

PS 224 Public Opinion

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This class is an introduction to the study of public opinion. We will examine such topics as the meaning of public opinion, forces affecting the formation of public opinion, the distribution of opinion on major issues, and the consequences of public opinion in modern politics.

The grading for this class will be based on two short papers (5-10 pages, 33% each), and a final (33%). The short papers should synthesize an argument from a single week's readings. The short papers should not be literature reviews, but criticisms of central themes in the readings. Appropriate short paper topics might examine the implications of the research approaches for the conclusions drawn by the different readings, point out central problems that the readings fail to address, extend the implications of one reading into the conclusions of another, and so forth. Brehm will provide a suggested list of these topics.

The following books are available at the Co-op:

- Erikson, Robert, Norman Luttbeg and Kent Tedin, *American Public Opinion*
- Sniderman, Paul, David Brody, and Philip Tetlock, *Reasoning and Choice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zaller, John, *Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Many of the readings for this class are articles. The articles all should be available on E-Reserve (and please let me know otherwise so that I can remedy the situation).

3 Jan What this course is about

9 Jan Definitions (Week 2a)

- VO Key, *Public Opinion and American Democracy*, 1967. New York: Alfred Knopf. Chapter 1, pp. 3-18 (reserve)
- Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*, 1922. New York: The Free Press. Ch 1, pp 3-20 (reserve)
- Zaller, Ch. 1, 2

11 Jan Survey Response (Week 2b)

- Zaller, Ch. 3
- SBT, Ch. 2, 6
- ELT, Ch. 2

16 - 18 Jan Ideology (Week 3)

- Converse, Philip E. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," 1964. In David Apter (ed.), *Ideology and Discontent*, New York: Free Press, pp 206-261 (reserve)
- SBT, Ch. 8-10
- Zaller, Ch. 7
- E, L & T, Ch 4.

23 - 25 Jan Influences on Public Opinion: Rationality and Self-Interest (Week 4)

- Downs, Anthony. Ch 11-12, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, 1957, New York: Addison-Wesley, pp 207-259 (reserve)
- Kramer, Gerald. "Short-Term Fluctuations in U.S. Voting Behavior, 1896-1964," *APSR* 1971 65(1):131—143. (reserve)
- Kinder, Donald R. and Roderick Kiewiet, "Sociotropic Politics: The American Case," 1981, *British Journal of Political Science* 11(2):129--161 (reserve)

30 Jan - 1 Feb Influences on Public Opinion: Information and Cognition (Week 5)

- Zaller, Ch. 8, 9
- Lodge, Milton and Marco Steenbergen, "The Responsive Voter," *APSR*, 1995, 89:309-326 (reserve)
- Conover, Pamela and Stanley Feldman, "Candidate Perception in an Ambiguous World," *American Journal of Political Science*, 1989, 912-940 (reserve)
- Iyengar, Shanto. "How Citizens Think About National Issues," *American Journal of Political Science*, 1989, 878-900 (reserve)

6 - 8 Feb Influences on Public Opinion: Media (Week 6)

- Iyengar, Shanto, Mark Peters and Donald R. Kinder, "Experimental demonstration of the not-so-minimal consequences of television news," *American Political Science Review*, 1982, 76(4):848-858 (reserve)
- E,L&T, Ch. 8
- Iyengar, Shanto. "Television news and citizens' explanations of national affairs," *APSR*, 81:815-831 (reserve)
- Bartels, Larry. 1993. "Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure" *APSR* 87(2):267-285 (reserve)
- Erbring, Lutz, Edie Goldenberg, and Arthur. Miller. 1980. "Front Page News and Real World Cues: A New Look at Agenda Setting by the Media" *American Journal of Political Science* 24(1):16-49 (reserve)
- MacKuen, Michael. 1984. "Exposure to Information, Belief Integration, and Individual Responsiveness to Agenda Change" *APSR* 78(2):372-391 (reserve)

SHORT PAPER #1 DUE 8 FEB

13 - 15 Feb Expressions of Public Opinion: Race (Week 7)

- Kinder, Donald & David Sears, "Prejudice and politics: Symbolic racism versus racial threats to the good life," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 40: 414-431, 1981 (E-reserve)
- SBT, Ch. 12-13
- Kinder, Donald and Lynn Sanders, 1996. "Framing the Issue: Elite Discourse and Popular Understanding," *Divided by Color*, Ch 7, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (E-reserve)
- Alvarez, Michael and John Brehm, "Uncertainty and Racial Attitudes?" *Hard Choices, Easy Answers*, Princeton University Press, 2003, Ch. 6. (E-reserve)

20 - 22 Feb Expressions of Public Opinion: Democratic Values (Week 8)

- SBT, Ch. 7
- Putnam, Robert. 2000. *Bowling Alone*, Ch. 8 and 9, New York: Simon and Schuster (E-reserve)
- Brehm, John and Wendy Rahn, 1997. "Individual Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital", *AJPS* 41(3):999-1023.

27 Feb - 1 Mar Consequences of Public Opinion: Political Participation (Week 9)

- Zaller, Ch. 10
- Brady, Verba, and Schlozman, "Beyond SES," *American Political Science Review*, 1995, 89:271-294.
- E, L & T, Ch 9, "Elections as Instruments of Popular Control," pp 242-279

6 Mar Consequences of Public Opinion: Representation and Responsiveness (Week 13)

- Stimson, James, Michael MacKuen, and Robert Erikson, "Dynamic Representation," *American Political Science Review*, 1995, 543-565
- Brehm, John *The Phantom Respondents*, Ch. 1, 1993. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. (E-reserve).
- ELT, Ch. 10, 11

SHORT PAPER #2 DUE, 8 MAR