote, including poll taxes and literacy tests, was presumably off the table during the era's numerous parades and social gatherings since it was thought unsuitable for public discourse.

### **Party-Managed, Whistle-Stop Campaigns**

Change in style, if not content, became the political norm as the 20th century drew near. The 1896 campaign served as an early prototype for the subsequent national, party-organized campaigns. Street rallies that were boisterous and in the military style had fallen out of favor by 1896. As the nation reached the turn of the century, the sight of soldiers marching through the streets appeared out of place. Political parties' national committees now play a more significant role in campaign preparation, replacing the night armies of the Civil War with a corporate model. Republican Party Chairman Mark Hanna used contemporary accounting techniques, monitored campaign developments over the phone, and sought corporate funding during the 1896 campaign. Hannah ran a well-organized campaign that simplified complex issues into catchy phrases, advertising candidate William McKinley as if he were a patent medicine, in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, despite the fact that the campaign raised significant monetary issues: the gold standard versus free silver, the latter symbolizing justice to Democrats and financial disaster to Republicans.

While William Jennings Bryan, his rival, went on a nationwide speech-making tour, traveling more than 18,000 miles and giving 600 speeches, almost passing out at the end of the campaign. In contrast, McKinley pursued a quiet but effective campaign strategy, delivering carefully scripted speeches to audiences gathered at the front porch of his Canton home. Bryan's plan was adopted as the standard for campaigns in the 20th century even though he lost. Candidates crisscrossed the nation, abandoning outmoded beliefs that one should run for office rather than stand for it. In 24 states and more than 550 communities, Theodore Roosevelt visited. By rail, Harry Truman and Franklin Delano Roosevelt whistle-stopped the nation. National campaigns were commonplace, and party officials devised plans to support



candidates, disseminate information, plan field operations, and solicit donations from influential people. Campaigns were positioned to go to the next level as radio and television increased. Today's political campaigns increasingly rely on television news and more unfavorable TV advertisements.

We can discover similarities and differences with current campaigns by examining important elements of prior ones. Four things are comparable. First, elections offer candidates for public office with a formalized channel of communication with the public as well as a means for the public to assess candidates. Second, media has long been a part of the American presidential election process, from newspapers in the 18th and 19th centuries to print and broadcast media in the 20th. Third, negative campaigning has existed from the very first elections. Fourth, elections have never had much substance and have a tendency to sidestep important national concerns. The structure and substance of campaigns now change greatly from those of the 19th and 20th centuries. Campaigns now are more democratic and no longer exclude women and people of color. Party candidates are now chosen democratically via primary elections rather than by party executives. Political parties are no longer the connective tissue between candidates and voters; now, it is the media. The speed of communication among candidates, the media, and the public has increased dramatically, with communications traveling back and forth quickly arriving on technical gadgets, which was unthinkable two centuries before.

### **The Contemporary Media Campaign**

Today's effort is centered on the media. The road to the White House is long, circuitous, and bumpy, writes Stephen J. Wayne in 2008. It has several dangers and possible dead ends. Additionally, it weaves its way via the news, advertisements, heated discussions, and blogs. Political communication academics Jesper Strobeck and Lynda L. Kaid noted that the mass media are the main channels through which politics is communicated, and that the manner in which media portray election realities have a significant impact on how voters view politics. This was acknowledged more than thirty years ago by scholar Thomas E. Patterson, who titled his book the mass media election. The *International Journal of Press/Politics*, a scholarly publication on political communication, emphasizes this idea. And you are aware of this because you probably only learn about presidential campaigns from the media, whether you read about them in ink-stained newspapers, watch commercials on television, or browse the Internet, clicking on websites and watching candidates' images flash across your computer screen. The media- and technology-driven presidential campaigns of today share seven key traits.

Campaigns first concentrate on cultivating images. Mitt Romney's advisers were aware of their candidate's image issue during the 2012 campaign: He was seen as apathetic and insensitive to the issues facing middle-class Americans. As a result, Romney went to considerable measures to moderate some of his more conservative beliefs during the presidential debates and to express his congratulations to Obama on his wedding anniversary. He even made light of the fact that spending an anniversary debating his opponent on a debate stage wasn't the most romantic way to mark the event. Obama, on the other hand, tried to bolster impressions that, despite his management of a faltering economy, he was a likeable, in-touch leader. He appeared on *The Tonight Show*, *The View*, MTV, and other shows at the peak of the autumn campaign [9], [10].

You don't get a full sense of a presidential candidate's personality when you see him or her on television or in a YouTube video. What you have seen is a snapshot, a stylized presentation, and an image that the candidate and consultants have created in an attempt to change the perception that you have of the candidate. Politics is the art of forming and shaping such



perceptions. It focuses on persuading voters to accept the good impressions, incorporate them with their own views, and mentally recombine them to develop a positive mindset. In modern political communication, image management and building are crucial.

The word image has a definite meaning provided by academics. According to Nimmo a candidate's image is the combination of impressions based upon both the subjective appraisals made by the voters and the messages transmitted by the candidate. In a way, worries expressed by the Greek philosopher Plato predate concerns about images and politicians' deceiving people with appearances rather than facts. Many years later, historian Daniel J. Boorstin, in his book simply titled *The Image*, issued a warning about politicians creating fictitious events known as pseudo-events that are scheduled in advance to get media attention. His book became popular because it refuted the widely held notion that political information in the media was, in some way, real, which looks terribly naive to observers now.

Politicians and journalists often distinguished between a real campaign event, such as a Labor Day address, and media coverage throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. During the 1970s and 1980s, this difference started to erode as candidates became better at staging appearances on television. It soon became apparent that the real campaign took place in the media and was a struggle to create positive political perceptions. According to Adatto, on the nightly news in 1988, journalists often portrayed the candidates as rival image makers, competing to control the picture of the campaign that would play. Journalists joined the narrative once the picture became the focal point. Voters seemed to lose respect for the process, seeing it all as a matter of artifice and packaging as politicians altered photos to strike the ideal stance and television journalists occasionally edited political images to draw viewers.

Second, campaigns now place more emphasis on candidates than on parties, which strengthens the media's position. With the emergence of independent voters, the expansion of ticket-splitting, and rising levels of knowledge, individuals have become less likely to identify as a political party out of reflex. Television replaced parties as the main means of communication between candidates and voters, which contributed to a certain degree to the erosion of political bonds. Beginning, in part, with Jimmy Carter in 1976, candidates have evolved into independent businesspeople who hire their own staffs, raise political funds separately from the parties, work with pollsters, develop plans, and try to run campaigns that convey their goals and ideologies. Parties remain matter because they help organize elections and shape voter sentiment. However, they are no longer the kingmakers that they once were. Candidates had to have meals with the mayors of large cities throughout the first half of the 20th century, such as Richard Daley of Chicago and David Lawrence of Philadelphia, in the hopes that the mayors would support them and bring delegates to the nominating convention. Today, candidates must prevail in primaries and caucuses to obtain the nomination. As a result, news media coverage has a significant influence on the nomination process since candidates rely on it to gain exposure for their campaigns.

Third, presidential politics in the era of media are becoming more tailored. People watch television in the privacy of their own living rooms and bedrooms. It humanizes tragic occurrences from distant locations, such as wars, assassinations, and famines, illuminating their impact on ordinary people. The electronic media expose the dark corners of politicians' life by disclosing intimate information about their extramarital affairs, infidelity, and psychiatric quirks. As mentioned, older media maintained a conventional separation between the public and private spheres, portraying only the political figures' most socially acceptable public activities. This barrier vanished when technology advanced, making it simpler and less intrusive for journalists to cover politicians' actions. The line between the private and the public was also destroyed by cultural developments. There was almost no private behavior a

politician could engage in that did not seem suitable for mass media coverage, given the growing public appetite for political gossip and journalists' admission that they had covered up presidents' private wrongdoings. For their part, political candidates adapted to the new period by realizing there can be political gain and rhetorical advantages in disclosing details of their personal life.

The near-obsessive concentration that political campaigns have on getting positive media coverage is a fourth feature of today's politics. Staff members inspect the auditorium where a candidate is due to speak to confirm that the space is appropriate for the anticipated turnout. Mitt Romney found himself addressing to 1,200 supporters in an 80,000-seat football stadium on the day of the pivotal Michigan primary in 2012. Much to his dismay, press reports highlighted how small the venue was in comparison to his message. Later in the campaign, he sharpened his focus as his strategists planned speeches days in advance, looked for the most picturesque setting for Romney to speak, and worked tirelessly to draw crowds so that photographers could capture the candidate speaking in front of throngs of ecstatic supporters. In an Ohio town, they planned to have a rally at a certain time so that Romney could speak at the exact moment when the event's backdrop, the municipal building, would be bathed in an alabaster glow from the setting sun.

Fifth, in a similar vein, advertisements are planned to line up with the media's rationale for reporting on occurrences. Candidates must adjust to television's accelerated pace and narrow focus to keep viewers interested and build a tale, material is packaged quickly and quickly. From more than 40 seconds in the late 1960s to less than 10 seconds in the 1980s and 1990s to roughly 7.5 seconds in 2004, the average sound bite or amount of time given to a candidate's speech on the news has decreased. Candidates are compelled by television to talk quickly and glibly, which condenses their ideas and reduces the complexity of problems to, uh, a simple sound bite. Voters usually criticize politicians for using glib, phony language, but TV news is equally to blame. Strategists are aware that media portrayals of candidates shape public perceptions of them. These opinions may be crucial in tight elections. Candidates are very sensitive to unfavorable media depictions. They just want to avoid making an evident mistake, gaffe, or misrepresentation. The visual emphasis of media politics is one of its sixth characteristics. Images on a screen are essential.

Television is a visual medium that values beautiful sights and imagery. Candidates must be careful with their looks since people build opinions of political personalities based on their media appearances. Were impressions not always important? Voters weren't worried about the candidates' appearances during debates or speeches on the campaign trail, right? Yes. Abraham Lincoln said, I leave it to my audience, in response to Stephen Douglas' accusation that he was being deceitful during their 1858 debate. Do you think I would wear this face if I had a different one? Voters saw fewer candidates in person than they do on television now, however. When there was no visual media, assessments of whether a candidate seemed presidential were probably less important.

Ronald Reagan regarded the creation of visual images as an art. Reagan knew the power of artifice since he was an actor, and his advisers were aware of the necessity to stage pictures to appeal to a broad audience. In the 1980s, new words including staging the news, presidential image-making, and photo-op entered the language. For instance, the Reagan White House's public relations team planned for Reagan to hoist a few beers at two o'clock in the afternoon with a bunch of blue-collar workers and an Irish priest at an Irish bar. They understood that the image immediately conveyed that Reagan was just a regular guy, possibly leading them to believe that his contentious economic policies would be advantageous to the working class.

Last but not least, campaigns are structured around modern web technology. Political advisors formerly spent all of their time focusing on how their campaigns appeared on television. Not anymore. TV is still a factor, for sure. Older Americans get the majority of their political news from TV, and campaign managers closely monitor how network news outlets portray their candidates. However, campaign strategists are likely to be just as preoccupied with concerns like these now, if not more so, according to political management specialist Dennis W. Johnson. What do the polling data from yesterday on Polling.com indicate? Did you notice the tweet our adversary made on Twitter? Do we continue to read the possibly harmful tirade on the RedState.com blog site? Have you seen how many views that YouTube video is receiving? How well-received are our Google pop-up advertisements? What are they doing on the Facebook page of our rival?

## CONCLUSION

Political participation in societies is dynamic, as shown by the analysis of previous and contemporary political campaign situations. In the past, campaigns largely focused on conventional techniques like canvassing homes door to door, holding public events, and print media. Although these strategies made it possible for politicians and voters to interact on a more personal level, their efficacy and reach remained limited. Modern political campaigns, in contrast, make use of social media and technology to reach a wider audience. Real-time communication, data-driven targeting, and wide-scale message distribution are all made possible by digital platforms. This broadens the audience, but it also raises questions about privacy, false information, and the role of money in politics. To protect democratic processes, regulators and policymakers must take these issues into consideration. Politicians, candidates, and voters all need to grasp how political campaigns change over time. We may work to establish more inclusive, aware, and responsible political campaigns that work in society as a whole by studying the history and critically examining current practices.

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## CHAPTER 19

### A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: MAIN PLAYERS IN POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

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#### ABSTRACT:

In democratic countries, when candidates and parties fight for popular support and elected office, political campaigns are essential activities. These campaigns' success significantly depends on the participation of several key people, each of whom has a unique impact on the result. This chapter looks at the major actors in political campaigns and discusses how important they are in swaying voters, rallying support, and forming public opinion. This article highlights the complex and dynamic nature of political campaigns via an examination of political campaign methods and the roles of candidates, political parties, campaign staff, media, and voters. For understanding the larger ramifications of political campaigns on the democratic process, it is essential to know the roles and interconnections of these key stakeholders. Additionally, it emphasizes the value of openness, moral behavior, and educated voters in establishing a strong democratic process. The environment of political campaigns is always evolving as technology and communication channels advance.

#### KEYWORDS:

Campaigns, Candidates, consultants, Media, Political, Voters.

#### INTRODUCTION

##### The Primary Political Campaign Participants

In today's democracy, election campaigns are essential. Political scientist James A. Thurber said that elections are arguably the single most important event in American democratic life. Elections allow Americans the chance to both give their consent to be governed and to hold their representatives accountable for past performance, he said. Similar to this, election campaigns select decision makers, shape policy, distribute power, and provide venues for debate and socially approved expressions of conflict. Symbolically, campaigns legitimate democratic government and political leaders, uniting voters and candidates in displays of civic piety and rituals of national renewal. Elections enable voters to choose their leaders, which is the main goal of democracy. The key is campaigns. They act as the means by which voters are informed about the candidates. Through rituals of debate, discussion, and discourse, they symbolically unite people and leaders[1]–[3].

With the latter in an attempt to assist readers understand the human elements of campaigns, this chapter presents the key participants in the election campaign and defines each one's function using ideas, statistics, and sporadic anecdotal anecdotes. The media, candidates, and political consultants are introduced in the first part. The functions of political parties and opinion polls are discussed in the sections that follow. The importance that money and campaign finance play in presidential campaign politics is examined in the last part. Although the presidential election is the major focus of this chapter, subsequent campaigns often use the same actors.

## **Media**

This book's central thesis is that politics and the media are fundamentally intertwined. Every four years, presidential campaigns traverse a path paved with media. The last part discussed how media and interactive technology have shaped the course of recent campaigns. Politics on television are individualized. The coverage that candidates get is tailored to meet the logic of the media and online social networking platforms. Voters sort through candidate presentations, news coverage, and their own biases to settle on an image they carry with them into the voting booth. Campaigns are a battle to control the image, with candidates attempting to convey visually compelling images, journalists offering their own frame on candidate constructions, and journalists offering their own frame on candidate constructions. So let's keep in mind that media have two purposes. They serve as avenues of communication between political candidates and the public, spreading the perceptions of the candidates. Journalists, commentators, and bloggers provide a variety of messages and frames via news items, talk programs, comments, blogs, and Twitter feeds, but they also interpret, support, and criticize these pictures.

As our primary points of access to politics, the media not only mediate between political leaders and the general public but also serve as the arena in which campaign politics take place. Politics are encountered in the media, where they are also formed, rebuilt, and destroyed. In presidential elections, the paid media are significant. However, candidates may not always have the funds to run TV advertising in lower-level electoral battles, such as municipal, state, and certain Congressional campaigns. Therefore, they work to have positive news pieces published in media sources, support candidates online and on social media, and depend on a large volunteer force to turn out the vote. In lower-level elections, traditional retail campaigning that has been boosted by the buzz of digital media may be crucial [4]–[6].

## **Candidates**

The route to the White House is required. These are the opening lines of the extensive book about presidential politics written by Richard Ben Cramer. His more than 1,000-page book has these words as its title, and they suitably capture its theme: It takes a lot to declare that you are going to run for president and that you not only should be president, but I am going to be President. Candidates must see in themselves a figure of size to bestride a chunk of history.

Candidates for president require a big ego and a lot of ambition. John F. Kennedy allegedly said, Wanting to be president is not a normal ambition. Additionally, candidates must have a strong sense of self-assurance, political vision, patriotism, and enthusiasm for the political process. Candidates likely experience significant psychological benefits from the larger societal goals of politics, including making a difference in problems that benefit others and go beyond the individual. This is similar to activists who participate in political causes. According to voters, the best candidates are those that exhibit these qualities with integrity, showing honesty, compassion, and a willingness to discuss important topics.

Cramer provided journalistic profiles of the 1988 presidential contenders. Dick Gephardt, a longtime Missouri congressman who launched a strong but failed bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, was one of the contenders Cramer covered. Gephardt's rise in politics was charted by Cramer, and by examining a scene from his first run for Congress, we can understand the intense motivation and dedication to politics that drive candidates to run for office, whether it be for a position as a state representative, a seat in the U.S. Congress, or the presidency. Cramer highlights the tenacity and grit of Gephardt in the text that follows. He went door to door the next day, the day after that, and the day after that, introducing



himself as Dick Gephardt and announcing his candidacy for Congress. Is everything in the neighborhood all right?

He would do it all day; depending on what they had to say, he would spend two minutes or an hour at a door. Gephardt listened while nodding. He never argued or became confused. His bright, blue eyes were fixed on their faces. We knocked on how many doors today? Dick just needed to know that. Gephardt's diligent labor was fruitful. He was headed for Congress after defeating his rival by 18 percentage points. The same commitment was on show in the autumn of 2006, almost 20 years later. Barack Obama was considering running for president and weighing the advantages and disadvantages when political assistant David Plouffe presented the options to his boss: He gave Obama two options to choose from. You may continue working in the Senate, spend your weekends there, travel often, and enjoy quality time with your loved ones. Or you may run for president, have every aspect of your life probed, seldom see your family, constantly travel, knock your tin cup on a corner for alms, and lead a lonely, sad existence[7]–[9].

You may decide that, Plouffe said. There is no room for compromise and no quick cuts. Candidates for president go through more difficulties than only emotional ones. The road to the White House is a physical endurance test: greeting auto workers when the plant opens at 7 a.m.; attending rallies and meetings with uninterested, even hostile voters; spending physically taxing afternoons working a crowd; chowing down on fatty hot dogs and pirogues with the locals; crafting a speech at midnight; and typing out a tweet when you can't see straight at 2 a.m. Bob Dole, a former senator from Kansas and a Republican candidate for president in 1996, endured gripping pain every day as a result of a combat injury he sustained during World War II. He never let anyone see how he was feeling, instead charging ahead and pressing on with a grin and a snarl. Dole was never elected president. Clinton crushed him in 1996, but Cramer observes that he demonstrated via his tenacity that he had what it takes to run for president.

## DISCUSSION

Candidates certainly have flaws; for example, Bill Clinton's libido led to him breaking his marriage vows, while Richard Nixon's ambition drove him to breach the moral and legal agreements he had made with the American people. But each candidate stands out from their equally brilliant, if not smarter, colleagues who decide not to run for president due to unique personal qualities. They make an effort to keep their focus on the big picture throughout everything, or the vision thing, as George H.W. Bush so famously called it: governance, policy research, and bringing together various constituencies to turn a Congressional bill into law. Consultants, pollsters, and campaign strategists the crucial symbolic handlers who routinely organize, plan, and manage the communications of political actors are given the daily chores of practical persuasion.

### Political Consultants

The Seattle interior designer, who had just declared her bid for the House of Representatives, said openly that she knew nothing. In reaction to a school massacre, Heidi Behrens-Benedict wrote a newspaper column in which she expressed fury at the National Rifle Association's ability to influence politics. She made the decision to run for Congress less than a week later, motivated by her just acquired political fury. In order to win a position in the U.S. House of Representatives, she decided to run against veteran Republican Congresswoman Jennifer Dunn. In order to beat Dunn in the general election, BehrensBenedict intended to run as the Democratic candidate.

She decided to run for Congress after meeting with a group of gun control activists, and the next day, she called it a night and got ready to go since she still had a lot of campaign work to do. The idea suddenly raced through her thoughts at that moment. She stated, I'm getting ready to go home and I realize I have no idea how to run for Congress. Stage left welcomes political strategists. Behrens-Benedict, a fresh face on the political scene, made contact with political advisors who assisted her in running for Congress. This is hardly the Cinderella tale of triumph. Congresswoman Dunn, a veteran, defeated Behrens-Benedict. But in her first attempt at running for Congress, she won the Democratic primary for the vacant House seat and received more than 40% of the vote. She also drew attention to the incumbent's voting history on crucial topics and urged the incumbent to pay closer heed to constituents' concerns. Additionally, if she had not recruited advisors, none of this would have occurred.

