

POSC 256
SEMINAR IN PUBLIC OPINION & MASS MEDIA
Winter 2008
Tuesdays 3-6 PM

Martin Johnson
Department of Political Science
University of California, Riverside

e-mail: martin.johnson@ucr.edu
Office: Watkins Hall, Room 2222
Telephone ext. 8-4612

Hours: Wednesday, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m. and by appointment

This course explores public opinion and the mass media in the U.S. We will focus on three major areas of scholarly investigation: Individual attitudes, opinions, and preferences; aggregate or collective public will; and influences of media and other sources of information on individuals. This class also has a methodological orientation. So much of how we study public opinion research has been affected by the invention of the random sample public opinion survey during the early 20th century. We will examine survey research in depth and critically, as well as discuss alternative strategies in the study of public opinion, media effects, and political psychology generally. This course is intended to provide you with a thorough review of literature and prepare you to demonstrate this knowledge on a field examination treating mass political behavior as well as in the design of your own original research.

Required Books

- Alvarez, R. Michael, and John Brehm. 2002. *Hard Choices Easy Answers: Values, Information, and American Public Opinion*. Princeton University Press. ISBN 069109635X.
- Fowler, Floyd J. 2001. *Survey Research Methods*, 3rd edition. Sage Publications. ISBN 0761921915
- Gamson, William. 1992. *Talking Politics*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0521436796
- Herbst, Susan. 1995. *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226327434
- Hochschild, Jennifer L. 1986. *What's Fair: American Beliefs about Distributive Justice*. Harvard University Press. ISBN 0674950879.
- Iyengar, Shanto, and Donald R. Kinder. 1987. *News That Matters: Television and American opinion*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226388573
- Lee, Taeku. 2002. *Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and Racial Attitudes in the Civil Rights Era*. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226470253
- Prior, Markus. 2007. *Post-Broadcast Democracy: How Media Choice Increases Inequality in Political Involvement and Polarizes Elections*. Cambridge University Press ISBN 9780521675338.
- Zaller, John. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0521407869

In addition to these books, there will be a great deal of supplementary readings, discussed below. Most of these will be available either through J-STOR (www.jstor.org) or through other electronic resources at the library (library.ucr.edu). Note these abbreviations, many of which are likely familiar to you: APSR (*American Political Science Review*), AJPS (*American Journal of Political Science*), BJPS (*British Journal of Political Science*), JOP (*Journal of Politics*), APQ (*American Politics Quarterly*), POQ (*Public Opinion Quarterly*), PB (*Political Behavior*).

Course Assignments

Weekly Readings Notes

Each week you will read at least one book and at least one journal article. Most weeks, you will read at least one paper no one else in the class reads. Consequently, you will be responsible for conveying that reading to your colleagues. In order to help you prepare for class discussion and comprehensive exams, I would like you to write a detailed **one page** summary of each book and article you read this quarter. When you are assigned an article no one else reads, you will present the article using these notes. The memos are due each week on Monday at 4 p.m. and should be e-mailed to me (martin.johnson@ucr.edu).

Do not turn them in late. These weekly writing assignments and your class participation are worth 40 percent of your grade.

Participation in Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Colloquium. You are also responsible for participating in the Politics of Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration Colloquium, organized by Karthick Ramakrishnan and Shaun Bowler Friday, February 1. Professors and graduate students from UC-Irvine, Claremont Graduate University, USC, UCLA, and others will be presenting and discussing research, much of which will be related to public opinion and political behavior. It will be held at the Mission Inn downtown. Your attendance will contribute to your participation grade.