Political strategists are a staple of modern elections, despite their repeated criticism for using television attack advertising and putting style over content. Consultants stepped in to handle campaigns as political parties shrank and party leaders' roles shrank. Candidates went to consultants when they realized they could no longer rely entirely on parties to coordinate volunteers and fund campaigns. And consultants were more than glad to join the fight, drawn in by the adrenaline rush of media campaigns, a desire to further a political cause, and the huge earnings they get for their services. People may picture high-profile, well-known consultants like Democrats James Carville and Republicans Ed Rollins when they think about consultants. The 1993 New Jersey governor's election was referred to as a struggle between two campaign titans, although the titans in reference were Carville and Rollins rather than the rival candidates. One could also consider the legendary Karl Rove, George W. Bush's political architect, or Dick Morris, a former Bill Clinton pollster who later became a fervent Republican consultant and a regular on Sean Hannity's Fox News talk show. Both men were astute and capable of hurling brutal insults at rival candidates[10]–[12].

Few consultants are as well-known as the ones listed above, however consultants come in many shapes and sizes. Numerous political consulting companies exist, each specialized in a particular aspect of political campaigns. Over the last 50 years, the area of political consultancy has expanded. The majority of consultants in the middle of the 20th century were generalists. However, as more specialists in telemarketing, fundraising, data analysis, and international political marketing enter the industry, it has grown increasingly specialized. According to a poll, around 49 percent of consultants identified as Democrats, 37 percent as Republicans, and the remaining percentage may be classified as Independents. Typically, consultants work for politicians of their favorite political party. In Republican elections, pro-Republican consultants are available for hiring, whereas pro-Democratic consultants support Democratic candidates.

What do consultants in politics do? They create campaign plans, conduct surveys, create messaging, organize media-focused, technological campaigns as well as grassroots voter turnout drives, and manage internet replies to an opponent's commercials. The majority of the time, consultants specialize in one or more of these duties. Their work might be beautiful or extremely statistical and scientific. Victory is the main motivation for consultants. In political consulting, winning is important, political consultant Raymond D. Strother said in 2003. There is no superior alternative. No prize for runner-up. No expense is too large as a consequence. On it, survival relies. A victory, even a fortuitous one against a disgraced foe, elevates the consultant and paves the way for his success. If it loses by even one vote, a good and moral campaign that avoided nasty advertising and discussed important topics would be reduced to ashes. Opposition research is a contentious component of success. Critics and beginners to the political campaign are troubled by opposition research, which involves

learning about the opponent's record, personality traits, and even skeletons in the political closet. Johnson points out that it is crucial, especially for challengers who wish to convince voters that the incumbent should be removed from office. According to Johnson, thousands of hours can be spent on candidate and opposition research. He points out that it can turn out politically sensitive information that is humiliating, such as a member of Congress who portrays herself as tough on drugs, but has a string of citations for driving while intoxicated. It's uncommon to find personal skeletons in a candidate's closet, so consultants need to make certain the material they provide is true, relatively up-to-date, and won't be used against them or the candidate in the future.

Opposition research, which identifies discrepancies in a candidate's past or stances taken that, if made public, may alienate important constituents, is more common. For instance, seasoned pro-Obama consultants labored over Republican nominee Mitt Romney's track record as the head of a private equity investment firm, Bain Capital, in 2012. They argued that the company bought businesses that later went bankrupt, laying off employees, while Bain cashed in, earning hundreds of millions of dollars. The strategists located a number of individuals who had been fired by Bain Capital, persuaded them to share their experiences, and used them as the basis for damaging advertisements that sought to cast doubt on Romney among middle-class voters. While some of the promises stated in these advertisements proved to be true, others were exceedingly dubious. The lies highlight a larger issue with modern consulting: the propensity of consultants to serve as hired guns for dishonest, wealthy political action organizations.

Defenders of opposition research point out that it might provide challengers seeking to defeat a popular incumbent who has broken his or her word or who has said things in private that contradict her or his public comments convincing information. Additionally, consultants are paid to come up with plans that will help elect their candidate, and as long as their methods do not violate any laws, they have a professional obligation to conduct an aggressive campaign. However, consultants have gone too far when they lie, intentionally provide false information, or decide to divulge shady details regarding the history of the rival candidate. Political consultant and communication professor Thomas A. Hollihan believes that consultants must uphold the ethical standards of their field. He says that when people cast their ballots on election day, Consultants who fail to live up to these expectations, as well as the candidates who retain their services, should be punished.

While there are dishonest consultants, the vast majority follow industry standards. Many work for politicians running for municipal, state, and Congressional office with little budgets, and they provide a strategic view of current politics that candidates with a policy concentration do not. Whether the institution of political consultancy helps or undercuts democratic goals is the bigger, longer-lasting issue. The long-time detractor of the consulting sector, political scientist Larry Sabato, claims that consultants have emphasized personality and gimmickry over issues, often exploiting emotional and negative themes rather than encouraging rational discussion. Advocates for consulting contend that spreading unfavorable information about a candidate's track record is acceptable during an election, particularly if it conflicts with the candidate's earlier assertions. Again, there is no straightforward response to this question, and several normative philosophies provide various viewpoints. Libertarian thinkers, who place a great emphasis on an individual's rights, support the function of consultants, arguing that they aid candidates in making a compelling argument for election. Democrats who are more deliberate in their approach are more critical, pointing out that consultants have developed a divisive, crash-and-burn style of politics that rarely encourages an in-depth discussion of the issues[13], [14].

## **Polling**

Can you envision a vote without a polling place? Is there any way a presidential campaign narrative could be written without mentioning the most recent tracking, trial heat, or CBS/New York Times poll? According to a political writer, Politics without polling has become as unthinkable as aviation without radar. With a 900-fold rise in trial heat polls from 1984 to 2000 alone, surveys have multiplied. Although a crucial component of political consultancy, polling is a highly specialized field of science. Private polling firms are used by or kept on retainer by presidential campaigns. In the months leading up to presidential primaries and throughout the primary season, candidates often conduct surveys and watch the results of such polls, which are done by reputable polling organizations. News media coverage and rich donors' choices to contribute to a candidate's campaign are heavily influenced by polls. When it comes to the primary and general election stages, why do candidates conduct polls?

They seek to understand how people feel about them so that they may alter their campaign plans to reflect the viewpoints of important constituencies. They could be particularly interested in test-marketing campaign communications to see if certain phrases or frames connect with certain voting blocs. In order to choose from a variety of counterattacks before it's too late and voters' views that were swayed by advertising become convictions, they also want to understand how people see the opposition. Additionally, presidents often do polling to see how the public feels about a contentious program, a presidential policy effort, or the president's overall goals. However, presidents also conduct surveys on subjects that have an impact on their electoral prospects. In the aftermath of his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, Bill Clinton sought consultant Dick Morris to survey the public's perception of his impeachment. Morris noted that although perjury was not tolerated by the public, adultery was. Clinton lied before a grand jury while ignoring his pollster. He ought to've paid attention. On the basis of perjury before a grand jury and obstructing justice, the House impeached Clinton.

Basic definitions of a poll and a pollster may be found in Michael W. Traugott and Paul J. Lavrakas. But there is more to scientific polling than this, as they note in an insightful book on election surveys. According to Traugott & Lavrakas, a poll is any political sample survey of the electorate that is carried out by the media, politicians, or political interest groups with the aim of a relatively quick and somewhat cursory tally of the public's political opinions and preferences. The term sample is crucial here. A sample is a smaller population that has been carefully chosen by science. You may be curious as to why researchers sample. Why not simply face your fears and communicate with everyone? This is practically impossible. A census involves interviewing every person in the population, which is costly, time-consuming, and problematic. Finding certain people like the destitute or the highly mobile can be almost difficult. Therefore, pollsters take samples. Additionally, as Traugott and Lavrakas point out, sampling is extraordinarily precise.

Inferences about the opinions or behaviors of the whole population of interest may be made with confidence from the replies to a well-drawn, scientific sample, which enables a pollster to interview just a relatively small portion of a community. But only if the sample is chosen in accordance with certain rules of probability can this be done accurately and with confidence. When these approaches are used, pollsters may reliably predict the preferences of the more than 120 million Americans who are likely to cast ballots, or the views of the more than 200 million American adults who are citizens, using a sample of only a few thousand respondents. The views of voters are examined using four significant polls. As follows:

1. Benchmark studies that provide broad baseline data on the degree of candidate name recognition and perceived public image.
2. Trial heat polls that put candidates against one another by posing the question, would you vote for mitt romney or barack obama if the election were held today?.
3. Monitoring polls, which are performed every day at the conclusion of a campaign to measure changes in public opinion.
4. Exit polls, which rely on in-person interviews with voters as they leave polling places.

Over the years, polling has advanced in science, providing more sophisticated and precise means to gauge the mood of the voter. Reputable polls provided startlingly precise forecasts of the presidential election's result in 2012. Based on statistical analysis of poll findings, Nate Silver, a polling blogger for The New York Times, correctly predicted the outcomes in each of the 50 states. He even took a risk by bragging about his forecasts well in advance. There are still more non-scientific issues with modern polls. Unreliable consultants have exploited polls by creating push polls that are intended to confuse respondents rather than enlighten them. Critics claim that polls now have an unjustifiably significant impact on elections, leading politicians to become excessively preoccupied with winning over voters and media to relentlessly report on every nuance of fresh poll findings. However, there is more of an issue with how polls are used in the current campaign than with polling itself. Polls may be used for both good and bad things, like other techniques for getting information. When used carefully and intelligently, polls provide insightful information about how the public feels about candidates and may help achieve democratic goals. Have you ever picked up the phone to participate in one of those political polls only to hear the person on the other end of the line silently disparage a candidate before asking you to rate their suitability for office? Well, if you were a resident of Maryland in 2006, you could have gotten an automated call from a conservative group asking you which U.S. Senate candidate you supported and then if you believed that medical research should be done on unborn children. Wow, you may think, perhaps in response to the semantics of the query, Research on unborn babies? When you publicly expressed your opposition to doing such research on unborn children, the voice would respond, Fact. Ben Cardin voted to permit stem cell research on unborn children. Michael Steele rejects any study that ends human life, according to the truth. This was a sneaky persuasive tactic. Ben Cardin, the other candidate, was purposefully painted with a broad brush of bad associations by supporters of Michael Steele who used loaded terminology such as destroys human life and unborn babies. The American Association of Public Opinion Research defines a push poll as a highly unethical pseudo-poll in which telephone calls are used to canvass potential voters, feeding them false or misleading information about a candidate under the guise of taking a poll to see how this information affects voter preferences. Push polls provide propagandistic information as opposed to real polls, which are meant to gather knowledge. They make an effort to deceive voters by leading them to believe that the pollster is curious in their opinions while, in reality, the goal is to provide them with skewed information that may affect how they vote. Push polls are uncommon. Authentic pollsters wouldn't consider using them.

However, there are several examples of dishonest consultants using them in elections. Regrettably, they are effective, possibly having a bigger effect on people who make decisions later and are less engaged. For instance, a Congressman from Ohio who was single at the time heard about push polls asking his followers whether they would still support him if they knew he was homosexual. Although he claimed he wasn't homosexual, the candidate conceded that the tactic put him in a precarious situation. He inquired, What do you do? Do you give a press conference and declare that you are not gay? No news conference was held by the candidate. He also lost his bid for reelection to a second term in Congress.



The use of push polls in presidential elections is very common. Supporters of George W. Bush used the most well-known and filthiest tactics during the 2000 South Carolina Republican primary. Bush supporters distributed a push poll that asked: Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for John McCain for president if you knew he had fathered an illegitimate Black child? in an effort to tarnish the character of their major rival, Senator John McCain.

The survey was especially impolite since it indirectly mentioned McCain's adopted Bangladeshi daughter in addition to its racist tone. When Obama was running for president in 2008, a push pollster questioned Jewish people in Florida whether they would be more or less likely to support him if they knew he had donated to the Palestine Liberation Organization and visited with leaders of the terrorist organization Hamas, which is hostile to Israel Asher, 2012. As the majority of Florida Jews chose Obama in 2008, it seems that the push poll had little to no impact. The American Association of Political Consultants has denounced push polling because of its ethical concerns and potential harm to the consulting industry. This is a wise move that might discourage its usage. Push polls should be condemned, but given the nature of elections, this won't deter dishonest sellers from using the tactic.

### CONCLUSION

Political campaigns are complex, varied processes, and the engagement of different key individuals has a big influence on how they turn out. The focus is on the candidates, who outline their goals and strategies in an effort to appeal to voters. Political parties are essential in helping politicians raise money, get support, and have a consistent agenda. Behind the scenes, campaign staff members put in a lot of time coordinating logistics and coming up with clever ways to promote their candidates. Through coverage and advertising, the media serves as a potent channel for the dissemination of information and the influencing of public opinion. The ultimate power is in the hands of the electorate, whose decisions influence the direction that political campaigns take. For an understanding of the dynamics of political campaigns, it is essential to know the roles and interactions of these key stakeholders. In order to react to new trends and problems and ensure that political campaigns remain impartial, inclusive, and representative of the public's will, ongoing study and analysis is required. In the end, an effective democratic system relies on the accountability and active participation of all major participants in political campaigns.

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## CHAPTER 20

### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION ON CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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**ABSTRACT:**

The term campaign finance describes the funds and donations used to support political campaigns and endeavours. It is essential to the development of democracy because it influences how well-positioned politicians are to engage voters, promote their programmes, and win elections. Campaign money, however, has generated discussion and controversy. On the one hand, it is seen as crucial for promoting competitive elections and permitting participants from a range of backgrounds. On the other side, requests for stronger rules and more transparency have arisen in response to worries about the influence of money in politics and the possibility for corruption. The main tenets of campaign funding are examined, along with its effects on democracy and proposed solutions to its problems in this chapter. However, in order to maintain an election system that is fair, open, and responsive to public opinion, nations must constantly review and enhance campaign funding laws.

**KEYWORDS:**

Campaign, Democratic, Money, Political, Parties.

### INTRODUCTION

Modern political systems depend heavily on campaign funding, which shapes how politicians seek for office and how elections are held. It refers to the money spent on political campaigns to help politicians spread the word about their agendas, connect with voters, and engage in fierce competition. The democratic process and the legitimacy of election results are significantly impacted by the financing sources, expenditure limits, and openness in campaign finance. Candidates in democratic nations make their ideas, visions, and policy proposals known to the public via political campaigns. For effective campaigns to run commercials, plan events, recruit personnel, and participate in grassroots outreach, large financial resources are required. As a consequence of worries about its impact on judgment and potential for corruption, the role of money in politics has become a hotly debated subject.

On the one hand, supporters contend that campaign funding is necessary to promote political competition and make it possible for candidates from a variety of backgrounds to take part in the election process. A sufficient amount of cash enables those who really want to help the public to share their thoughts and become more visible. By giving voters access to a variety of viewpoints and policy solutions, it may also result in a better educated electorate. Opponents, on the other hand, assert that increased financial influence in politics may lead to an unfair playing field that favors politicians sponsored by powerful people, businesses, or interest groups. The democratic values of equality and representation may be undermined by policies that put contributors' interests ahead of those of the general public as a result of this apparent pay-to-play dynamic[1]–[3].

There is a worldwide discussion about campaign money, not just in one nation. Different countries have developed different strategies to deal with these problems, leading to a wide range of campaign financing laws and processes. Some nations choose to finance elections

publicly in order to rely less on private donations, while others set stringent contribution limits and disclosure regulations in order to increase transparency. The rise of new communication technologies and social media platforms in recent years has made the field of campaign funding even more complex. The distinction between conventional and digital techniques has become muddled as online fundraising and advertising have developed into essential elements of contemporary campaigns. The groundwork for a thorough investigation of campaign financing, its function in democracy, the difficulties it presents, and the many measures governments have sought to overcome these difficulties. We may better understand how money affects politics and how to find a balance that supports democratic norms while reducing the dangers of corruption and undue influence by looking at the nuances of campaign funding.

### **Parties in Politics**

Political parties still have a significant impact on presidential politics, although not having the same disproportionate influence on elections as they had fifty years ago. Over the course of its more than 200-year existence, the United States has enjoyed a thriving two-party system. The Republican and Democratic Parties continue to be the cornerstones of modern American party politics, despite the fact that the parties have evolved through time and that the underlying ideologies and political coalitions of today are quite different from those of 50 years ago. American politics has been a two-player game for the last 150 years. The two-party drama has evolved over time thanks to supporting performers and bit characters from different political parties. Ralph Nader, a liberal activist and Green Party presidential candidate in 2000, received enough support in Florida to help George W. Bush win that crucial state. Many dedicated conservative activists organized the Tea Party in 2009 as a result of their frustration with Obama's federal government efforts. The Tea Party was called after the famous pre-revolutionary tea dumping in Boston Harbor. The Tea Party, which is less a legitimate political party than a movement with shaky and sometimes acrimonious ties to the Republican Party, assisted Republicans in 2010 in winning state and federal legislatures.

On several subjects, the two main parties have opposing stances. When seen through the prism of its platform, the Republican Party places a strong emphasis on limiting federal spending and repealing the Obamacare health care legislation. The Republican Party, also referred to as the GOP, favors lower taxes, promises to reform Medicare by giving a set amount to future program beneficiaries, fervently defends the right of Americans to own guns, and strongly favors abortion with no exceptions for rape or incest. The Democratic Party platform supports increased taxes on Americans with higher incomes in order to close the budget deficit. It also defends the continuation of the federal Medicare program and finds benefits in government expenditure. On social matters, there are notable disparities, with Democrats continuing to favor abortion rights and same-sex marriage[4]–[6].

In addition, the parties have similar policies against terrorism, oppose Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon, and support Israel in the Middle East. Furthermore, both parties enthusiastically support the American capitalist system, as leftist opponents painstakingly point out, and each is pleased to embrace multimillion dollar political action committees PACs that finance their politicians' commercials. In the process of nominating presidents, parties are essential. A candidate must win the nomination of his or her party and run as either a Democrat or a Republican. The nominating conventions that certify the candidate are administered by parties. Even in today's candidate-centered environment, parties still help choose strong candidates, support them with staff helpers, rally voters, and raise money for

the presidential campaign. Retail door-to-door campaigning continues to take place even in a media-focused election, with help from national party employees.

Parties are still significant politically even if they do not have as much sway over elections as they had more than 50 years ago. Parties serve as brands that influence individual voting choices. If I identify as a Republican, I feel a sense of devotion to my party and want to see my candidate win. If I'm a Democrat, I look at candidates through the prism of my brand and choose to support them because they bear the Democratic banner. Parties may act as a conduit for ideas and emotions, and ardent party allegiances, developed via socialization, can have an impact on political conduct. Parties give various perspectives on current topics, which helps to frame the protracted presidential campaign at the macro level. Parties do not promote democratic goals when they provide false information or refrain from taking positions on topics. Democratic objectives may be advanced when the two parties provide opposing perspectives on election-related topics. But instead of producing the concessions required for effective government, they create impasse when they are unable to agree on issues dividing the country.

## **DISCUSSION**

The importance and complexity of campaign money in democracy cannot be overstated. On the one hand, it is essential to the success of democratic elections and political campaigns. However, it also presents possible difficulties and dangers that should be carefully considered in order to protect the legitimacy of the democratic system. The following significant factors underline the importance of campaign money to democracy:

### **1. Promoting Political Engagement**

Candidates from a variety of backgrounds may take part in the political process because to campaign money. Aspiring politicians may run for office, express their opinions, and interact with the public thanks to financial resources. Without sufficient finance, it may be difficult for those without personal wealth or access to donors to compete, thereby reducing the variety of views in politics.

### **2. Educating the Public**

Candidates need funding in order to present to voters their platforms, policy ideas, and vision for the nation. Candidates may enlighten voters about their positions on important topics and reach a wider audience via campaign advertising and outreach. By enabling voters to make informed decisions during elections, this knowledge encourages a more informed and active electorate.

### **3. Running for office**

Democratic regimes are built on the foundation of competitive elections. The election process is more alive and active as a result of campaign money, which enables candidates to undertake competitive campaigns. As a result, there are more meaningful public debates and better policy discussions. Competitive contests allow candidates to engage with people, address their problems, and make persuasive arguments.

### **4. Expression and Freedom of Speech**

The right to free speech and expression and campaign funding are intimately related in many democracies. It enables people, groups, and interest groups to express their political opinions and preferences by supporting politicians and issues they care about. A pluralistic and open democratic society must be preserved, and that means defending freedom of expression.

## **5. Contributions to Political Parties**

Political party funding is often correlated with campaign money. Parties may perform internal party operations, maintain organizational structures, and reach out to prospective members and supporters with the aid of enough finance. For a country to have stable and successful government, political parties must be strong.

### **Importance of Campaign Funding**

Although campaign funding is important to democracy, there are a number of difficulties and possible negatives that come with it:

#### **1. Money's Influence on Politics**

Concerns about undue influence and possible policy capture might arise from affluent people, businesses, or interest groups spending excessive amounts on campaigns. Candidates' capacity to serve the interests of the general public may be compromised if they feel obligated to their significant contributors.

#### **2. Differential Political Influence**

A level playing field may be created by an unequal allocation of financial resources, favoring candidates who have access to substantial finance. As a result, candidates from less affluent backgrounds may be marginalized and the idea that a wealthy elite controls politics may spread.

#### **3. Possibility of Corruption**

Without appropriate rules and mechanisms to ensure openness, campaign money may turn into a haven for corruption. Large, anonymous contributions can make it possible for people or organizations to lobby public leaders for favors or special treatment.

#### **4. Loss of Public Confidence**

Citizens may get disillusioned with politics and the political process if they believe that campaign funding is hurting democracy.

Many democratic nations have put in place campaign finance laws, such as donation limits, transparency rules, and public funding choices, to strike a balance. In order to protect the democratic values of justice and representation, it is important to make sure that although candidates have access to the required funds, there are safeguards in place to thwart corruption, preserve openness, and prohibit it altogether. Ultimately, a healthy and robust democracy depends on striking the correct balance between freedom of campaign money and honesty [7]–[9].

### **Campaign Finance**

A PAC that backed Newt Gingrich's 2012 campaign for the Republican presidential nomination received more than \$16 million from billionaire casino tycoon Sheldon Adelson. Adelson admired Gingrich's contempt for labor unions and his ardent support for Israel. The wealthy conservative billionaires Charles and David Koch funded an estimated \$200 million for independent political organizations that opposed Barack Obama's reelection. Wealthy liberal contributors on the Democratic side, including financier and billionaire George Soros, contributed around \$100 million to non-partisan liberal groups that backed Democratic candidates in the 2012 election. On board, unions and other Democratic organizations likely contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to local, state, and federal elections. Huge

contributions made to independent liberal and conservative groups on all sides of the political spectrum may now be made anonymously thanks to organizations that shield the identities of the people who sign the cheques.

All of this is lawful as a consequence of the contentious Citizens United decision from the Supreme Court in 2010, which ruled that the government could not outlaw independent political expenditure by businesses and unions in elections. Undoubtedly, campaigns need funding. They utilize it to fund political advertisements as well as the delivery of conventional political mailings. Additionally, they need money to run grass-roots campaign offices around the nation, where staff people must be employed to recruit volunteers, train them, call voters who are still uncertain, and register friendly voters in crucial swing states. They also need money to pay advisers and pollsters. Every election cycle, the expenditures of running a campaign appear to reach a new, unheard-of height.

Obama became the first major presidential contender to refuse public campaign funds in 2008 after realizing this. In doing so, he would be able to spend as much money as he wanted on his campaign without being constrained by federal spending laws. His choice was a sudden some could even say hypocritical reversal from his prior criticism of politics-as-usual and indication that he would choose public campaign finance. What function should finance have in politics? Should wealthy contributors, sometimes known as fat cats or big dogs, who lavishly contribute to political campaigns be prohibited from doing so by the government? It is a well-known query that traces back to earlier times when money launderers gave money to politicians they supported. One thing is certain: You cannot comprehend modern presidential politics without acknowledging the importance of money and campaign financing.

The lines of war have been clearly established. Conservatives contend that since businesses have legal rights much like persons, the government does not have the authority to forbid them from attempting to influence political results. Liberals counter by claiming that corporate money corrupts politics and has an improper influence on both elections and the choices made by elected officials while they are in power. A quick historical overview is useful for comprehending the present.

### **1. Watergate**

In the aftermath of the Watergate incident, which started when a group of burglars stole into the DNC offices at the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C., with the approval of the attorney general of President Nixon, shocking ethical violations occurred. Amazingly, Nixon's presidential reelection campaign set aside funds to compensate the thieves, and they received hush money in exchange for their silence. Thus, the Watergate break-in and cover-up were funded in part by hidden campaign donations. Early in the 1970s, at this time, other abuses took place. The dairy sector contributed \$2 million to Nixon's campaign in exchange for higher milk price supports, enabling it to raise its revenue from dairy products. The telephone corporation, then known as International Telephone and Telegraph, pledged \$400,000 to support the San Francisco Republican convention in 1972. In return, ITT received a favorable resolution to an antitrust complaint from the Justice Department after Nixon personally defended the company.

### **2. Reforms after Watergate**

The two chambers of Congress must work together and overcome many obstacles in order to accomplish comprehensive campaign reform. Watergate provided a significant catalyst. Major reforms to campaign finance regulations were made by Congress in 1974 in an attempt to lower the exorbitant cost of presidential races, the parties' reliance on rich contributors, and



the use of hidden donations. The new law mandated that donations from one individual contributor may not exceed \$1,000 to a candidate and \$20,000 to a political party committee in each election, and that contributions of \$200 or more had to be disclosed publicly. It introduced an optional framework for public funding of presidential races via federal and matching monies, established the Federal Election Commission as an independent government entity to oversee election law, and mandated extensive transparency of campaign expenditures.

Over the following decades, court rulings in favor of liberals, who wanted the government to impose severe limitations on campaign spending, oscillated back and forth with conservatives' views, who claimed that campaign reforms harmed free speech. Court-ordered changes, however, were unable to halt the infiltration of large sums of money into political campaigns. Rich people discovered methods to get around the post-Watergate rules, which prompted Congress to create the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, often known as the McCain-Feingold Act after its two senatorial advocates, John McCain and Russ Feingold.

### **3. Expanding free speech and opening the floodgates, the Supreme Court**

The right-wingers were incensed. They could not for the life of them see why there should be any restrictions on advertising at all since they believed that the First Amendment was inviolable and forbade any exceptions.

America was involved, after all. Liberals said that, yeah, this is America and that money stands for money in that country. Smaller voices are drowned out by the noise of big money, and strong interests have easy access to the halls of power. Conservatives argued that restricting political spending would be unconstitutional since money has a right to speak. They argued that because money is speech, politicians can spend as much of their own money on their campaigns as they want; it would be unconstitutional to limit their expenditures. An prior Supreme Court ruling supported this.

Liberals reacted by saying the choice was foolish. The dispute then continued. Conservatives searched for a chance to challenge the McCain-Feingold statute, which set restrictions on political donations, and they found one, albeit it was an unusual case. A conservative non-profit organization named Citizens United created the documentary *Hillary: The Movie* in the run-up to the 2008 election in an effort to discredit Hillary Clinton's campaign by using news, interviews, and eerie music. According to the McCain-Feingold Act, it was electioneering and unlawful to name a candidate in a message that was published a month before a primary. This was confirmed as accurate by the Federal Election Commission for *Hillary: The Movie*. It couldn't be aired as a result. Conservatives argued that this was unlawful and brought the matter to the Supreme Court.

Conservatives prevailed this time. The Supreme Court concluded in the *Citizens United* case on a 5-4 vote that the government could not limit how much money businesses and unions might spend on elections. The Court ruled that there was no distinction between corporations, unions, and wealthy people when it came to their ability to donate money to create and broadcast political advertisements that name candidates. They may either fund their own sponsorship of the advertising or they might give the money to a PAC, a political action committee, to create the commercial. Justice Anthony Kennedy of the Supreme Court argued in favor of the ruling by stating that speech is an essential component of democracy and that the First Amendment protects speech and speaker. Observing that speech is constitutionally protected, conservative law scholar Michael W. McConnell said that this is true not because we doubt the speech inflicts harm, but because we fear the censorship more. Corporate and union donations to parties and candidates were still prohibited. But the *Citizens United* ruling

overturned important provisions of the 2002 McCain-Feingold statute and campaign finance restrictions from the post-Watergate period. Unrestricted free expression won the day[10], [11].

### **Political Action Committee Spending Has Increased Since Citizens United**

You could be alarmed by these issues and start to worry about the health of American democracy as a result. Or you may respond that these are fictitious issues: We don't know for sure if influential contributors always had an impact on the policies chosen by elected officials, whether super-PACs' and candidates' responsibilities overlapped and led to genuine conflicts of interest, or if the millions of dollars spent on political advertising resulted in any voter turnout. Because Citizens United upholds free expression, you could support it. That's a valid point, and the Supreme Court's majority concurs.

However, the ways that Citizens United lessens openness and promotes covert political activity alarm opponents. Reformers have put forward several fascinating suggestions in response to these issues. One of Lessig's suggestions was among the more intriguing ones. He places a focus on congressional elections being publicly funded. Lessig proposes that the first \$50 of each American's annual tax payment to the U.S. Treasury be changed into a democracy voucher. Each voter had the option to distribute the \$50 voucher anyway they saw fit, whether it be equally among many candidates or giving the whole \$50 to one. Candidates were allowed to accept the funds as long as they acknowledged that the only funding they would utilize for their campaigns would be democracy vouchers or modest donations from voters. They were unable to take donations from PACs. According to Lessig's calculations, the system would generate millions of dollars in campaign funding for each election cycle if every registered voter used it. By ensuring that elections are paid by all people, not just the wealthiest 1 percent, this might eliminate the taint of corporate donations and help rebuild public confidence in the democratic system.

Conservatives will object since the proposal seems to indirectly forbid companies and unions from contributing an unlimited amount of money to political elections. The First Amendment could have been violated in this situation. The idea that voters may be forced to provide their tax revenues to any political candidate would also be rejected by libertarian academics. The proposal gives, at the very least, a useful method to begin a fresh discussion on this subject.

### **Intersections Among Players**

The characters in this chapter cross one other's paths and collide in various ways as performers on the tumultuous stage of political theater. Candidates make valiant attempts to shape the agendas and frames of the media, but they must adjust to its practices. Some campaigns use political bloggers, and many use social media to reach out to vote blocs. Media reflect and refract campaign ideas, giving consultants attention but sometimes characterizing their tactics with contempt. In campaigns, polls are crucial because they provide candidates with feedback on their ability to connect with voters and assist them in adjusting their message to fit with overarching themes. In the media, polls are a common occurrence that sometimes drive out more interesting news. Special interest organizations conduct surveys, employ consultants, and fund PACs with multimillion-dollar contributions that may be made in secret.

Candidates invest a great deal of time in fund-raising, courting wealthy donors and party groups that support them. Parties rely extensively on the media to spread their political message because they understand that in the age of digitally based political marketing, they serve as brands. Everything is politics: divisive, political, and a high-stakes endeavor to use

influence to seize control. In the greatest scenarios, it leads to elected officials requesting a mandate to execute laws that raise people's standards of living and health. In the worst cases, the process benefits the wealthy and influential, ensuring that strong financial interests continue to control the status quo.

Even though they are no longer the main conduits through which campaigns move, political parties nevertheless have a significant impact on presidential politics. Parties choose qualified candidates and certify them at conventions for nomination. Parties have an impact on voters as well, acting as brands to influence voters' choices. And last, you need a lot of money to conduct campaigns. The 2010 Supreme Court decision eased campaign finance laws by holding that the federal government cannot prohibit corporations and unions from making independent expenditures in candidate elections. The extraordinary level of corporate expenditure that has resulted from this has pleased supporters of the First Amendment but alarmed detractors who are concerned that corporate organizations may be able to influence presidential politics.

However, it is still unclear how Citizens United will affect elections. In 2012, anti-Obama PACs outspent Democratic PACs in expenditures by hundreds of millions of dollars. Obama did, however, win reelection with a sizable majority, and the Democrats kept control of the Senate. Republican lawmakers retained control of the House despite massive expenditures by pro-Democratic PACs to unseat them. Elections cannot be outright purchased with unrestricted political money. Voters continue to rebuff obvious efforts to use advertising to their advantage in elections. But there are also more subtle issues with campaign money. The democratic ideal of transparency may be violated when contributions to political action organizations are kept a secret. The disparity in access to public officials between wealthy groups and those representing the middle class and the financially disadvantaged shows no signs of abating.

## CONCLUSION

A challenging and divisive topic in contemporary politics is campaign money. It is crucial for fostering political competition and making it easier for politicians to interact with voters, but it also raises serious concerns about the unjustified influence of money in politics. Policymakers throughout the globe confront the difficult problem of striking the proper balance between allowing for free speech and preventing possible corruption. Potential remedies to reduce the detrimental effects of excessive money in politics have included transparent reporting procedures, contribution caps, and public funding choices. The development of an educated electorate that can fight for significant campaign financing reform and reinforce democratic ideals also depends on public education and civic participation. In the end, a properly controlled system of campaign funding may strengthen the democratic process and encourage a fairer and more representative political environment.

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## **CHAPTER 21**

### **POLITICAL PARTIES: NOMINATIONS AND NEWS DYNAMIC**

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

This research examines the significant influence that nominations have on news coverage and news substance. Nominations are the procedure for choosing news items, subjects, or people for in-depth coverage in the media. The study looks at how public perceptions of people, events, and society problems are affected by nominations. It digs into the processes that determine nominations, looking at the impact of numerous elements such media bias, political allegiances, and public interest. The research also examines how biased or selective nominations could affect democratic debate and media plurality. Media outlets must be aware of their duty to give a fair and inclusive picture of news topics and people in order to promote a healthy democratic society. Legislators have to think about enacting rules that encourage openness in the selection process and prohibit improper influence on press coverage. Furthermore, since algorithms and artificial intelligence are increasingly influencing news curation, the study emphasizes the significance of technology in the nomination process.

#### **KEYWORDS:**

Candidates, Election, Media, Nomination, News, Political.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

How is President Rudy Giuliani doing? Hillary Clinton, the president, is another example. Political scientist Samuel L. Popkin raised these concerns while pointing out that Giuliani was the overwhelming favorite to win the Republican nomination a year before the 2008 election, with his polling numbers more than doubling those of his rivals and his fundraising breaking previous records for Republican candidates. Giuliani received praise for his gallant leadership on September 11 and in the days that followed the horrible catastrophe while serving as mayor of New York City during the 9/11 attacks. He was sure to win the nomination because of his strong track record as mayor of New York City and his reputation for no-nonsense toughness, which appealed to Republican principles and was expected to excite voters[ 1]–[3].

Giuliani, however, failed. He dropped out of the campaign in late January, months before the Republican convention, after failing to win a primary in 2008. Why is Hillary Clinton not the president? As a virtual juggernaut, a member of Democratic Party royalty due to her marriage and personal achievements, a politician revered by hordes of her fellow citizens, and a twice-elected senator from New York, Clinton was the favorite to win the party's nomination. She was ahead in the polls, had a sizable campaign war fund, and was in charge of a staff that sparkled with political swagger. Obama, on the other hand, started his campaign with almost nothing. In January 2007, when he submitted the paperwork to investigate running for president, just four employees managed a tiny Washington, D.C. office. They hurried out to get a wireless router the day before the announcement so that everyone would have access to the Internet. Obama had an odd name and a spotty resume due to his brief time in the Senate.

But Hillary Clinton was unsuccessful in winning the Democratic presidential nominee for 2008, which was a terrible personal disappointment. Few would have foreseen this conclusion in the chilly winter of 2007, when Obama, slow and overburdened, struggled to remain on topic and Clinton, polished and precise, appeared prepared to win the nomination. And why didn't Rick Perry win the GOP nomination for 2012? The three-term governor of Texas was well-liked, competitive, attractive, and a skilled campaigner. He was well-liked in Texas, had a positive message that might sway people, and, on top of that, consistently supported the right on issues like abortion and homosexual marriage. He led Mitt Romney by double digits in polls conducted in 2011, raising the possibility that he may put together a coalition to unseat President Obama in 2012.

Nevertheless, he too fell short of winning his party's candidacy, the victim of linguistic wounds he gave himself that few could have predicted. A campaign involves a number of difficult strategic decisions, thorny choices, and the complicated difficulties of managing a campaign organization. While some candidates succeed, others fall short. When reality settles in, it appears apparent who would win the party's nomination at first, but when the contender withdraws, it becomes equally clear that he or she didn't have a chance from the start. In the nomination process, communication is crucial. The opinions of candidates' viability among fundraisers and voters alike are influenced by the media coverage of political campaigns. A campaign's course may be changed by opinion surveys and primary debates in ways that were unthinkable under the previous political party-dominated nomination process. The unique method used in America to choose its presidential candidates includes drawbacks as well as advantages, and it has undoubtedly changed significantly from what the nation's founders would have envisioned [4], [5].

The function of political communication in the selection of the next president is discussed in this chapter. The formal processes that govern presidential nominations are explained in detail in the first part, along with the reasoning that underpins the crucial press coverage. The pre-primaries and subsequent state primaries are covered in more detail in the following sections. The nomination procedure and news media coverage are then reviewed. The last section discusses conventions, which have changed from being important occasions to being weeklong promotions for the parties. You have undoubtedly followed presidential nominations in the media, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on your level of interest. You may have wondered or perhaps found it puzzling that candidates compete in so many primaries, travel through little states in search of votes, and get apparently unending poll-based, strategy-driven media attention. You may make sense of everything, get a more critical knowledge, and grasp the processes that led to the lunacy with the aid of this chapter.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Official Regulations and Procedures**

The presidential election process always includes primaries. To be nominated by the Republican and Democratic Parties, candidates must prevail in the primaries and caucuses. It goes without saying that it wasn't always this way. Party officials choose the candidates in the 19th century by haggling and striking bargains among themselves in smoke-filled backrooms. Primary elections were started in the early 20th century by a group of political reformers known as the Progressives who were fed up with party boss control and wanted to give the public a chance to choose the presidential candidates. Primary elections began slowly. In 1912, primaries were conducted in around 12 states. Over the next fifty years, there were a variety of state primaries; on average, 15 states hosted presidential primaries, and no more than 40% of the convention delegates to the nominating conventions came from primary



states. The nomination procedure was still heavily influenced by party leaders. In order to show party officials that people would support his presidential campaign despite the fact that they were aware of his Roman Catholic faith, John F. Kennedy ran in the 1960 primary. He didn't run in primaries to get delegates according on how many primaries he won. Instead, he made an entrance to wow the party leaders.

By 1972, it had become evident that party officials were in charge of the nomination process and could intimidate others who disagreed, forcing the Democratic Party to democratize its processes.

Choosing delegates should be fairer, more transparent, and less subject to the demands of party insiders, according to a high-powered panel. The group suggested that the primary elections, which were conducted the year before the general presidential election, be used as the primary method for choosing convention delegates.

The report was endorsed by the Democratic Party, and state legislatures enacted legislation as a result that made the modifications enforceable for both Democrats and Republicans. As a consequence, the vast majority of electors who participate in primary and caucus elections virtually choose the delegates to the nominating conventions. Let's define three crucial words before moving on.

A presidential primary is a state-wide election where voters may choose the party's candidate for president. Just as in a regular election, votes are cast via a secret ballot. Caucuses are unique. A caucus includes conversing, debating, and caucusing together about matters, as the name implies. A caucus is a local, open meeting when party members openly discuss candidates, choose delegates to the nominating convention, and determine which presidential candidate they will support. Party members strive to convince one another to endorse one candidate or another in a caucus, which is a public gathering. A favored candidate and a slate of delegates to represent their interests at a nominating convention are ultimately chosen through caucuses.

A delegate is a party member who attends the convention and officially casts a ballot for a candidate. According to Polsby et al., delegates are more likely to be political participants and possess more radical political views than ordinary voters and party faithful. Strong opinions on topics encourage people to participate in presidential elections, which is a positive thing. This may not be a terrible thing. Delegate voting is often only a formality. Most of the time, the victor of a primary or caucus obtains all or a significant majority of the convention delegates, who are obligated to back the candidates that voters chose in those contests. Delegates are distributed proportionally to the amount of votes cast in primaries which are increasingly adopting proportional representation methods. Superdelegates are a unique, more limited class of delegates. Superdelegates are members of the party's national committee and, in the case of the Democrats, elected officials governors and congresspeople.

You may be perplexed as to why we even have delegates anymore. The procedure seems quaint and esoteric. The custom dates back to the 19th century, a time when party leaders predominated nominating conferences and assigned certain people to handle the convention's day-to-day operations and candidate selection. Party leaders picked delegates in the 19th century; now, they are chosen based on the outcomes of primaries and caucuses. But the custom continues. Some experts vehemently support the idea of a convention delegate, pointing out that it allows grassroots party members a chance to take part in the convention, rewarding their labor and strengthening party loyalty. The conversion of primary and caucus votes into delegates involves a complicated procedure. It basically guarantees that delegates will back the decisions made by voters at the polls[6]–[8].