Survey Research Center Internship Project

Just by being in this class, you are also going to be an intern with the UCR Survey Research Center. Throughout the quarter, I will ask you to contribute to selected projects of the SRC, starting with a survey of faculty priorities for information technology at UCR, recently commissioned by the Academic Senate and campus Computing & Communications office. You will learn some practical skills in the SRC this quarter, including a walk-through of how to program a web-based survey using our computer-assisted interviewing software, Sawtooth. In addition to these occasional papers, I would like you to develop a short writing assignment on a topic of your choosing related to research methods in the study of public opinion. This will be short: 5 pages or so, and can take the form of a targeted literature review, methodological critique, applied research design idea, a proposed question wording experiment, almost anything you would like it to be. I want you to develop the idea, but get my approval on it and let's plan to discuss it throughout the quarter.

Final Exam

In addition to these writing assignments, you will have a final exam. This final will roughly mirror a portion of a field examination in mass political behavior, with questions focused on public opinion, representation, political psychology, and media effects. The exam will be self-scheduled during exam week (March 17-22). You will pick up the exam from me and have 48 hours to complete it. The deadline for completing this exam and turning it in to me is 5 p.m. Saturday, March 22. You will need to pick-up and begin the exam by the close of business Thursday afternoon (3/20, 5 p.m.) in order to take full advantage of the 48 hours you have at your disposal prior to the close of business Saturday afternoon (5 p.m.). This will be a take-home open-book examination, worth 40 percent of your grade.

Reading notes & class participation	40%
SRC internship or methods project	20%
Final exam	40%

Course Schedule

1. January 15: Thinking about public opinion and public opinion research

Blumer, Herbert. 1948. "Public Opinion and Public Opinion Polling." *American Sociological Review* 13: 542-54.

Converse, Philip. 1987. "Changing Conceptions of Public Opinion in the Political Process." *POQ* 51 S: 12-24.

Herbst, Susan. 1995. *Numbered Voices: How Opinion Polling Has Shaped American Politics*. University of Chicago Press.

Price, Vincent. 1992. *Public Opinion*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. Chapter 3. Conceptualizing the Public. pp. 22-44.

2. January 22: Individual opinion – The psychology of attitudes

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

Price, Vincent. 1992. *Public Opinion*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. Chapter 3. Conceptualizing Opinions. pp. 45-70.

___ Alford, John R., Carolyn L. Funk, and John R. Hibbing. 2005. "Are Political Orientations Genetically Transmitted?" *APSR* 99:153-167.

___ Cacioppo, John T., Wendi L. Gardner, and Gary G. Berntson. 1997. "Beyond Bipolar Conceptualizations and Measures: The Case of Attitudes and Evaluative Space." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 1:3-25.

___ Fazio, Russell H. 1995. "Attitudes as Object-Evaluation Associations" In Richard Petty and Jon Krosnick, eds. *Attitude Strength: Antecedents and Consequences*. Erlbaum. BF327 .A87 1995.

___ Lavine, Howard. 2002. "On-line Versus Memory-Based Process Models of Political Evaluation." In Kristen Renwick Monroe, ed. *Political Psychology*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

___ Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. "The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation." *APSR* 89:309-326.

___ Miller, Joanne, and David A.M. Peterson. 2004. "Theoretical and Empirical Implications of Attitude Strength." *JOP* 66:847-867.

___ Petty, Richard E., and Duane T. Wegener. 1998. "Attitude Change: Multiple Roles for Persuasion Variables." In Daniel T. Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske, and Gardner Lindzey, eds. *Handbook of Social Psychology*. 4th edition. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Recommended

LaPiere, Richard T. 1934. "Attitudes vs. Actions." *Social Forces* 13(2):230-237.

3. January 29: Attitude organization

Alvarez, R. Michael, and John Brehm. 2002. *Hard Choices Easy Answers: Values, Information, and American Public Opinion*. Princeton University Press. ISBN 069109635X.

Converse, Phillip. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In David Apter, ed. *Ideology and Discontent*. Free Press.

___ Achen, Christopher H. 1975. "Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response." *APSR* 69(4):1218-31.

___ Huckfeldt, Robert, Jeffrey Levine, William Morgan, and John Sprague. 1999. "Accessibility and the Political Utility of Partisan and Ideological Orientations." *AJPS* 43(3):888-911.