## **The news media in primary schools**

### **1. News based on strategy and horse races**

The horse race and popularity are the only topics that the national press is interested in. The headline in tomorrow's Washington Post, if a thermonuclear war broke out tonight, would read, In a major defeat for the president. The news media treat the election of presidents like a game, an athletic event, or a horse race. Journalists constantly concentrate on the candidates' intentions to defeat their competitors, electoral strategies, poll results, and come-from-behind techniques to defeat political foes. Thomas E. Patterson, a political communication expert, was one of the first to identify and explain this trend. Patterson has often contended that the media trivializes the important business of presidential elections by turning the campaign to a horse race. Robert D. McClure and he made the following observations:

A presidential election is covered by the media just like a horse race. The camera follows the competitors as they travel the nation in an effort to capture the drama, excitement, and adventure of a taxing race toward the finish line in November. The positions of the contenders on the track are indicated by the opinion surveys, which are regularly quoted. All of the competitors are continuously analyzed for their strengths and shortcomings, which helps to explain why they are where they are and builds tension as they approach the finish line.

The horse race metaphor has been around for a while, and it comes from a time when watching horse races was a common spectator event. You think that horse racing is outdated. Fine. Replace it with March Madness, the NFL playoffs, or the baseball pennant chase. The importance is the same regardless of the sport: Instead of treating electoral politics as a serious endeavor that involves a discussion of various policy ideas, a competition between leaders who have expressed contrasting visions for their nation, or a crucial exercise in the deliberation of ideas among citizens and leaders, the news media treats electoral politics as a competitive game, characterized by a battle over tactics for the prize of victory. You will see headlines similar to this in the main news media every four years: According to polls, Kerry and Edwards have recently made gains; Dean is currently in third place ; Clinton and Obama are engaged in a close battle in Indiana ; and Romney is changing tactics by attacking a resurgent Gingrich. Just during the nomination stage, mind you[9]–[11].

A new national poll or prognostication is released almost every day during the general election campaign, and when the outcome is expected to be close, as it was in 2012, the race's closeness becomes the main topic of conversation as network anchors anxiously count down the days until the race starts. Horse race news is a crucial component of the nomination process, maybe even more so at this stage since predictions of who will win have a greater effect on fundraising and voters, who are less interested in the nomination process than they are in the autumn campaign. You will thus hear a heart-pounding, adrenaline-filled account of an impending confrontation before the start of a debate among contenders for a presidential party nomination.

If you hadn't paid close attention to the candidates' names, you might have mistaken CNN's preview of the 2012 Republican primary debate, which took place in the fall of 2011, for one of those dramatic, picture-book segments that airs before football playoff games and dramatizes and romanticizes the teams and players. In keeping with the setting of the western discussion, the CNN montage opened with images of cowboys, livestock, lush streams, and mountains. Woodwind musical instruments chirped a tune in the background. Before a

Republican debate in Las Vegas, a deep-voiced CNN anchor said the following, displaying all the trappings of horse racing, competitive drama-infused political journalism:

The American frontier is historically a region of potential for Republicans, from the majestic mountain ranges of the Rockies to the arid sands of the Mojave. Tonight, the race for the Republican presidential nomination moves to this area, where Barack Obama made inroads four years ago cut to picture of Barack Obama to a state that could be pivotal in the primary and general election cycles camera pans to casinos and Las Vegas traffic; and to a Las Vegas event for Republican presidential candidates, on stage and in depth following a dramatic reshuffle of the pack picture of playing cards: Herman Cain, now among the front-runners. The presidential campaign is moving west with nothing less than America's future in mind cut to Statue of Liberty.

Dramatic music begins to play, then cheers break out, and Anderson Cooper's voice can be heard. Welcome to all of our viewers, both in the United States and beyond. Let's get to know the Republican presidential candidates for 2012. on stage with us are: Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich enters the room like a giant and waves to the crowd; Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachman enters the room like a star athlete wearing a white dress; Texas Governor Rick Perry enters the room speaking like the power forward of an NBA team to loud applause. Former senator from Pennsylvania Rick Santorum, former governor of Massachusetts Mitt Romney, former CEO of Godfather's Pizza Herman Cain, who puffed up his chest, and Texas Congressman Ron Paul were the candidates who were introduced like a starting basketball squad full of famous people in the NBA finals.

There is a ton of factual data that supports these instances, showing that the news media, especially during a campaign's nomination stretch, focuses on the game side of politics. Results come from detailed content studies of election coverage, in which researchers categorize articles to compare the percentage of stories that concentrate on the race with those that look at policy concerns, such the candidates' positions on the economy, in order to draw conclusions. The horse race was the subject of 64 percent of news reports on average from 1988 to 2012, while just 28.1 percent of them focused on political matters. For instance, in 2000, a staggering 78% of the surveys looked at the horse race, compared to 22% that looked at policy concerns.

Press rumors about 2016 began shortly after the 2012 election was declared valid. Journalists debated which potential Republican candidates had an advantage: Chris Christie from New Jersey? The Marco Rubio of Florida? or Wisconsin native and 2012 vice presidential contender Paul Ryan? Six months after the election, Hillary Clinton was the subject of so many media rumors that columnist Maureen Dowd pleaded with readers not to bother her any more. Such a ridiculous question. Hillary is running, of course. Why, especially during the nomination process, do horse racing tales predominate press coverage? Four factors exist: Increasing journalistic skepticism about politics encourages reporters to view politics as nothing more than a strategic power game. Polls' proliferation, statistics-heavy presentation of news, easy-to-follow routine, and fact that the election is a horse race with candidates strategizing, concentrating on early primary wins, and relentless campaigning are also factors. There are more insightful ways to evaluate the campaign, according to those who bemoan the media's fixation on the race. Towards the conclusion of the chapter, their concerns are explored along with several other approaches to present the campaign.

## **2. Favored Media Narratives**

The media does not merely broadcast election-related news to the general public like a conveyor belt. Instead of reflecting politics, it offers specific slices and viewpoints of

presidential campaigns. As was said, professional procedures influence the news rather than political prejudices. One custom is the propensity to embellish campaign tales. Like all communicators, journalists use tales to frame politics around certain issues. These stories are neither fabrications or outright falsehoods. It is understandable that the themes change in various election years, but it is striking how consistent the plots are throughout a range of elections. Although it sometimes seems that way to thin-skinned campaign staffers, the intention is not to promote any one candidate for president. In order to shed light on the dynamics of certain nomination campaigns, the goal is to choose one subject among the many that may be considered.

Patterson has noted important journalistic narratives that predominate in coverage of the presidential nomination in his work throughout the years. They consist of:

1. **The front-runner scenario:** The candidate who, in surveys, expert assessments, and significant endorsements, leads the field is favored by the news. Leading candidates may get the majority of publicity. However, this is usually outweighed by unfavorable press that arises from journalists' eagerness to alert the public to weaknesses in the front-runner's defense.
2. **The losing ground narrative:** The news reflects when a top candidate's public support in primary elections or polls dramatically drops. As a number of indicators from party leaders' thoughts to voter comments take on a sour tinge, coverage becomes markedly less positive.
3. **The bandwagon narrative:** The bandwagon theory states that when a candidate's poll numbers start to increase quickly, news reports seize the opportunity to join the bandwagon. Positive news reports regarding the candidate increase.

News favorability is mostly determined by how well candidates do in primaries and election polls in each scenario. The use of this concept by journalists is not evil. It adheres to standards of professionalism and aids journalists in understanding a presidential campaign. We may now explore the dynamics of the presidential nomination after examining the political and media rationale that drives campaigns. A year and a half before the presidential election, the path to the nomination convention begins. This certainly is a long and winding road, to use a term from the Beatles, a band noted for its social, if not political, prognostication. It starts with the pre-primaries, a string of crucial non-electoral occasions that take place a year or two before the primary elections itself.

### **Pre-Primaries**

Long before American voters are thinking about the next presidential election, the nominating process starts. Ten Republican candidates announced their candidacies for president around 18 months before the 2000 election, while nine Democratic contenders revealed their candidacies for president about 1.5 years before the 2004 election. Since there was no incumbent candidate in 2008, the field was wide open, and contenders were considering a candidacy for the presidency up to two years before the November election. By April 2007, ten Republicans and eight Democrats were running for office. Fearing an Obama apocalypse, nine Republican horsemen and one Republican horsewoman seized their reins in 2012, a year and a half before the Iowa caucuses opened, in the hopes of winning the party's presidential candidacy. Election campaigns, in comparison, take place in Britain for around a month.

Why goes on for so long during the American presidential election? Why does it begin so soon? The expense of running for president is high, and candidates need time to gather the funds necessary to fund campaign workers and television ads. They must create a strong

organization with capable pollsters, speechwriters, advisors, and volunteer rank-and-file members. In early primary and caucus states like Iowa and New Hampshire, they must develop a base of support among voters. Candidates must succeed by gaining widespread exposure via press coverage. The importance of visibility, according to Nelson Polsby and his coworkers, is due to the fact that news media coverage introduces candidates to voters and shapes public perceptions of the various contenders. A heuristic purpose is likewise served by national news coverage. It provides crucial information to fundraisers and party officials, indicating that the candidate is a serious contender for the nomination. The method is peculiar and self-fulfilling. As a result of being seen as a serious competitor, a candidate receives media attention, which increases their chances of winning the election.

The campaign's pre-primary phase has been referred to as the invisible primary. The term acknowledges that the primary and caucus periods really begin months before the first ballots are tallied, as candidates host fundraisers, attempt to enhance voter familiarity, and work to establish credibility with the media. I concentrate on the two most recent presidential elections to acquire deeper understanding of the political communication dynamics of the pre-primaries.

### **1. 2008**

In January 2007, Hillary Clinton formally declared on her website that she was running for president, saying, I'm in. I want to win, too. As a freshman senator with an exotic name, only two years out of the Illinois statehouse, Obama was the underdog. However, after giving a powerful address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, he developed a national reputation and shown a talent for political oratory. Bipartisanship, togetherness, and the need to go outside of the poll-driven brand of politics-as-usual were the main points of his speech. Voters favored the message, which had been put to the test by Obama's pollsters. Democrats preferred change over experience, which Clinton stressed, and change was what Obama offered.

On November 10, 2007, the Jefferson-Jackson Dinner in Des Moines, Iowa, brought everything to a head. The Democratic Party tradition, which was named after two famous presidents and was more of a large political rally than a banquet, drew thousands during presidential election years. Clinton made a red meat address in which she highlighted the need to intensify the pressure on the Republicans. Obama chose to use a different strategy, emphasizing the need to reject the same old Washington textbook campaigns in favor of bringing the country together around bipartisan change in which everyone could believe rather than appealing to party resentment. His stirring speeches embodied the honesty that so many idealistic young people yearned for. His perfectly crafted speech matched the pace of the audience and moved the 9,000 Democrats present to rousing applause and standing ovations. Obama now has a three-point lead over Clinton in Iowa polls thanks to the speech, which also thrilled Democratic Party officials and generated a flood of pro-Obama headlines. The Jefferson-Jackson rally marked a sea change. Obama had effectively identified a message of change that people eager for relief from eight years of conflict, war, and Republican government were ready to hear. Democratic voters were captivated by the slogans Change We Can Believe In and Yes, We Can.

### **2. 2012**

The strategy framework for an incumbent president's reelection campaign is mostly based on their track record. The incumbent has allegedly broken pledges made to the people, according to the challengers. In addition to defending their record, presidents take a above the battle stance in regards to the election. The Republican contenders often brought up Obama's record



on the economy as a campaign issue in 2012. Mitt Romney became the early favorite to win the nomination as it became evident that conservative politicians with celebrity clout Sarah Palin, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels were not going to run. He was the front-runner, which meant he would gain from the situation and incur its costs. Journalists write these articles because they believe it is their responsibility to publish material that can prompt voters to ask pertinent questions about a prospective nominee or president, not because they detest the front-runner or disagree with his or her beliefs. At the same time, the news provided a brief boost to Rick Perry's presidential campaign. Perry is a handsome, three-term Texas governor with conservative credentials and a track record of success in the Lone Star state.

The campaigns of less well-known candidates were boosted by news attention. Michele Bachmann, a congresswoman from Minnesota, was featured by *The New Yorker*, which discussed both her political and personal traits. Bachmann prided herself on being a devout Christian conservative who had adopted 23 foster children out of compassion. She vehemently opposed same-sex unions because she considered homosexuality to be a kind of personal enslavement. In her pursuit of the Republican presidential candidacy, she drew on her religious principles. Bachmann received favorable press when she won an Iowa straw poll in August. This was a purely symbolic event because there was no scientific basis for the selection of respondents, who were Iowa Republicans who attended a lovely summer festival with plenty of barbecue and entertainment thanks to the presidential candidates.

Similar to this, press promoted Herman Cain's outsider campaign. Cain is a former CEO of Godfather's Pizza and lobbyist for restaurant associations. Candidates from outside the traditional political environment, such as billionaire businessman Ross Perot, who briefly led the polls in 1992, look refreshingly unspoiled by the deal-making of Washington ever since Watergate damaged the American public's opinion of the federal government. They have a certain attraction, and they have influence over the electorate until their own political skeletons come to light. Cain's situation was similar.

He rose in the polls as he made more appearances on television and in TV forums, outlining an appealingly straightforward tax reform proposal with the catchphrase 9-9-9. His standing was boosted by news that promoted a bandwagon theory. But it also contributed to his downfall. Several women came out in November 2011 alleging that Cain had harassed them sexually. One said he put his hand up her dress and said, You want a job, right? Cain vehemently rejected the accusations, but his polling ratings fell especially among women. He realized that his campaign could not be sustained in the face of bad news and declining poll numbers, and he withdrew from the race in the first few days of December.

### **3. Lessons from the Pre-Primaries**

These short stories demonstrate the important roles that news, debates, and campaign management play in the early stages of a campaign [12], [13]. According to studies, rising poll numbers, major political endorsements, and media attention during the pre-primary period all strongly predict a candidate's success in following primaries. What themes arise from these instances and the research? What broader lessons may be drawn from the examples and research? Four lessons become clear:

#### **i. Communication matters**

A politician with a theme message might attract followers seeking a powerful message. A candidate who is unable to provide a strong case for running loses support.



## ii. Public remarks have weight

Voters from both parties pay attention to what politicians say and how they say it, even during the unseen pre-primaries. Obama and Hillary Clinton both made powerful addresses in front of large crowds. Rick Perry, a Republican, did badly in the debates. The pre-primary years are a crucial time for mediated public appearances, which are essential for image construction.

## iii. An election may be made or lost by the news

Obama received favorable publicity in 2008 for his oratory abilities, his ability to draw large audiences, and his compelling, message that had been well tested by consultants. In 2012, positive press temporarily helped Bachmann and Cain, while negative press ultimately ended Cain's candidacy. During this first stage of the campaign, journalists play a crucial gatekeeping role.

## iv. The pre-primaries establish the foundation for the campaigning phase

Candidates may proceed during primaries and caucuses if they have a strong financial basis, increase voter support, and are seen as serious contenders by the news media in the pre-primary phase. Candidates that fall short of these goals won't stand out from the crowd.

## CONCLUSION

The news scene and public conversation are significantly shaped by nominations. This study emphasizes how important it is to understand the nomination process and how it affects media plurality and objectivity. The research shows that media organizations often spotlight certain news or opinions while ignoring others because of their political allegiances or business interests. This nomination bias may skew public perception and prevent the spread of opposing ideas. The research also emphasizes the value of open nomination procedures for preserving journalistic credibility and integrity. News organizations must implement strategies to combat prejudice and guarantee that all views and opinions are represented in the media. Initiatives to promote media literacy are also essential for enabling the general public to evaluate news information critically and identify any biases introduced throughout the nomination process. Despite the convenience and personalization that these technologies provide, they may unintentionally worsen filter bubbles and echo chambers, restricting exposure to opposing ideas. Finally, nominations have a big influence on the news we read, influencing public opinion, media diversity, and democratic dialogue. We may work toward a more informed and inclusive society by comprehending and tackling the challenges presented by the nomination process.

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## CHAPTER 22

### DETERMINE THE ROLE OF IOWA AND NEW HAMPSHIRE

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#### ABSTRACT:

The importance of the states of Iowa and New Hampshire in the political landscape of the United States, especially during the presidential primary elections is examined. The presidential nomination process and the general direction of the election cycle have traditionally been greatly shaped by these two states. The research examines the factors that led to their early popularity, the distinctive qualities of their electorates, and the effects of each primary's results on the ensuing nomination contest. This study offers insight on the enduring importance of Iowa and New Hampshire in forming American democracy by exploring the historical backdrop and present political dynamics. The nomination contest, according to critics, is disproportionately impacted by these two states' enormous prominence, thereby disqualifying candidates who may be more qualified on a national scale. There have been calls for the primary system to be changed, arguing that more diverse states should conduct early primaries and that the concentration of power in Iowa and New Hampshire should be reduced.

#### KEYWORDS:

Candidates, New Hampshire, Nomination, Political.

#### INTRODUCTION

Imagine we were starting from scratch and trying to figure out how to best organize the nominations process. A nationwide primary election for each party may be held using the general election as a model, providing each candidate an equal opportunity to win the majority of the vote. Alternately, we may suggest a series of regional primaries. Primary elections may be held in the North, South, East, and West, perhaps in a staggered fashion to maintain a high political fervor. The major, representative states in each area may be given special attention and allowed to have their primaries first if, on the other hand, we believed that it was crucial for each state to host a primary. What we probably wouldn't want to do is choose two tiny, completely unrepresentative states, arrange for their elections to be held first, and then advise candidates who performed poorly in these state elections to drop out of the race. But the procedure really does operate in that way [1]–[3].

The earliest and most important electoral contests are held in New Hampshire and Iowa. Low crime rates, a good quality of life, and rural beauty are just a few of the advantages that Iowa and New Hampshire share. However, they seldom serve as a representative of the nation. Both states have more rural than urban areas. While New Hampshire, often known as the Granite State, is home to several quarries, Iowa is located in the center of the Corn Belt. New Hampshire is rated 42nd in terms of population, whereas Iowa has the 30th highest. They are primarily White. They are not representative of the rest of the nation in terms of their demographics, economies, environment, or politics. And yet, every four years, the presidential campaigns spend a tremendous amount of time and money in the Corn Belt and

Granite State, just as farmers harvest corn in Iowa in October and syrup enthusiasts make maple sugar in New Hampshire in February.

There are antecedents for this. Since 1920, New Hampshire has hosted the country's first primary. Since the middle of the 19th century, Iowa has had caucuses. Precinct, county, and state caucuses in Iowa are really held in succession, which is why we used the plural form above. In 1976, the Hawkeye State caucuses gained significance. Jimmy Carter, a little-known Georgia governor, understood the political significance of a solid start in Iowa. Carter won the state despite receiving just 28% of the vote, which was less than the 37% of voters who said they had not made up their minds about a candidate. Nevertheless, a story was seen by the media, or maybe one was invented. During the primary campaign season, Iowa and New Hampshire get the majority of media coverage. Based on their population and the quantity of electoral votes they control; the two states get significantly more attention than one would anticipate. When academics initially examined the press coverage of Iowa and New Hampshire using content analysis, they discovered an intriguing anomaly. The two states garnered 34% of the television network news coverage of the primaries, while having just 10% of the 270 Electoral College votes and only 3% of the country's population. The amount of press coverage provided to the primaries in bigger states like California, New York, and Texas pales in comparison to the two states.

Not only have the news media given these events a lot of attention. The candidates invest a lot of time and money on winning or finishing second in Iowa and New Hampshire. Party officials keep a careful eye on candidate performances. Fundraisers research candidates to determine who will win and so be worthy of their support. The outcomes are used by engaged, active voters from both parties to decide who candidates to support in their respective state primaries. Do the media cover these two elections extensively because they are politically significant or because they get extensive attention already? It's a little bit of both, since voters and political elites now perceive winning results to be a predictor of candidates' success in the race for the nomination. The outcomes of the New Hampshire primary and the Iowa caucuses would be roughly as important to the presidential nomination and vice versa if it weren't for the media, according to two scholars as opening-day baseball scores are to a pennant race [4]–[6].

### **1. Frontloading**

Politics and the media cannot be readily separated, and these two competitions, which are crucial to the trajectory of presidential nominations, are carved into the nomination process. These early contests, together with the New Hampshire primary that quickly follows them, have a disproportionate influence on party nominations. This is a component of the frontloading procedure. The series of competitions that take place early in the process, or at the front, have a significant impact on the nominations. In actuality, frontloading has mainly succeeded in shortening the gap between the start of the primary season and the moment when a de facto candidate is revealed, as noted by Polsby and his colleagues. This process is only sped up by a frontloaded primary schedule, which often results in a candidate in a matter of weeks as opposed to months.

In those days, many delegates were selected later, in the late spring, after primaries that lasted from January to June. Most of the contests take place in January through March these days, and a large number of the committed delegates are selected by the end of February. Sometimes the presumed winner has been determined before other, larger and more representative states have had their primaries and caucuses. These states conduct their elections later, and they may not matter much now that a candidate has been agreed upon.

Frontloading still has an impact on the path to the nominating conventions, even if the primary calendar has stabilized in recent years, perhaps diminishing frontloading impacts. Michele Bachmann withdrew from the 2012 presidential election after finishing sixth in Iowa. Bachmann lacked the financial and political moxie necessary to fight in following elections because she was short on finances and unable to demonstrate that she could appeal to conservatives with strong ideologies. Rick Perry, who had several pre-primary issues, finished sixth in Iowa and intended to resurrect his campaign by winning the South Carolina primary a few weeks later. However, as polls indicated he would do badly in South Carolina, he withdrew, admitting there was no viable path forward for me.

Democratic senators Joe Biden and Christopher Dodd's campaigns were completely destroyed in Iowa four years before, in 2008. Both left after having disappointing seasons in the Hawkeye State. Rudy Giuliani had undertaken an innovative approach on the Republican side, eschewing Iowa and New Hampshire in the hopes that a victory in the late January Florida primary would help him advance to wins in other significant states. The New York City mayor, who initially led the polls but lost due to a lack of message and a wave of adverse news, however, understood he was over after a disappointing third-place showing in the Sunshine State. He backed John McCain, the eventual Republican candidate, after withdrawing and doing so. However, candidates have a chance of succeeding if they win in Iowa and New Hampshire. Early primary wins result in a frenzy of favorable headlines, high hopes from powerful political figures, and a flood of monetary contributions from modest contributors and wealthy lobbyists who want to be identified with a victor. They create momentum, or the Big Mo, as George H.W. Bush put it.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Effects of New Hampshire and Iowa**

After winning an early race, media attention tends to concentrate on only one candidate either the winner or a contender who performs beyond expectations. The media tends to concentrate on one or two candidates because of constraints on time and space as well as the need to create an engaging narrative. These individuals eventually break away from the crowd and become superstars, becoming the center of attention due to their star-studded status. Winning in both states may generate momentum and an air of inevitability with just a week separating them from New Hampshire and Iowa. Of course, this is what campaigns aim to do. It occurs on rare occasions. In 1976, Carter triumphed in both races, a notable victory that propelled his bid for the Democratic nomination. A political outsider like Carter would never have achieved such success in the past.

The idea that he was a winner was fostered by the media coverage and unexpected successes. In a broader sense, as Mayer noted: The winning candidate is presented as popular, dynamic, confident, and in control: in short, a leader. His organization is expanding, his message is becoming more and more popular, and his audiences are sizable and fervent. His poll numbers are rising. Contrarily, his opponents are already gone, dying, or in a mess. Obama made every effort possible in 2008 to beat Hillary Clinton in Iowa. John Edwards finished in second place and Hillary Clinton in third place, which was a disappointing finish. Obama won the election handily. Because it demonstrated that an African American candidate could win in a mostly White state, the victory was significant. He sallied out into New Hampshire's rugged mountains after giving a thundering victory speech, riding the tide of energy into Manchester and relishing in a lead that indicated he might skillfully beat Clinton in a one-two Iowa-New Hampshire blow. Political analysts and workers from both camps agreed that Clinton would be done if it took place[7].

Let's now take a little break. Do you realize how absurd this is? New Hampshire only has 22 committed convention delegates, while Iowa only has 45. For a contender to get the Democratic nomination, they required 2,117 delegates. Just 67 of the 2,117 delegates required to secure the nomination came from these states. You are aware that neither state closely resembles the Democratic electorate in the other primaries that followed. No matter. According to the rules of the current game, Clinton's campaign would be derailed if she lost in Iowa and then suffered a setback in small-town New Hampshire. She was a well-known national contender with throngs of followers and people eager to cast votes for her in their home states. This is political reality; a candidate's prospects of winning the nomination are severely harmed by losing in both of these crucial early states.

After Iowa, Clinton found herself in a precarious position and performed what many New Hampshire voters viewed as an honest moment of raw emotion, breaking down in tears at a coffee shop when someone questioned how she was able to portray herself so effectively in the face of difficult campaigning. It's not simple. And if I didn't genuinely feel that was the proper thing to do, I couldn't do it, she remarked. A come-from-behind victory over Obama was achieved thanks to Hillary Clinton's well-publicized display of emotion and the desire of many New Hampshire Democrats to keep Clinton in the race. This shift in momentum signaled the start of a heated two-candidate primary contest. With each election, the early primary dynamics change a little. In a few instances, candidates have won an early fight but were unable to capitalize on momentum. However, in general, a candidate's chances of getting the nomination are slim if they lose in both Iowa and New Hampshire. The field of potential nominees is whittled down by the two competitions.

### **Lessons from New Hampshire and Iowa**

1. Each campaign is distinct from the others because to the variety of candidates, issues facing the country, and political party dynamics. But certain patterns stand out:
2. The two elections have a disproportionate influence on how the media covers them and how party leaders see their feasibility. Their effect in the general election is out of proportion to their size, overall representativeness, and impact.
3. In these states, candidates need a strong organization and a lot of funding to be successful. Early triumphs in Iowa and New Hampshire may boost groups and draw in additional funding, which is another self-fulfilling prophecy at play.
4. Candidates for president are whittled down by Iowa and New Hampshire, where defeats usually cause them to withdraw from contention. After New Hampshire, there are fewer candidates running because people believe they can't win the nomination, which causes financing to stop.
5. Winning may sometimes result in media-driven momentum spikes that raise a candidate's poll numbers. A bandwagon effect may be produced by momentum and rising poll ratings. Candidates attempt to offset expected defeats by spinning, or purposefully lowering expectations for victory in succeeding primaries. Then, they provide a better than expected performance, indicating that they may still be viable. This tactic may not work since reporters and political specialists are aware of what is happening. Candidates continue to spin.

### **The Remaining Campaign And Other Primaries**

Even if those who are tired of the campaign may wish it were over after New Hampshire, the race for the nomination continues. Other states have their own primaries and caucuses, allowing voters a chance to express their choices and providing a test of the surviving contenders' political sturdiness. South Carolina has emerged as a crucial post-New



Hampshire test, happening far enough after the first two games to leave a lasting impression yet still early enough in the frontloaded process to matter. Additionally, this is the first southern primary, and the cultural character of the state has been important in the race. In 2000, Bush needed to defeat McCain since Bush had been soundly defeated in New Hampshire. The win provided McCain a boost in support. McCain was tarnished by a ferocious underground effort that spread a number of divisive, hostile sentiments. Flyers and an email message both said that McCain chose to sire children without marriage. The statement was untrue since the McCains had devotedly adopted a kid with black complexion from Bangladesh years before. False messages stated that McCain's wife was a drug addict and that the Vietnam War veteran, who behaved gallantly as a prisoner of war, had committed treason as a POW. Bush was never linked to the assaults, but political analysts suspected Bush strategist Karl Rove, who was known for using sneaky, deceitful methods. It was generally considered that the campaign had an impact on Republican voters in South Carolina, leading to a significant Bush victory that helped him win in more primary states[8].

Eight years later, in a closely contested campaign, Obama and Clinton exchanged jabs in South Carolina. Bill Clinton unleashed a barrage of criticisms at Obama because he had stage-managed his wife's campaign from the sidelines and believed she needed to work more to win. He refuted Obama's much-touted opposition to the Iraq War, took issue with a complimentary remark Obama made about previous Republican President Ronald Reagan, and attacked Obama for running a divisive campaign that seemed to play up his race. As a result of insulting African Americans, the assaults backfired, favoring Obama. The Obama campaign was well-positioned for success with a state structure established back in 2007 and 13,000 volunteers canvassing the state on Election Day. And win he did, trouncing Clinton by a margin of 28%. The South Carolina triumph provided for a compelling journalistic story, as did the dramatic account of an up-and-coming African American contender heading toward the nomination. According to the bandwagon narrative, Obama received some favorable publicity.

After South Carolina, the election campaign mostly becomes a media blitz, with politicians running for office via political commercials and news stories produced through local appearances and debates. Early primaries' retail, hand-crafted strategy gives way to a campaign that is media- and technology-driven. In the latter primaries of 2008, Clinton ran an effective campaign and shown courage and vigor. She almost lost the nomination because Obama was more organized than she was, made better use of modern technology, gathered a bigger, more devoted volunteer network, and invested crucial energy in both the caucuses and the primaries. Contrarily, Clinton disregarded the delegates that might be gathered from the comparatively high number of caucuses.

There were other factors depending on communication. Liberal Democrats were deeply moved by Obama's charm, well crafted message, and the enthusiasm he created. America may really elect an African American president. After all, he had created an excitement more akin to rock stars than presidential candidates. Obama received more favorable press despite the fact that it fluctuated and that it peaked when it became known that he had ties to a divisive Chicago preacher, largely because he was a bandwagon candidate who upset the presumptive front-runner and because he had an engaging personal story. Critics said that the media discreetly promoted Obama because he was a cool, charming African American candidate while degrading Clinton because she was a woman. According to some academics, the news media portrayed Obama as an embodiment of racial progress while downplaying Hillary Clinton's role as a complementing symbol of significant advance in gender equality.

Republicans fought it out in crucial state primaries and caucuses four years later. They fought in South Carolina, in the several state elections that took place on one day, known as Super Tuesday, and in the primaries that took place throughout the spring. Rick Santorum, a former senator from Pennsylvania who had a strong appeal to Tea Party and White evangelical Republican supporters, won three elections in a single day in Colorado, Minnesota, and Missouri. In a nationwide survey of Republican voters, Santorum briefly had an advantage over Romney because his conservative stances on social matters were more in line with Republican voters' preferences. In the end, Romney could afford the expenditures of television commercials in the last primaries and caucuses thanks to his own money. In late April, he officially accepted the nomination [9]–[11].

### Lessons Learned from Other State Competitions

**1.** During the later elections, when the campaign is mostly focused on media purchases and political advertising, the candidate with the biggest, richest organization does best.

**2. Issues matter:** Voters do take the candidates' stance on issues into consideration, especially when the contest has been down to only two or three competitors.

### A Media-Based Nomination System Evaluation

The political and communication dynamics of the race for the presidency have been clarified by this conversation. It's vital to consider normative considerations as well. Is the system in place now good or bad? Does it enhance democratic goals or harm the political system? In this part, we'll look at frontloading and how the media covers horse races. The goal is to study the complex issues surrounding potential changes to the nomination process and political news, not to endorse one side or the other.

#### 1. Frontloading and the Nominations

Let's get one thing straight up front: There is general agreement that, despite its flaws, the current system is far superior than the previous one, which included party leaders selecting candidates in secret meetings. The present method takes place in the open, exposing media and candidate flaws to the democratic daylight. However, this does not imply that the current practices are faultless or even close to perfect. The nomination procedure, which starts a year and a half before the general election, is criticized for being too drawn out. First, the protracted campaign costs hundreds of millions of dollars and demoralizes voters. Second, as was already said, Iowa and New Hampshire get an excessive amount of attention under the existing system. Third, frontloading ignores several state caucuses and primaries. In some cases, the presumed candidate has already been selected before voters in these later primary states cast their ballots, giving them less power over the nominations than those who happen to reside in states with earlier primary elections. Fourth, the event- and narrative-driven media's pervasive influence can skew the process by giving dramatic but unimportant events more weight, encouraging voters to choose candidates based on flimsy horse-race standards, and attributing arbitrary momentum shifts unwarranted influence on political outcomes.

On the other hand, the modern system has certain advantages, as its advocates point out. Candidates are put to the test throughout the protracted campaign, and those who lack the political acumen or psychological fortitude to weather the ups and downs of a presidential candidacy are eliminated. Candidates are compelled to establish a solid organization throughout several states. Perhaps the existing system does a very good job of sorting the presidential wheat from the chaff, to the degree that these qualities are necessary in the head of state. Frontloading is still a concern, although the results of the last two elections imply that

the influence of Iowa and New Hampshire are less noticeable than in previous elections. Candidates vigorously fought primaries in 2008 and 2012 into late April, giving voters in states with later primaries a bigger say in the final result. Additionally, momentum effects have diminished. Obama was unable to translate his momentum in Iowa into victory in New Hampshire. While winning New Hampshire and doing well in Iowa, Romney came up short in South Carolina.

Additionally, supporters of the current system contest the idea that voters choose candidates based on flimsy criteria. They contend that primary voters, and particularly caucus goers, do make logical assessments of candidates' character traits and policy ideas. Indeed, it is fair to suggest that voters are more shrewd than detractors claim; they are less likely to be taken in by horse race betting shops and instead utilize this data to create logical conclusions about which candidate would be the most viable party nominee. Last but not least, despite all of the media's flaws, they do provide transparency by enabling voters to observe how candidates behave in public and deal with challenging campaign situations. They provide a glimpse into the personalities of the men and women running for the highest position in the nation in this manner.

Numerous creative solutions have been put out over the years, including a national primary election, regional primaries, and a primary season that starts in June rather than January. Since both parties are dedicated to upholding the present system, any remedy has flaws, and in any case, there is little chance of change. All nomination processes ultimately have flaws. The best method is one that optimizes voter preferences' ability to influence the result, allows newcomers and established candidates an equal chance at the nomination, and does not arbitrarily favor any candidates or organizations. When seen in this light, the current system seems more favorable than is often thought. However, there is still need for development in light of its many flaws. One can only hope that some inventive concept modification would result in a more effective nomination process for the two parties.

## **2. Reflections: Horse Racing And Jockeying**

Reporters like covering horse races and other strategic video games. They compete for the most coveted political beats. Actually, a lot of people like the heart-pounding suspense that horse race tales provide as well as the thrills and spills of covering the largest, greatest competition in the nation. The issue with these tales is that they have the potential to simplify politics and reduce intellectual discussions about the nation's destiny to unimportant inquiries about who is leading in the polls and why. Critics are not merely offended by the sheer volume of horse racing coverage. It is the unrelenting propagation by journalists of the cynical idea that politicians are only motivated by winning and nothing else. Reporters believe that almost all candidate actions whether they be speeches, policy choices, or appeals to specific voters are motivated by winning and planning. For instance, Republican candidate Mitt Romney came up with a proposal during the 2012 presidential campaign that he claimed would assist the United States achieve energy independence while simultaneously generating millions of jobs in manufacturing and oil exploration.

The plan placed a strong emphasis on giving the states more authority over the nation's energy resources. But according to a front-page New York Times article based on interviews with political, business, and environmental leaders, Mitt Romney is making a bid for anti-Washington voters in key Western states, while holding out the prospect of a sizable reward to major campaign backers from the energy industry. Perhaps the reports were correct. The strategy could have been based on shady election-year projections. However, scholarly opponents contend that such reporting is too pessimistic and attributes the greatest self-

interested motivations to politicians. They observe that public leaders do provide proposals that correspond to the party platform or the requirements of their voters.

Candidates are often driven by a combination of a desire to serve their constituency and consistency with prior stances they have made, as opposed to pure self-interest. Press coverage would not have revealed it to you. Journalists portray politics in a derogatory and tactical light.

There is evidence from political communication studies that these frameworks may have significant cognitive impacts. News that is strategically framed helps people remember strategic information, while news that is issue-focused helps people remember problems. Additionally, strategy-framed news can reinforce pessimistic beliefs, such as those that the candidates were willing to do whatever it took to win and nobody would talk about the hard issues, like taxes, because that would lose voters. According to Pingree, Scholl, and Quenette, game-framed news may even lessen deliberate, policy-based thinking. Critics assert that the news exaggerates how much politics is a strategic game, bolstered by studies. By doing this, it contributes to the issue and breeds corrosive cynicism and mistrust that deter people from engaging in politics. Horse race narratives that prioritize the candidate with the best chance of winning may also favor established candidates, perhaps to the exclusion of non-conventional political personalities.

## CONCLUSION

The presidential election process in the United States now heavily depends on the participation of the states of Iowa and New Hampshire. They often set the tone and pace for the following competitions due to their early placement on the main schedule, which has given them disproportionate prominence. Both the conventional New Hampshire primary and the Iowa caucus system add distinctive elements to the political process, enabling politicians to interact directly with voters in a more personal environment. The different demographic makeups of the electorates in Iowa and New Hampshire highlight the candidates' capacity to sway a wide range of demographics and garner widespread support. Additionally, the retail politics culture in these states necessitates a tailored approach to campaigning, allowing less well-known politicians to stand out via grassroots initiatives. Although their responsibilities have come under criticism and discussion, Iowa and New Hampshire continue to play a significant role in the early phases of the presidential nomination process. They are crucial to the democratic process because of their capacity to investigate candidates, highlight campaign tactics, and highlight particular policy problems. Any contender hoping to become the next president of the United States must comprehend the importance of these states and how they affect the larger electoral landscape as American politics continue to change.

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## CHAPTER 23

### A BRIEF STUDY ON PERSUASION AND POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS

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**ABSTRACT:**

Political campaigns, in which candidates and parties aim to sway public opinion and win over supporters, heavily rely on persuasion. The methods and tactics used in political campaigns to influence the voters are examined in this chapter, including emotional appeals, framing, and the function of the media. It also examines the ethical ramifications and the negative effects of persuasion on democratic processes. This study gives insights into the complicated dynamics of persuasion in the context of electoral politics by looking at case studies and research on political campaigns. Policymakers, candidates, and the general public must use critical thinking and media literacy in order to maintain a healthy democratic atmosphere. Citizens can make informed judgments and political discussions can become better by encouraging openness, fact-checking, and accountability in political communications.

**KEYWORDS:**

Campaigns, Candidate, Election, Political, Voters.

### INTRODUCTION

The presidential election may be seen from many different perspectives. The method by which Americans express their agreement to be governed the mechanism that gives democratic government legitimacy takes place during campaigns. They provide forums for discussion and chances to discuss various solutions to the country's concerns. They are quadrennial rituals that energize the political system of the country by infusing it with the oxygen of hope and the adrenaline of ideas. Elections, however, are just that: exercises in persuasion, according to candidates and advisors. They are wars of strategy to persuade Americans to vote for a specific candidate. Arguments and pleas made in person, on television, and in videos broadcast online are the weapons. The dynamics of political campaign persuasion are examined in the next three chapters. The presidential election is the main topic, although implications for contests at lesser levels are also looked at [1]–[3].

This chapter outlines the key ideas that underpin political persuasion while using psychological techniques as a guide. The methods of persuasion are used in this chapter. Research on persuasion looks at how the message, the communicator, and the audience all affect how people's attitudes. The chapter focuses on the fundamental characteristics of the political communicator and the political message, using examples from campaigns to highlight the depth of the ideas. Both provide insight into how presidential campaigns create messaging to influence opinions and voting patterns.

#### 1. Communication Skills

Credibility is the cornerstone of successful political persuasion, and it involves projecting a credible image and nurturing a positive opinion of political leadership. Aristotle is credited with coining the word *ethos* to designate trustworthy communicators. Years of empirical study have shown that there are several ways to establish trust with an audience rather than



just one. Expertise, dependability, and goodwill are the three main elements of credibility. The knowledge, political experience, and skill associated with the political communicator are referred to as expertise. A communicator's integrity, or honesty, character, safety, and propensity to speak what they mean and mean what they say, is what makes them trustworthy. Good will is the perception of empathy, compassion, and knowledge of the suffering of others. The key, according to persuasion specialists, is to understand that the same persuasive quality does not apply in every election. Instead, depending on the specific political context, many credibility-related factors are important. Let's look on real elections when presidential candidates used their knowledge, dependability, and goodwill to their advantage to understand how this works.

## **2. Expertise**

During the presidential election of 1972, President Richard Nixon used knowledge. His advisers came to the conclusion that the stern, Machiavellian Nixon famously known as Tricky Dick would neither win a popularity contest nor be seen as a man brimming with trust. Nixon's advisor Roger Ailes, who is now the head of Fox News, is famous for saying that people saw him as a bore, a pain in the ass since he was 42 years old on the day he was born. They believe that other children received footballs for Christmas. Nixon received a briefcase and he cherished it. However, according to his advisers, Nixon was regarded for his intelligence, foreign policy expertise, and achievements.

The message of Nixon's advertisements was you need Nixon, not you like Nixon. Nixon was the anti-cozy candidate; he was icy and steely. However, his communications stressed his intelligence, understanding of global concerns, and familiarity with politics. He was a political guru, to put it briefly. George McGovern, Nixon's Democratic rival, was thoroughly defeated. McGovern attempted to cast doubt on Nixon's unscrupulous role in the Watergate crisis throughout the campaign, but since he was unknown to voters and lacked trust, he was unable to convince them. Nixon won reelection with a huge margin. Three years later, the situation had changed. Given his involvement in the Watergate crisis, Nixon chose resignation over almost likely impeachment and resigned from office. Even his renowned skill was unable to rescue him [4]–[6].

## **3. Trustworthiness**

Jimmy Carter is a perfect example of a politician who successfully used their credibility in a presidential campaign. Carter understood that Americans yearned for a leader who would be honest with them in the wake of Watergate and ex-President Nixon's jaw-dropping deceptions. Carter made a commitment to never tell a lie to the American people, and sincerity became his watchword. He understood that in the aftermath of the Watergate incident, credibility had gained more sway with voters than knowledge. Carter, a born-again Christian from sunny Georgia, stood out to many voters as a welcome alternative to his opponent, President Gerald Ford, with his evangelical grin and wholesome appearance. Ford had pardoned Richard Nixon, a humanitarian but divisive action that infuriated many Americans and raised questions about Ford's morality. Ford lost to Carter in 1976 by a narrow margin.

## **4. Good Will**

Good will stresses showing respect for the audience, just as trustworthiness does. But as the name says, empathy and the idea that the politician really cares about the electorate are at the heart of good will. In 2012, the empathy factor first appeared. Even though Mitt Romney is a very accomplished and intelligent guy, he seemed inauthentic. Romney came out as stilted,

like a candidate attempting to add a John Williams score to a corporate balance sheet, in an age when politicians are expected to personalize themselves in the media. His wooden monotonous voice, lack of variety in tone, and forced giggles all added to the impression that he was fake, disingenuous, and heartless. Romney attempted to highlight his storied financial acumen, but Obama strategists saw they had a winning topic and worked to instill sympathy and understanding for Americans dealing with economic and job difficulties.

Given that he was such a private guy, it was amazing that Obama was able to make Americans like him. He admitted to Iowa voters on the night of the Democratic convention that he was aware they nicknamed his health care program Obamacare. That was perfect for him because, he said, I do care, expressing his concern for safeguarding the health of millions of Americans. Romney was already having trouble winning over supporters when a covertly taped video showed him disparaging the 47% of Americans who do not pay income taxes. He conveyed insensitivity to almost half the population when he asserted that these Americans believe that they are victims and do not personally accept responsibility for their life, as even several fellow Republicans noted. Large majority of voters in battleground states believed that Obama cared more about their needs and issues than did Romney, according to polls conducted in the summer of 2012. Romney was able to make progress during the autumn campaign by showing empathy during the presidential debates, but he was unable to close the good will deficit.

## DISCUSSION

### Voters and political persuasion:

The voter is the target audience for persuasion. It all comes down to how people feel, what they believe, and who they vote for on election day. How do voters interpret political messages? What prompts them to alter their opinions on a candidate? These issues have been addressed through theories and research, providing information on the consequences of campaigns.

#### 1. The Role of Mental Processing and Involvement

The peripheral and core routes are the two ways that individuals process or think about messages, according to the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion . The concept contends that in order to create convincing arguments, persuaders must comprehend how people think about persuasive messages. Political participation, or the degree to which a campaign is seen as personally relevant or touches on personally significant results, is a crucial aspect. Under conditions of low and high participation, voters receive political information mentally extremely differently. Political persuaders must create distinct messages for low- and high-involved people in order to be in tune with how voters think [7]–[9].

#### 2. Low Involvement

Voters are uninterested in the campaign when there is limited engagement. They lack interest in the election because they think it has little bearing on their own lives or fundamental principles. If they intend to vote, they base their decision-making on quick and easy methods. They don't take the presidential campaign seriously and don't put much thought into what the candidates are saying. They pay attention to the campaign in passing and base their vote choice on heuristics or mental shortcuts. Despite being ancillary to the campaign's central problems, these signals are simple and straightforward to understand. Low-involved voters depend on political party heuristics. The opinions of significant people, such as I come from a family of Republicans; I'm voting for Romney, he's a good bet I just heard Bill Clinton gave

Obama a fantastic speech. Clinton is excellent. I'm voting for Obama, and indications that are simple to understand, such as Romney has a business experience, which qualifies him in hard economic circumstances.

Candidates must provide straightforward communications that don't demand a lot of cognitive processing if they want to win over people who aren't very interested. They must adapt the message to appeal to voters' heuristics and surface-level clues. If you want to win over people who have little interest in the election, you should avoid asking them to give it any serious consideration. Your communication won't be processed by them. They are not motivated or interested enough to watch. Instead, you should create straightforward communications that quickly and effectively engage with people' uninterested political calculation. Candidate appeals like this are successful when there is limited engagement:

- i. Endorsements, such as when well-known politicians, businessmen, or celebrities back the contender.
- ii. Low-involved voters may lean toward a candidate only because a reputable individual talks in favor of the candidate.
- iii. Connections of the candidate with patriotic and familial symbols.
- iv. Physical appeal,
- v. Racial, gender, or ethnic similarities between the candidate and the electorate. Some low-involvement voters may respond favorably to Facebook postings that are specifically targeted and ask friends to like the candidate.

Studies using empirical data support these ideas. There is evidence that communications with ancillary cues, like the ones mentioned above, may be successful when people aren't involved or are just somewhat interested in the election.

### 3. Peripheral Cues in Lower-Level Elections

City, state, and even Congressional elections are examples of lower-level contests where peripheral messaging variables may have a significant impact. Voters are presented with a dizzying array of options every two years. Should people vote for the judge, who snarls in his TV advertisements that he would imprison seasoned criminals for life, or the challenger, whose no-nonsense, commonsense broadcast advertisement is intended to evoke memories of Judge Judy, the judge on the reality TV show? Which of the five almost unknown candidates for county auditor deserves your support in the primary election in May?

Should voters choose the Democratic incumbent for state senator or the opponent who has launched an effective advertising campaign? In low-level contests, the majority of voters seldom even recall the name of the incumbent, much less the opponent. What about Congress, then? One candidate may have run a number of advertisements that stood out for her sincere conversations with men and women from the working class. Another candidate could gloat on social media about her easy-to-understand tax-cutting strategy.

When faced with these options and weighed down by their own daily obligations, individuals commonly turn to mental shortcuts. They may decide on a candidate based on whether they have the support of well-known politicians or simply on whether they seem to be a political leader, much more so than in presidential elections. The look of a candidate's website may have an impact on certain people casting votes in state elections. A website that exudes persuasiveness looks stylish, feels modern, and has plenty of eye-catching visuals may be taken more seriously by people who aren't really engaged in politics.

In lower-level elections, such as contests for Congress, even the repeating of a candidate's name in ads may have significant impact. Repetition of exposure to a neutral stimulus, product, or political candidate may boost positive affect and increase sentiments of like, according to the well-known psychological concept known as simple exposure.

Low-involvement political judgments are influenced by exposure in the same manner that other decisions are. Which detergent ought should you purchase? Maybe the first one that pops into your head is the one you kept seeing promoted. Why do you crank up the radio in your automobile when a rock and roll tune is playing? Maybe it's because the music has begun to stick in your head after you've heard it five times and you truly like the rhythm and bounce of it. There is abundant evidence that just being exposed has a positive psychological impact and may assist to explain political decision-making. Whether political candidates who spent the most money on media advertising were more likely to win elections than those who spent less or had less money to spend was the subject of a famous research by Joseph Grush and his colleagues. Grush, McKeough, and Ahlring concentrated on low-profile Congressional races and discovered that the top spender won over 60% of the time. This was far higher than the percentage that could have been predicted by chance alone.

Candidates with substantial personal wealth or skilled fundraisers are thus presumably more likely to be elected to low-level office. Once in office, they take use of their standing and the influence that comes with being an incumbent. Their names are well-known and connected to the patriotic accoutrements of power because they are incumbents. Simply being exposed explains why incumbents win elections with such startling regularity. There are difficulties, of course. When voters have strong opinions or a specific candidate evokes unpleasant emotions, simple exposure is less effective. In many contests for the president and the Senate, when more voters evaluate information carefully and depend on more substantial information than name recognition, emotion, and favorable candidate associations, just repeating a politician's name repeatedly will not cut it. The ability of candidates to win elections for lower-level seats is nonetheless explained by frequent, peripheral exposure to persuasive messaging. And in Congressional elections, when news and political discussions have less of an influence, advertising may be a particularly powerful force .

On a normative level, this raises the more general issue of whether or not peripheral processing is advantageous. The use of decision-making shortcuts, according to supporters, makes practical sense since they may assist busy yet low-involved voters in making intelligent decisions. It is not illogical to base your decision to vote on whether a candidate seems to share your party identification. It is at least sensible to vote for a candidate who has received support from those who share your views. The opposition argues that democratic values are insulted by political decision-making that is just cosmetic. Candidates are not always competent to occupy political office just because they have the support of a political party or close friends. The possibility that the system is rigged to benefit those with the financial means to accumulate the funds necessary to win elections to lesser office and manipulate simple exposure to their advantage is another concern raised by critics.

#### **4. Extremely involved**

Voters that are really invested in the election have quite diverse perspectives on political communications. They pay close attention to campaign statements because they are worried about how the result of the election could influence their finances, career prospects, access to health care, or the financial stability of their children. According to the ELM, when people are highly engaged, they centrally and methodically evaluate political signals. They take into account whether potential presidents would implement policies that serve their own interests.

They judge the current president on whether or not the head of state has helped the economy and kept his campaign promises. Campaign messaging are most effective at swaying highly engaged voters if they convincingly address voters' economic and social problems, feature strong policy arguments, and provide reassuring answers to difficult national challenges, as shown by Ladd.

Messages must concentrate on important topics. They must align with the social ideals of the electorate. These more concerned and responsible voters will not be persuaded by persuasive messages that rely on easy arguments, such as naming the candidate's political party or connecting the candidate with patriotic symbols like the flag. If a voter is concerned about her family's financial situation, she needs more than just a message that shows the candidate smiling with loved ones or receiving the support of a respectable senator. Candidates must convince voters to support their election when voters are engaged in the results of elections. According to the ELM, candidates must describe how their plans will meet the urgent economic requirements of voters or solve major issues brought up throughout the campaign.

Due to the nation's financial crisis in 2008, many independent voters who typically lean Republican were mainly focused on economic problems. These voters were represented by John Butler, who had a flower store close to Youngstown, Ohio. Butler said that since he lives in a region of the nation that has been severely affected by the economic crisis, he was forced to fire 25 of his 26 workers and discontinue his health insurance plan. I assessed my circumstances and discovered that I couldn't afford to support McCain. As astonished as anyone, I was, he said. Presumably, Obama's economic recovery strategy won over these active voters who were primarily absorbing political messaging. In 2008, Obama attracted many of these independent voters by accusing the Republicans of causing the financial crisis and outlining his plan to address the economy's problems.

In 2012, Romney tried to win back these supporters by claiming that Obama's policies had made their economic situation worse and that Republican policies would be more beneficial to their financial situation than Democratic ones. While running for office, Romney criticized Obama's record while advancing persuasive justifications for his economic policies. Compared to 2008, the Republican campaign attracted more Independent voters, but not enough to overcome Obama's lead among other demographics[10]–[12].

Voters might also be quite invested in the election, but they also have to deal with psychological pressures. One group of working-class women, known as waitress moms, was conflicted. They believed Obama had broken his pledge to boost the economy despite having supported him in the 2008 election. Emmakate Paris, a lady from New Hampshire, said she was concerned about taxes, insurance, and the price of gas, everything. Romney attempted to influence people like Ms. Paris based on the ELM by framing the election in terms of Obama's economic policies, claiming that his own business history and economic plan would better serve her economic self-interest. Romney's conservative stances on abortion and birth control caused concern among voters like Ms. Paris, which was an issue for Romney. The social issues that Ms. Paris and other working women care about were targeted by Obama's campaign managers, who claimed that the president's views on abortion and contraception were more in line with their demands. Women preferred Obama over Romney by double digits, according to exit polls.

## **5. Persuasion Obstacles When People Have Strong Political Passions**

Political persuaders may influence voters' opinions by choosing the right communicator trait, crafting an effective message, or adapting the communication to meet the level of voter engagement in the election, as has been highlighted in the debate thus far. These arguments,



however, can fail because of people's strong political beliefs and partisan allegiances. Affirmative action, abortion, and gun control are just a few examples of topics where opinions may be strongly held. Additionally, supporters of the Republican or Democratic Parties might be very committed.

Voters assess politicians via the prism of their political ideologies because they are driven by a well-developed ideological worldview. Strong attitudes are marked by symbolic attachments, connections to fundamental societal ideals, and certainty. Strong attitudes can be both a gift and a burden because they give people the confidence to become active in politics and push for change, but they can also make them oblivious to other points of view. When someone has a strong opinion on a subject, they always see everything around the subject through the prism of that opinion. People who have strong attitudes are seldom objective, but rather very subjective and generally hesitant to entertain other viewpoints. Furthermore, ardent supporters of a particular political party may be so devoted to it that they are willing to compromise their intellectual convictions in order to support the cause of their beloved organization. The psychological propensity to see and interpret communications in a way that is congruent with a strong underlying set of ideas, attitudes, or political attachments is selective perception, which is shown by this. Blogs, speeches, debate performances, and advertisements that are political run up against these. Strongly partisan voters swiftly reject arguments that conflict with their beliefs. Additionally, they favor news sources that extol the virtues of their political party while mocking its opponents. These concepts could make you think about the restricted effects model. The limited effects method, expanded to account for a variety of media impacts and updated to fit the modern day, provides some insight into modern campaign persuasion.

The greatest method to change a deeply held belief, according to persuasion theorists, is to understand its dynamics and underlying structure. In order to examine persuasion and social attitudes, psychologists Muzafer and Carolyn Sherif created a social judgment theory method. According to social judgment theory, individuals do not impartially assess a communication based on the strength of the arguments. Instead, they make comparisons between the promoted viewpoint and their own perspective, relying on their own social perceptions. If the communicator typically shares their viewpoints, they will accept the message and maybe even get more passionate about the subject. They separate or contrast the speaker's standpoint from their own and reject the communicator's arguments if the speaker adopts a posture that seems to differ from their opinion. The obvious message for political candidates is to avoid trying to sway people's opinions, especially on contentious issues like abortion or weapons. Instead, make the case to voters that you concur with their viewpoint. Be cautious what you say to avoid giving the impression that you disagree with the voters' views, which might cause them to vote against your campaign.

Yes, candidates do express their views about topics. Candidates from both the Republican and Democratic parties have contrasting future ideas. Generally speaking, presidential candidates do support a set of values. But if they don't use extreme caution when addressing contentious matters, they won't be elected. As the first African American president, Obama had to tread carefully on these subjects. White people who grudgingly supported him in 2008 might get angry with him if they felt he periodically highlighted the issues of Black Americans who are still dealing with racism. But when he seemed to be deaf to the concerns of the Black community, fervent activists like radio personality Tavis Smiley and professor Cornel West called him out, alleging that he was not sensitive enough to the issues that African Americans faced. This was a problem for Obama the whole first term. He expressed sympathy for Trayvon Martin's parents when their son tragically died in Florida due to



circumstances that some perceived to be related to racial prejudice. Obama stated, If I had a son, he'd look like Trayvon, in a sympathetic tone. On the other hand, during his first six months in office, he refused to appear on Black Entertainment Television after consulting with media workers. I'm not the leader of African Americans. He underlined, I'm the president of the United States of America. Obama adhered to the social judgment theory in these ways, which emphasizes the value of shaping a message to meet audience members' opinions and fall within their range of acceptable viewpoints. Romney followed suit, emphasizing rejection of Obama's health care plan and income tax cuts during the Republican primaries two policies that Republicans wholeheartedly supported. He moderated his ideas throughout the general election campaign in an effort to win over more moderate voters. Politicians make a great effort to avoid taking stances that seem to conflict with people's fundamental beliefs. Therefore, even after the horrific shooting rampage that left 12 people dead in a Colorado movie theater in July 2012, Obama remained silent on gun regulation, a stance that Democrats have always supported. A majority of Americans at the time opposed a ban on assault weapons and pistols, therefore his rejection was calculated. This draws attention to a political dilemma. To win an election, candidates must uphold moral convictions. However, they won't be reelected if the beliefs they uphold while in office conflict with those of important constituencies.

### CONCLUSION

For the purpose of swaying public opinion and ensuring electoral victory, political campaigns mainly depend on persuasion. Candidates and political parties have used a variety of strategies throughout history to appeal to voters' emotions, frame matters favorably, and take use of the media's ability to spread their views broadly. The importance of persuasion in influencing political discourse and voter behavior has been highlighted by this research. The success of persuasion in political campaigns poses moral questions since manipulative tactics may polarize people and damage the democratic process by deceiving them. The dissemination of false information and the effects of social media algorithms on information consumption are only two examples of the new problems that arise as technology develops. While persuasion is a necessary component of political campaigns, the security and health of democratic societies depend on its proper and ethical use. Voters will be able to participate in politics in a knowledgeable and empowered way thanks to ongoing study into persuasive techniques and public awareness of them.

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## CHAPTER 24

### A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW: POLITICAL ADVERTISING

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#### ABSTRACT:

Public opinion is significantly shaped by political advertising, which also has an impact on election results. This research looks at political advertising's tactics, effects, and moral ramifications in modern democracies. The report explores how political campaigns target voters by using a variety of media outlets and targeting strategies. It also assesses how political commercials affect voters psychologically and cognitively. The research also examines the difficulties presented by deception, manipulation, and the development of digital platforms in relation to political advertising. At the end of the day, this study helps us comprehend the complexity of political communication and how it affects democratic processes. Political advertising has a double-edged effect on democracies. While it gives candidates a way to share with the public their goals and plans, it also raises questions about how public opinion may be swayed and how truth can be lost. To solve these issues and protect the integrity of democratic processes while safeguarding the freedom of political speech, policymakers, media outlets, and individuals must collaborate. By doing this, we can promote an educated and healthy electorate that is equipped to make wise political judgments.

#### KEYWORDS:

Advertising, Advertisements, Candidates, Campaigns, Political, Voters.

#### INTRODUCTION

Joe Soptic, who is balding and has hollow rings under his eyes, introduces the political advertising by somberly stating that he worked as a steelworker for 30 years. As he dons a hard hat, he still exudes pride. We had a reputation for producing high-quality goods, he claims. It was a product of American manufacturing. Images of a steel facility appear on the screen while he speaks. While a truck carries raw materials from one area of the facility to another, fire pours down from the melting of steel. We weren't wealthy, yet despite that, Soptic was able to pay for her daughter's college education. On the screen now comes John Wiseman, a 28-year steel business veteran with broad shoulders and a mustache. His voice is resonant and deep. It's crucial to have a good job that pays well enough to support and raise a family. That stopped with the sale of the plant to Bain Capital, Soptic says. The video then switches to a portrayal of Mitt Romney. Romney is shown confidently stating, I know how business works, while waving excitedly. Jobs come and go for reasons I am aware of. Soptic reappears on the screen once again. Romney's private equity company, Bain Capital, made as much money off it [the steel plant] as they could, closed it down, and filed for bankruptcy, without any concern for the families of the communities, the author claims[1]–[3].

Two elderly men who have both worked at the steel industry for more than 25 years, Andy Cruz and Jack Cobb, share their opinion. They described it succinctly while sitting outside a house: It was like a vampire. They entered and drained the life from us, said Cobbs. Joe Soptic ends the advertisement with these chilling words: I was horrified. Makes me irate. All

of the men were wealthy. They were all wealthy beyond their capacity to spend. However, they lacked the resources to care for the same individuals who brought them their income.

One of numerous attack advertisements the candidates and super-political action committees produced during the presidential race was this viciously disparaging commercial, which was funded by the Obama campaign and broadcast in the spring of 2012. Political campaigns often rely on advertising, especially harmful advertising. In presidential elections, advertisements are the main means of candidate communication with voters, and they are becoming more and more important in international elections. Negative news stories are continuously debated, and consultants carefully prepare for them. The majority of us have views on political commercials. We either like their artistic talent or detest their use of beloved icons. We worry about how they will affect weaker Americans while ignoring how they will affect us since we believe their opinions won't be much changed. We regularly bemoan their abundance, describing them as eyesores and thinking that they impede democracy. Political advertising has also been discussed by academics, who have provided theories and evidence-based assessments to explain its impacts.

The influence and perplexities of political advertisements are explored in this chapter, which unravels these problems. The primary characteristics of modern campaign advertisements and promotional methods are covered in the first part. The impact of political advertisements on voters is examined in the next section, which uses case studies to clarify key ideas. The chapter's conclusion provides a critical viewpoint by exploring the benefits and cons of negative advertising and the methods in which the media might dispel misconceptions.

### **Identities of Presidential Campaign Advertisements**

For more than 50 years, political advertising has been a vibrant part of presidential elections. In the 1952 presidential election, more than 60 years ago, the first notable television political advertising was aired. Since then, there have been several changes and advancements in presidential campaign advertising. First, outside political organizations are increasingly funding political advertising. Super-political action committees, which have grown significantly since the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, spend a lot of money on presidential campaign advertisements. Super-PACs, which received more than \$61 million in donations in 2012, are now responsible for funding a large number of political advertisements. Super-PACs may finance offensive attack advertising while working covertly and independently of campaigns. These PACs are not legally obligated to disclose the identities of their contributors to the Federal Election Commission since they are not considered to be political organizations. It's all in good fun; candidates may denounce the negative tone of the attack commercials and express astonishment. They gain from PAC-sponsored assaults on their rivals at the same time[4]–[6].

Second, political advertising is presently spending more money than ever before. The 2012 presidential election was the priciest in American history. A total of \$6 billion was spent, substantially above the \$2.5 billion spent in 2008, with an estimated \$3.3 billion going into political advertising. Comparatively speaking, just \$600 million was spent on political advertisements in 1996. However, the Supreme Court's 2010 Citizens United decision let loose a torrent, and the 2012 election broke all previous records. The city of excess Las Vegas set a record in 2012 with more than 73,000 political advertisements, making it the location with the most TV campaign advertisements in a calendar year.

To accommodate in all the advertisements, several local TV stations throughout the nation were had to shave off minutes from their nightly news shows. The negativity of political advertising is a third feature. Political advertisements come in a variety of formats, such as

talking heads where candidates address the camera directly; testimonials where reputable people speak in favor of or against the political candidate; and issue ads where candidates outline what they would do if elected or what they have accomplished during their terms. These kinds of advertisements may be good or negative, and there are a number of distinct negative ad appeals, including some that make direct parallels between the candidates and others that take aim at their opponents' personalities. The important news is that since the 1950s, negative advertising has grown significantly.

## DISCUSSION

In 1952, 25% of political advertisements were critical. Only 12% of the main political advertisements in 1960, when John F. Kennedy ran against Richard Nixon, were antagonistic. Then came President Lyndon Johnson's famous Daisy ad in 1964, in which a little girl plucked petals from a daisy while a nuclear bomb mushroom cloud erupted. This ad not-so-subtly hinted at what Johnson's opponent could do if elected president. Major advertisements were unfavorable in 50% of cases in 1964. Both candidates increased the use of attack advertisements in 1968 in response to the turmoil of the late 1960s and the Daisy commercial's apparent success. In the aftermath of the national soul-searching that followed the conclusion of the Vietnam War and Watergate, negative advertisements started to diminish in the 1970s. However, they significantly rose over the 1980s. With the inflammatory assaults on Democrat Michael Dukakis, including controversial advertisements that alleged Dukakis's policies had caused a violent Black-on-White crime, the 1988 election remains the most divisive on record.

Even though they fluctuated over time, negative commercials persisted and still made up the majority of well-known political advertisements in the general election. Similar findings were obtained in a study of the Congressional elections of 2002, 2004, and 2006, which showed that the amount of negativity on websites and in television advertisements had grown. Fourth, advertisements often have great production values and use emotive imagery, engrossing music, and captivating cinematography to evoke emotions. Ronald Reagan was associated with upbeat music and well-known symbols of American culture in the famous *Morning in America* advertisement. In a well-known negative ad from George H.W. Bush attacking his opponent's record on crime in 1988, the camera swept over inmates marching constantly through a rotating prison door to ominous music. A contentious Obama commercial from 2012 implied that Mitt Romney's Bain Capital Company was to blame for the wife of a Bain-owned steel factory employee's passing by neglecting to offer health insurance. All of this is a long cry from the corny Eisenhower *Answers America* advertisements from 1952, in which the renowned Republican presidential contender glared into the camera and made awkward answers in response to questions that had been pre-recorded from people he had never met.

The fifth feature of modern political advertisements is the result of another transformation in political advertising during the last 50 years. Strategic planning has gone into the selection and placement of advertisements, with a focus on both traditional and interactive technology. Modern consultants contend that they earn more for their money by concentrating on swing states rather than investing money on advertising expenditures in all 50 states. Strategists argue that it is more advantageous to make purchases in areas where the result is uncertain rather than places where a candidate has secured victory. The majority of advertisements were placed in battleground states in 2008 and 2012, which were seen as being crucial to the result of the elections. Voters in Nevada, Virginia, Florida, and Ohio saw a lot of advertisements. We have a joke around here, the general manager of a Las Vegas television station stated in Nevada, where advertisements dominated the nightly news. There will eventually be so lengthy commercial breaks that when viewers tune in, all they will hear is

Hello, welcome to News 3. And good luck. Strategically speaking, concentrating on battlefield states is sensible, but it is similar to frontloading. It gives certain states an excessive amount of attention while ignoring others[7]–[9].

Candidates for president also start their advertising campaigns sooner than in previous cycles. Instead of merely conducting ad blitzes in the autumn, strategists start the assault early in an effort to convince and secure important vote blocs. Shortly after John Kerry won the Democratic nomination in March 2004, the Bush campaign started airing \$60 million in derogatory advertisements in 19 crucial states. Then, in the latter part of the summer, the infamous Swift Boat ads began to run, which attacked Kerry's record as the captain of a navy Swift Boat during the Vietnam War and made dubious assertions that Kerry had exaggerated his military prowess. Eight years later, the Obama campaign and leftist PACs attacked Romney negatively well in advance of the fall election, taking a page out of the Swift Boat book.

### **Negative Advertising**

They are the electronic equivalent of the plague, the Darth Vader and Voldemort of modern politics. Negative political advertisements get the most criticism in contemporary politics. Don't be misled: Since the first American elections, candidates have hurled snide remarks and vicious jabs. President John Adams was accused of planning to establish a dynasty with his sons by Thomas Jefferson's friends. The accusation made by Jefferson's adversaries that he had intercourse with a slave was factual, according to modern historical assessments. Political opponents of Andrew Jackson went all out, referring to Jackson's mother as a prostitute and his wife as an adulteress. These criteria show how subdued today's commercials are. Negative advertisements, however, reach a larger audience than the assaults of two centuries ago because they are disguised in modern media technology, adorned with cinematic production methods, and magnified by dramatic narrative elements. Negative advertisements should never be recommended against by any adviser worth their salt.

You question how this is possible. People detest bad advertising, right? They claim to. Democratic strategist Jill Buckley stated: People claim they detest negative advertising, yet it works. They detest it while nevertheless remembering it. Social science study explains why information from unfavorable advertisements might stick in people's minds. According to empirical research, individuals recall negative advertisements more vividly than good ones and can notice them more rapidly. This is due to a number of factors. Positive information doesn't have the same psychological weight that negative information does. Negative incidents grab our attention and have a more negative effect on perceptions and assessments. Positive information doesn't trigger reactions as quickly or as strongly as negative information does.

People are fascinated by the bad, maybe because they hope or anticipate that events will be favorable. You attend an event. Four friends compliment your appearance, sense of humor, the caliber of your job, and even your pet cat in a lovely and friendly way. One of your friends quickly and sarcastically remarks on the wording you used in your Facebook post. Which remark do you recall? Which one makes you think about it when you're driving home? According to research, it's the sarcastic crack. Similar to how bad political information may stick in people's minds longer than favorable ones. Additionally, it might be challenging to reject negative commercials since doing so could give the impression that the politician being attacked is hiding something.

Political strategists think negative ads may affect poll results even if the consequences of political advertising are complicated. Consultants worry that the competitors will run



negative commercials if they don't. This results in an arms race of unfavorable information and a self-fulfilling prophesy. Negative advertisements are covered by the media, which gives consultants another reason to create and use them. They get a double whammy: a potential payout from the unfavorable advertisement and a freebie when the media mentions the unfavorable spot. A creepy negative commercial makes for entertaining television. Additionally, campaign managers assume that voters won't watch news coverage that clarify the disinformation, despite the fact that journalists may critique a bad spot and report on factual flaws. In the event that voters do pay attention to the correction information, consultants believe people will recall the compelling advertising narratives above the more complex factual correctives.

## **Negative Ad Impact**

### **1. Limits**

All of this implies that unfavorable advertising has potent, debilitating impacts. It is abundantly obvious from the theories and data covered in earlier chapters that a variety of social and psychological variables restrict their influence. Negative spots are especially unlikely to affect attitudes in two circumstances. First off, they won't be able to persuade partisans to change their beliefs. Strong attitudes are notoriously hard to alter. After seeing a string of unfavorable advertisements, those who fervently support a politician won't change their mind.

Second, if the hit is excessively forceful, below the belt, unbelievable, socially unsuitable, or factually incorrect, they will not be effective. McCain, the 2008 Republican contender for president, refrained from launching a slew of criticisms against Obama's 20-year church affiliation and the controversial Chicago reverend who served as its spiritual head. The popular and well-liked pastor Reverend Jeremiah Wright crossed the line by seeming to imply that the U.S. was responsible for the September 11 attacks via its military foreign policy.

McCain opted not to use Reverend Wright in his 2008 advertising campaign, maybe because it might have been seen as raising racial concerns and giving the impression that he was race-baiting. His undoubtedly prudent choice highlights the perilous nature of negative advertisements and the knowledge that they might backfire.

### **2. Effects of Advertising**

What effects do political advertisements have then? According to research, political campaign advertisements may affect voters' opinions and attitudes about politicians. The above described ideas of agenda-setting, priming, and framing are very useful for illuminating the impacts of political advertising.

### **3. Learning**

First, some encouraging or even unexpected news. Political commercials educate people. They learn about candidates' stances on various issues as well as their character traits. This may be advantageous since it allows candidates to speak to people directly about their backgrounds and viewpoints without having to go via the news media.

### **4. Reinforcement**

Additionally, political commercials may strengthen partisan beliefs. Advertising's impacts are amplified when its themes connect with voters' political and social issues. In tight elections, advertisements may amplify feelings, reinforce views, and mobilize the base.

## **5. Creating and setting the agenda**

To set the stage and sway voters, candidates use advertisements. They urge people to pay attention to the subjects that appeal to their strengths and those they feel are most essential. Candidates create ads to persuade voters that their concerns should be the ones voters think about when they set the agenda. They also want to influence voters. Voters assess presidential candidates based on a number of factors. They take into consideration the candidate's stances on the economic and international policy, as well as personal qualities like experience and compassion. Candidates aim to set the agendas they think will have the most impact. When choosing who to vote for, they ask people to consider the problems raised by their campaign. Candidate who uses agenda-setting advertisements to highlight the state of the economy wants voters to prioritize these issues and the candidate's ability to address them while making voting decisions.

The 1992 election shows how candidate Bill Clinton used agenda-setting and priming to his advantage, according to research. The economy of the country is weak, and middle-class households are bearing the burden of the crisis, therefore economic difficulties and unemployment are widely seen as the biggest challenges facing the country. In order to emphasize the message and prevent anybody from forgetting it, Democratic adviser James Carville famously waved a placard that said, *The Economy, Stupid*, in the Little Rock, Arkansas office. His direct comment became the Clinton campaign's catchphrase. By focusing his campaign on the economy and reinforcing this message, Clinton urged Americans to remember how the incumbent president, George H.W. Bush, had said in 1988 that they would be better off four years from now. The narration in the commercial reminded voters that family health care expenditures had increased by almost \$2,000 in four years. How are you doing today?

The economic agenda was shaped by Clinton's advertisements. They influenced voters by implying that the most crucial aspect to take into account while casting a vote was a candidate's capacity to strengthen the economy. Those who were exposed to more advertising were more likely to base their decisions on the economy, at least in part, than those who were exposed to less advertising. Additionally, they were more likely to think Clinton might boost the economy. After the financial crisis, the failure of a major securities business, and the greatest single-day decline in the Dow Industrial average since September 11, 2001, the economy came into focus once again among candidates, the media, and voters sixteen years later, in 2008.

The economy was recognized by most respondents as the most important problem confronting the nation and as the main factor affecting their vote. The schedule was established, and priming could begin. Recognizing that the public blamed the party in power for the economy's troubles and generally viewing Democrats as better competent than Republicans of handling economic issues, the Democrats grabbed the chance. Obama made an effort to highlight economic problems and persuade people to prioritize a candidate's economic record when casting their ballots. He claimed that his programs would do more to restore economic soundness than McCain's [10]–[12].

McCain was criticized for saying that the fundamentals of the economy are sound, and Obama said that his rival was unqualified to handle the nation's financial issues. This priming technique was used in one Obama advertisement: *It's possible that you're having trouble merely making your mortgage payment. John McCain recently said, however, that the fundamentals of our economy are strong. Hmmm. McCain also lost count when asked how*

many homes he owned later that day. He was unable to recall. It's seven, I see. Seven dwellings. And this is one home that America just cannot allow John McCain to occupy.

Obama's plan was successful. Voters endorsed him because they believed he could handle the economy well. The economy was cited as the most important issue by 60% of respondents, the majority of whom supported Obama. Empirical studies support this unofficial proof of priming. TV advertisements had a significant, immediate influence on voter choices, according to a large-scale field experiment investigation of broadcast campaign advertising. The researchers contended that the advertising primed or conjured up important political judgments, which then swayed voters.

## **6. Framing**

Campaigns, as noted by Kinder in 2003, are not so much debates over a common set of issues as they are struggles to define what the election is about. What a statement that is! Candidates who can persuade people to embrace their point of view on the issues will likely win the presidency. Consider it like this: In hard economic times, there is general agreement that the economy is the main issue plaguing the nation. The framing highlights the reality that other factors affect voting in addition to the importance of economic considerations. Instead, how politicians frame the economy how they discuss it and what they decide to emphasize matters.

Romney, a Republican running for president in 2012, focused his campaign on Obama's failure to stimulate the economy. He pounded home the points that more than 23 million Americans were out of work and that almost one in six of them were living in poverty. His remarks focused on job losses and the crushing debt. One of his advertisements, which was based on an Obama campaign spot from 2008, displayed statistics on the screen, including proof of 40 consecutive months of unemployment over 8% and the millions of homeowners who are still behind on their mortgages. The assertions were accompanied by dramatic music. Then, using those six lines to attack Obama for making the foolish claim that the private sector is doing good, the advertisement said, The private sector is doing fine? If President Obama doesn't see the problems with our economy, how can he repair it?

The Obama campaign responded by reframing. His strategists spent one-fifth of the campaign money on attack advertisements that appeared in the summer of 2012 because they understood that hope and change would not work in a weak economy. Before Romney could take a stance as the Republican candidate, they attempted to define him. Romney, a richer-than-rich capitalist who supported tax cuts for the wealthy and did not represent the interests of the middle class as a whole, was pitted against Obama, who they said had championed initiatives that benefitted the middle class. The Joe Sopic advertisement discussed at the beginning of the chapter was created by the Obama campaign, along with another one that garnered over 2 million YouTube views and included a Romney audio clip singing America the Beautiful. Romney's enterprises shipped jobs to Mexico and China and had millions in a Swiss bank account, according to text that went across the screen as he sang. The advertisement emphasized the contrast between Romney's allegedly un-American actions and his patriotic statements.

Perhaps the framing had a bearing. Romney should have been successful in making the election a test of Obama's economic management given the slow pace of the economy's recovery. However, over 6 out of 10 voters who believed that their family's status was essentially unchanged from 2008 voted for Obama. Obama's attack commercials, which were aired in the spring and claimed that Romney's Bain Capital company had stolen businesses and lost people their jobs, may have had some influence on the attitudes of unsure voters in

competitive states. These commercials seemed to have an effect since they were released before people had developed strong impressions about the candidate, much to the Swift Boat ads used against John Kerry in 2004 and the assaults on Dukakis in 1988.

In conclusion, political advertising has the power to enlighten, reinforce views, set the agenda, and affect how voters perceive candidates. The key word here is can. Political advertisements do not deliver political signals to people's brains at breakneck speed. The limitations of persuading political advertisements are illustrated by research described in the preceding chapter and underlined by the traditional limited effects model. Additionally, it may be difficult to separate advertising impacts from the multitude of other variables that are present in campaigns at the same time. Political advertising is still a combination of art and science.

The best we can say is that political advertisements may affect voters' opinions through activating peripheral processes. When voters are more engaged, advertisements may define the conversation and determine the agenda. They have the ability to have significant short-term impacts and may energize voters, assisting them in converting their political beliefs into voting behavior. Candidates that are in a tight race believe that negative campaigning will make a difference spend a lot of money attempting to criticize and dehumanize their rivals while using deceptive psychological manipulation strategies.

## CONCLUSION

Political advertising, which has the ability to alter public opinion and have a considerable effect on election results, continues to be a crucial component of contemporary political campaigns. The study's research has clarified a number of important facets of political advertising. First off, political campaigns are using more sophisticated media channels and targeting techniques. The emergence of digital platforms has altered the environment and made it possible for communications to be more individually tailored and micro-targeted. But this has also sparked worries about manipulation, disinformation, and privacy. Secondly, it is important to consider how political advertising affects people psychologically. Individuals' reactions to political communications are significantly influenced by their emotions, cognitive biases, and social identities. Therefore, political marketers often create stories that appeal to these psychological characteristics, possibly influencing the ability to make logical decisions. Third, political advertising's ethical ramifications need consideration. Upholding the democratic ideals requires that political message be accurate, transparent, and accountable. Regulators and platforms have a significant problem in balancing the right to free expression with the need to stop the spread of inaccurate or misleading information.

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## CHAPTER 25

### DEFINITION AND FUNCTIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

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#### ABSTRACT:

In many nations, presidential debates are essential to the democratic process because they provide voters the chance to evaluate and contrast the candidates' stances on numerous subjects. An overview of the importance of presidential debates, their effect on the political climate, and the manner in which they affect voters' choices are provided in this chapter. It also emphasizes the vital qualities that make these discussions a crucial part of the electoral process. Presidential debates continue to be an essential part of the election process despite their shortcomings. They enable voters to assess candidates' viewpoints with more knowledge and hold them responsible. The democratic value of these events will be enhanced by ongoing efforts to expand discussion forms and promote inclusion, eventually strengthening the foundation of representative government.

#### KEYWORDS:

Candidates, Debate, Presidential Debates, Voters

#### INTRODUCTION

The political communication apparatus gets three separate things out of presidential debates. They are first and mainly political gatherings for candidates. In hinck's words to win over undecided voters, to reinforce voters who have already made a decision concerning whom to vote for, and to change the minds of more open-minded voters. From the standpoint of presidential contenders, debates provide important chances. Candidates don't want to inform the public. They aim to use discussions to further certain political goals. For voters, debates have a different purpose. They assist voters in determining which candidate best represents their interests, shares their beliefs, and has the potential to become the greatest president. Partisan activists see debates as crucial occasions to bolster their support base and lay out plans to win over swing votes. Debates encourage discourse, often witty and edgy conversation on social media and through Twitter for people who are interested in politics. They resemble stock car races for less engaged voters, when you root for your driver while secretly hoping an exciting small accident would happen, in the form of a blunder or mistake made by the other candidate [1]–[3].

The greater political system also benefits symbolically from presidential debates. They stand as the only live, in-person platform where candidates may debate policies while standing side by side. In a largely unmediated setting, they prioritized citizens above future leaders. Contrary to micro targeted Internet ads or political advertising, arguments are not crafted by consultants. In contrast to the news, arguments are not scrutinized and edited by journalists. They are civic education activities that assist individuals in learning new knowledge, approaching problems in greater detail, and taking into account fresh viewpoints on challenging situations. That is the hope, at least. These three roles might clash. If a discussion skirts the issues, it could not benefit the candidate's political goals or the electorate. A discussion that clarifies the problems may increase voter awareness. However, candidates



lose if their remarks wind up alienating swing voters. Civic objectives may be advanced by a discussion that intelligently articulates the many facets of policy issues. Voters with less education, however, may not understand the topic if it is couched in the abstractions of policy wonks.

### **Definition**

The debates for president are not real debates. The true definition of a debate, according to J.J. Auer, is a confrontation, in equal and adequate time, of matched contestants, on a stated proposition, to gain an audience decision. Anyone who participated in debate in high school or college is fairly familiar with this. Debaters do in-depth study, present thorough arguments, and craft convincing rebuttals on a particular subject. The argument is defended by one side, and it is disputed by the other. The winner is chosen by a judge using well developed criteria. The Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858 are the origin of a prestigious debate subgenre. While competing for the most important position on earth, presidential candidates do not really debate in the traditional sense. They do not discuss a predetermined stance, such as The U.S. should take all necessary steps to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, Taxes on people who earn more than \$1 million should be increased to reduce the deficit, or Assault rifles should be immediately banned. Instead, their discussions focus on general domestic or international policy. Image-related inquiries may center on a candidate's likeability or experience. Debaters are not required to respond to certain points or refute opponents. They have the ability to dismiss objections and sidestep problems.

A judge does not render a judgment based on a logical evaluation of the arguments and refutations. After the debate, a poll is conducted, and voter's judge who won based on a variety of factors, including the candidate's nonverbal abilities and manner. It is preferable to think of a debate as a joint appearance or in-person meeting. Here, the joint appearance by two or more opposing candidates, who expound on their positions, with explicit and equitable provisions for refutation without interruption is characterized as a presidential debate. Debates may include a lot of subject conflict. Candidates develop arguments on policy issues, touting their successes, criticizing the opposition, and providing passionate justifications of their own ideas. The presidential debaters typically equivocate or deliver vague platitudes when questions demand them to adopt positions that might alienate important constituencies. Debatable or not, political interactions take place during discussions.

### **Debate Politics**

The Kennedy-Nixon debates in 1960 marked the beginning of contemporary presidential debates. The 1960 presidential debates were the first to be broadcast on television. After a 16-year break, perhaps brought on by the fallout from the Kennedy assassination, the demonstrations of the 1960s, and Watergate, discussions resumed in earnest in 1976. Since then, there have been debates with every presidential election. They have now become ingrained into the American presidential election as rituals and institutions. The Commission on Presidential Debates, a nonprofit organization that sponsors debates, selects the venues, dates, and moderators in consultation with the two main political parties. The advisors for the candidates have a number of strategic discussions well before the debates themselves take place. The amount of time candidates should have to respond to questions, whether candidates should stand or sit, whether candidates should be allowed to take notes with pencil and paper, and even the appropriate height of the platform are all topics up for debate [4]–[6].

Candidates take note of these details. Their consultants also agree. They comprehend that audience perceptions may be influenced by format and contextual signals. Think about the height element. The goal of consultants is to avoid placing their candidate at a disadvantage.

Jimmy Carter allegedly put lifts in his shoes and wore them during the 1976 presidential debates because he was shorter than President Gerald Ford. Before the vice-presidential debate in 1984, Democratic advisors advised against Geraldine Ferraro, who stood at 5'4, staring up at George H.W. Bush, the more than 6-foot-tall Republican contender. Republicans objected, so they built a ramp that matched the floor covering over their concerns so Ferraro could get closer to Bush's height without having to clearly step up on anything. Candidates don't take any chances. They understand that viewers evaluate discussions based on indications from television. Poor presentation may lower candidate ratings. Split-screen pictures may provide tiny hints that can even change viewers' perspectives.

According to communication scholar Dietram Scheufele, when a candidate forgets they are on television and shows annoyance or disapproval during the opponent's speech, partisan viewers may respond negatively. It would not be an exaggeration to compare the presidential debate process to a sophisticated game of chess, political expert Myles Martel said. Nearly every choice, structure, strategy, and technique used during the debates, as well as how they were conducted, had political ramifications. Three presidential debates normally take place, each lasting 90 minutes. Debates are the pinnacle of the autumn campaign; they are major national media occasions that create a lot of hype. Candidates spend a lot of time practicing their responses to the opposition's expected arguments. They hold fictitious discussions in which their adversaries are played by other politicians.

Senator Rob Portman, an expert role-player in presidential debates, portrayed Obama in 2012, while Senator John Kerry, the Democratic contender in 2004, played Mitt Romney. He was so adept at echoing expected Obama charges that he even managed to irritate Romney. In order to lower expectations for their candidate, strategists can engage in the expectations game. Dole's campaign managers purposefully disparaged their candidate as the 1996 Clinton-Dole debate drew near. A Dole adviser referred to Bill Clinton as surely everyone in America knows Bill Clinton is the greatest debater since Benjamin Disraeli in an attempt to lower Dole's expectations. A top Romney advisor made an even larger hype sixteen years later, in 2012, when he said that Obama is widely regarded as one of the most talented political communicators in modern history. Romney is a skilled debater, but Obama mocked him for it, saying, Governor Romney. I'm just alright.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Formats**

There are three different debate formats: press conferences, where a group of pre-selected reporters question the candidates; single moderators, where the moderator, usually a television anchor or political correspondent, asks questions and acts as the umpire; and town hall meetings, where questions from the audience, frequently from voters who are still undecided, are featured. Depending on the format and agreements reached between competing candidates in a specific election, the debate's structure changes. Depending on the debate, candidates may have a certain amount of time to react to questions, rebuttals may be allowed, and general discussion of the debate's topics may be allowed.

Presidential debate opening and closing speeches are conventions. Each format has advantages and disadvantages. The press conference, which is attended by news reporters, guarantees that the panelists are skilled and will pose informed questions. Its flaw is that reporters sometimes ask difficult questions or set up traps for candidates rather than having a policy discussion [7]–[9]. It is also possible to keep reporters out of the environment that typical voters live in. Although the press conference style has been utilized in various debate contexts, such as primary debates, subsequent presidential debates have used it less often.

By using a single moderator, the mayhem that results from a team of journalists asking candidates questions is diminished. Much hinges on the moderator's ability to ensure that candidates follow the guidelines. In 1992, the moderator of a discussion with only him or her lost control, turning it into a virtual free-for-all. Moderator Jim Lehrer received praise and criticism in 2012. He won praise for giving Romney and Obama the opportunity to speak for 15-minute segments at a time, giving the audience a chance to assess the candidates without the interference of journalists. Others, however, attacked Lehrer for allowing the candidates to go beyond their allowed time and for not intervening when they made false claims. The fundamental advantage of town hall meeting debates is that they include regular people in the election process and provide voters the opportunity to ask candidates questions directly. The town hall gathering prioritizes democratic ideals by allowing voters to speak with candidates for the nation's highest office directly.

Candidates take a more voter-centered stance, emphasizing the concerns of the electorate. People may focus on topics that the elite media ignores yet are important to voters. In 2012, after a recent school massacre, a lady requested the candidates to clarify their views on gun control. She seemed to surprise the contestants. Town hall discussions have the potential to engage the public and generate millions of tweets regarding the accomplishments and errors of candidates. On the other side, there are issues with the town hall model. Voters sometimes pose poor questions. Additionally, follow-up questions that might compel candidates to elucidate concepts or clarify misleading statements are not always possible during town hall sessions.

### **Effects Of A Strategic Debate**

What strategic influences do debates have on the electorate? What impact do they have on the campaign? Reporters make assumptions about these issues, but academics endeavor to provide solutions. I give some overarching findings on debate impacts on the campaign based on historical and social science studies.

#### **1. Visuals Matter**

If any presidential debate in the 20th century served to establish the tradition, it was this one. This argument is the one that gave rise to the most well-known empirical investigation, if you had to choose. If academics were asked to select the discussion that had the most influence on the election or was seen to have the biggest influence it would also be this one. During the heated presidential race in the autumn of 1960, John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon engaged in their first debate. Here is a summary of the discussion and how the candidates looked: 80 million Americans listened as moderator Howard K. Smith said, The candidates need no introduction. In contrast, Richard Nixon seemed to be a middle-aged, unshaven man who was recuperating from a major illness. Jack Kennedy, on the other hand, looked dapper in a black, well fitted suit that highlighted his golden tan.

Nixon sat uncomfortably with his legs crossed and his hands hanging from the chair arms, while Kennedy sat with his legs crossed and his hands folded on his lap. The 1960 presidential campaign's first debate got under way at that moment. Kennedy quickly went on the attack, using his inaugural speech to sketch forth a vision for the need to get America going again and to project himself favorably as a fearless, vivacious leader. As the discussion went on, Nixon recovered his composure and presented strong points. However, even when he delivered convincing points, Nixon seemed exhausted and unwell, with exaggerated hollows of blackness in his eyes and drooping jaws, jowls, and cheeks from tension. Nixon was really healing from a knee injury he had incurred a month before. His pale complexion did not seem well in front of the camera, and his infamous five o'clock shadow coarsened up

his face. He refused to apply TV makeup. Nixon's outward look appeared to wear him down. A now-famous research investigation was carried out the next day. According to the study, those who saw the discussion on television thought Kennedy had prevailed. However, those who heard the radio broadcast of the debate reached the opposite conclusion: they believed Nixon had won.

The research has been extensively debated, and the results have been examined in great detail. Does a candidate's appearance override what they say? Did the television medium prioritize verbal style above verbal content? Or did Kennedy's nasal New England drawl sound worse on the radio, lowering his appeal to listeners? The solutions to these queries are unknown to us. The greatest research on the topic indicates that in the first debate, looks did matter a lot, and Kennedy's visual presence, along with Nixon's unsightly appearance, likely convinced TV viewers that he was the winner.

The argument caused a profound shift in perceptions of political media. A generation of consultants and candidates came to the conclusion that on television, physical attractiveness triumphs over important concerns and verbal communication is dwarfed by the visual. When Kennedy and I first met, it wasn't the content of our conversation that wounded Nixon the most; rather, it was the unfavorable contrast between our physical attributes. The truth is that a poor television camera angle may influence an election's result far more than a serious speechwriting error can. In the years that followed 1960, presidential contenders paid particular attention to the importance that visual image may play in debates, keeping eye contact with the camera and smiling at the right times to express likeability. This was in response to Nixon's message and the conventional thinking on this subject.

But the prevailing opinion minimizes the complexity of political reality. On the one hand, visual cues are important during presidential debates. Appearance is important. Kennedy, however, supported his alluring persona with powerful ideas and words. The majority of electors pay close attention to at least part of the presidential debates and are not easily swayed by an attractive face who spits clichés or presents weak arguments. Dan Quayle and Sarah Palin, two candidates with appealing physical attributes, did not prevail in their vice presidential debates. Second, Kennedy's image was improved by the first debate in 1960, which likely helped him narrowly win the election. Contrary to popular belief, it was not the only factor in his victory against Nixon. Kennedy also profited by calling the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s widow, expressing compassion after discovering that her husband was facing a six-month prison sentence for valiantly opposing segregation in Atlanta. He may have gained the support of many Black voters as a result of the phone call. The first presidential debate of 1960 taught us a few important things. The fact that the medium matters is the most important. On television, physical looks matter. Candidates' perceptions might be influenced by visual cues.

## **2. Nonverbal Communication May Have Effects**

In discussions, nuanced verbal and nonverbal indications are important. Some voters use them as straightforward clues or decision-making heuristics to assist them sort through convoluted, illogical policy arguments. Others see them as a valid method of selecting candidates in the electronic and interactive media era. Obama and Romney squared off in the first presidential debate of 2012, and Romney won. During the discussion, Obama seemed listless and distant, sometimes displaying contempt by glancing at his notes, looking down, or gulping when Romney brought up his failure to revive the struggling economy. In contrast to Obama, Romney was limber, attentive, and focused on the camera throughout his concluding comments. Romney had a lot of energy; he was like a fighter who was always on the move,

jabbing his opponent with punch after punch, scarcely the wooden figure of earlier months. Obama sometimes came out as unsure, while he seemed to ooze confidence. According to polls, Romney prevailed in the debate in large part because to his awareness of communicative signals and TV optics.

Even Obama admitted that his use of body language and other forms of communication hurt him. He said to his top campaign adviser, I believe the opinion is that we didn't have a very good night. The strategist quickly concurred, that is the consensus. Viewers may see candidates' nonverbal cues and emotes since television networks display the discussion on split screens. Tens of millions of people were watching the first 2012 debate when Obama glanced down at his notes. Viewers either liked Vice President Joe Biden's nonverbal jabs when he laughed through opponent Paul Ryan's speech in the 2012 vice presidential debate, or they didn't, considering it unworthy of a vice president. Non-verbal signals affected judgments in both scenarios. In presidential debates, television networks often air reaction shots that highlight the non-speaking debater's non-verbal reactions. This may draw attention to seemingly unrelated behaviors, such as checking one's notes or making a minor but noticeable grimace, that draw focus away from the actual content of a candidate's remarks. These responses may affect how the audience judges a candidate's likeability.

### **3. News Media Can Change the Dynamics of Campaigns**

Discussions occur in the midst of a ferocious press. In addition to covering the event live, the news media spends hours discussing the optics of the discussion. TV reruns important passages. They are widely discussed on Twitter and on YouTube. Monitoring polls check to determine whether a certain contender received a boost. Voters who are unfamiliar with all the difficult topics covered in discussions might seek advice from journalists. Voters' assessments of the debates may be influenced by news media judgments of who won. In other words, argument coverage in the press has an effect.

### **4. 1976: Ford vs. Carter**

Following the second debate between President Gerald Ford and his Democratic opponent, Jimmy Carter, the classic case of news media impacts occurred. Ford was questioned by a panelist regarding US-Soviet ties after it was suggested that the US could be losing ground to the USSR in international relations. Ford seemed to accept the premise of the argument after first asserting that his government had pursued discussions with the Soviet Union from a position of strength, reacting defensively in a disastrous miscalculation. He said that there was no Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe and that there never would be under a Ford administration, oblivious to the reality that the Soviet Union ruled and even occupied numerous Eastern European nations in 1976. Most Americans did not instantly notice the error. After-debate polls showed a razor-thin victory for Ford, with 44% declaring, followed by 43% for Carter, with the remaining 6% unsure. Voters paid attention as the networks repeatedly aired Ford's speech and criticisms that he had made a mistake. The results of polls taken between 5 p.m. and 12 a.m. the day after the debate demonstrated how much a day can change politics. The result so far? Carter was seen as the victor by 62% of respondents, whereas Ford was chosen as the winner by 17%.

Ford made a comment that was false and deceptive, but it was not the grave mistake of judgment that the media had implied. When you reread the debate transcript, you will find that Ford actually meant that there was no Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, meaning that the people of Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia did not see themselves as being under the control of the Soviet Union and that each country had its own autonomy, freedom, and sense of pride.



Ford undoubtedly was aware that the nations in Eastern Europe were ruled by the Soviet Union. What truly occurred was that Ford overreacted to his own hyperbole and said something that was untrue [10], [11].

And he received a beating for it. You may make the case that someone should be held to a higher standard whether they are running for president or when they are in office. Candidates must anticipate that news media coverage will hold them responsible if they make a mistake during a prominent presidential debate. You may also argue that the press greatly exaggerated this event due to a feeding frenzy in modern media. In any event, Ford's debate performance received negative press as a result of the news coverage and his following incompetence in obstinately adhering to his stance. At a critical juncture in the campaign, Carter gained ground, Ford lost ground, and public opinion moved in Carter's favor. It's possible that Carter's triumph was somewhat influenced by what the news media said about the second Ford-Carter debate.

## **5. 2000: Gore vs. Bush**

Journalists discreetly and sometimes humorously propagated various narratives of candidates Al Gore and George W. Bush during the contentious 2000 presidential campaign. Bush was considered to be a inexperienced dolt since he was not very intelligent and did not excel in school. Gore was referred to in news articles as a serial exaggerator who was prone to distort the facts and promote his professional career. Gore is well-known for having claimed that he took the initiative in creating the Internet. Gore seemed to be implying that he deserved praise for his leadership as a senator in giving the financing that turned a modest computer network into a computerized international system. The assertion, nevertheless, appeared improbable.

Following the first presidential debate, the media narrative gained significance. Gore said during the debate that he had accompanied the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to a Texas forest fire location in an attempt to highlight his expertise as a leader. Gore had visited disaster areas as vice president, but it came out that he had not traveled with the director to the Texas forest fires. Gore also made a little error in grammar while discussing Florida's overcrowded schools, but the rest of what he said was true. Press coverage after the debate stressed how suspect and erroneous Gore's claims were. This might be seen as an appropriate emphasis on a candidate's propensity to provide false information or as excessive attention of a pointless issue. What's notable is how voters' opinions of the debate were impacted by post-debate press coverage. The next week saw a deterioration in perceptions of Gore's sincerity. According to a study, more people felt Bush won the discussion as time went on.

### **Debate Effects on Voters**

Presidential debates have particular repercussions on voters and the broader political system in addition to affecting the dynamics of the campaign.

#### **1. Huge National Audiences Attend Debates**

People watch the election for a variety of reasons, including vote guidance, searching out information that would support their vote, intellectual curiosity, entertainment, and even the chance that a politician may make a joke or make a mistake. Political arguments are similar to stock-car races in that nobody really cares who wins; instead, everyone simply wants to watch the wrecks, the comic Molly Ivins said. The average number of viewers for presidential debates in 2008 was 57 million. In a time of specialized and fragmented media, the first Obama-Romney debate was seen by more than 70 million Americans on television



and the Internet four years later. Debates are seen by millions, which is positive. However, it is not as if viewers are engrossed on the TV or computer screen, soaking up every word or stance on policy. The focus is inconsistent. Only political junkies watch presidential and vice-presidential debates in their entirety, and few people watch a debate from beginning to end. Furthermore, just because someone watches a debate does not imply, they agree with everything the candidates say. Effects may not always follow exposure.

## **2. Candidate Attitudes Are Reinforced by Debates**

Viewers are picky, as Klapper observed more than 50 years ago and psychological science has subsequently proved. They use previous prejudices to restrict discussions. Partisans do not alter their opinion of the competitor even when the rival performs better than their own favored candidate. John Kerry, a Democrat, defeated Bush in the debates in 2004, but it didn't matter. Republican viewers did not adopt a more positive view of Kerry or modify their assessment of Bush. Partisan viewers also make accusations, highlighting the falsehoods and lies provided by the opposition while ignoring the errors made by their candidate. The lefty website Moveon.org claimed that Romney had lied and misrepresented Obama's record during the first 2012 presidential debate, despite the fact that independent fact-checking revealed that both candidates had omitted key information. Conservatives said that the moderator of the 2012 vice presidential debate was biased because she pushed the Republican vice-presidential candidate, Paul Ryan, to outline specific economic proposals, despite the fact that she garnered plaudits for her efforts to engage both candidates.

Romney passionately defended his commitment to workplace equality at the second presidential debate, stating that as governor of Massachusetts, he made a concerted effort to recruit women who met the requirements to join his Cabinet.

But when he said that women's organizations whom he sought for assistance brought back whole binders full of women, the uncommon phrase sparked a feeding frenzy on the Internet and prompted the creation of the Facebook fan page Binders Full of Women, which attracted a large number of sarcastic likes. Liberals misconstrued Romney's comments as showing an unwavering commitment to women's rights while conveniently omitting his claims that he wanted to hire talented women for his Cabinet and was open to offering flexible work schedules. In this approach, arguments are only partially seen by spectators, which reinforces prior opinions.

## **3. The effects of presidential debates on democracy are many**

Offering a venue that involves individuals, enhancing their awareness of topics and promoting discourse, is one of the debates' more general, civic aims. According to research, arguments serve various purposes. Watching presidential debates helps voters learn more about the viewpoints taken by candidates on many issues. The range of election topics that voters consider when evaluating candidates increases as a result of debate viewership. The conversation about the presidential campaign might intensify after a debate because presidential debates urge viewers to discuss it with friends and on social networking sites. Commentary is often negative. One person tweeted: Is there anything more awkward than putting two guys on stools 10 feet apart on a huge stage and asking them to look natural for 90 minutes. when the second presidential debate in 2012 became heated. One woman satirically commented on Amazon.com in response to Romney's claim that he had gotten binders full of ladies, saying, being a very curvaceous lady, I really need more of a plus-sized binder to fit into.

## CONCLUSION

Presidential debates are a crucial component of contemporary democracies, promoting accountability and openness in the election process. Candidates get the ability to express their views and goals during these discussions, and voters learn more about the people running for the highest position. The discussions encourage more involved and politically knowledgeable citizens by enabling educated decision-making among the voters. Additionally, these debates provide candidates a chance to demonstrate their leadership abilities, communication skills, and capacity for handling pressure in front of a large audience. Voters may see firsthand how candidates interact with one another on the debate stage as they reply to questions and participate in productive discussion. The presidential debates do have certain drawbacks, however. Theatrics and sound bites, according to some detractors, may be substituted for substantive discussions of hard problems in debates. Furthermore, arguments could not cover all pertinent subjects, thus leaving important issues neglected.

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