___ Conover, Pamela and Stanley Feldman. 1984. "How People Organize the Political World: A Schematic Model." *AJPS* 28:95-126.

___ Lodge, Milton, and Ruth Hamill. 1986. "A Partisan Schema for Political Information Processing" *APSR* 80(2):505-20

___ Kuklinski, James H., Robert C. Luskin, and John Bolland. 1991. "Where is the Schema? Going Beyond the 'S' Word in Political Psychology." *APSR* 85(4): 1341-56.

___ McGraw, Kathleen M., Neil Pinney, and David Neumann. 1991. "Memory for Political Actors: Contrasting the Use of Semantic and Evaluative Organizational Strategies." *PB* 13:165-189.

___ Peffley, Mark A., and Jon Hurwitz. 1985. "A Hierarchical Model of Attitude Constraint." *AJPS* 29:871-90.

Recommended

Eagly, Alice H., and Shelley Chaiken 1998. "Attitude structure and function." In Daniel T. Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske, and Gardner Lindzey, eds. *Handbook of Social Psychology*. 4th edition. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Note Feb. 1: Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Colloquium, Mission Inn, Riverside, CA

4. February 5: Survey research methods and critiques

Brady, Henry. 2000. "Contributions of Survey Research to Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 33(1): 47-57.

Fowler, Floyd J. 2001. *Survey Research Methods*, 3rd edition. Sage Publications. ISBN 0761921915

___ Belli, Robert F., Michael W. Traugott, Margaret Young, and Katherine A. McGonagle. 1990.

"Reducing Vote Overreporting in Surveys: Social Desirability, Memory Failure, and Source Monitoring." *POQ* 63: 90-108

___ Bishop, George F., Robert W. Oldendick, and Alfred J. Tuchfarber. 1982. "Political Information Processing: Question Order and Context Effects." *PB* 4(2):177-200.

___ Curtin, R., Presser, S., & Singer, E. (2005). Changes in telephone survey nonresponse over the past quarter century. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69 (1), 87-98.

___ Davis, Darren. 1997. "The Direction of Race of Interviewer Effects among African-Americans: Donning the Black Mask." *AJPS* 41:309-322

___ Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Edward H. Kaplan. 2004. The Illusion of Learning from Observational Research. In Ian Shapiro, Rogers Smith, and Tarek Massoud, eds., *Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics*. New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, pp. 251-73. JA86 .P66 2004

___ Holbrook, Allyson L., Melanie Green, and Jon A. Krosnick. 1998. "Telephone versus Face-to-Face Interviewing of National Probability Samples with Long Questionnaires>" ANES Technical Report Series No. NES003217. www.electionstudies.org/resources/papers/technical_reports.htm

___ Keeter, Scott, Courtney Kennedy, April Clark, Trevor Tompson, Mike Mokrzycki. 2007. "What's Missing from National RDD Surveys? The Impact of the Growing Cell-Only Population." Presented at the 2007 annual conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Anaheim, CA, May 17-20. <http://pewresearch.org/assets/pdf/514.pdf>

Recommended

Bishop, George. 2005. *The Illusion of Public Opinion: Fact and Artifact in American Public Opinion Polls*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. ISBN 0742516458.

Krosnick, Jon. 1999. "Survey methodology" *Annual Review of Psychology* 50:537-67.

5. February 12: Information environment – social and experiential

Books, John W., and Charles L. Prysby. 1988. "Studying Contextual Effects on Political Behavior: A Research Inventory and Agenda." *American Politics Quarterly* 17: 211-238.

Gamson, William. 1992. *Talking Politics*. Cambridge University Press.

___ Asch, S.E. 1958. "Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments." In E.E. Macoby et al., eds. *Readings in Social Psychology*, 3rd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

___ Baybeck, B. and S.D. McClurg. 2005. "What Do They Know and How Do They Know It? An Examination of Citizen Awareness of Context." *APR*. 33(4):492-520.

___ Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1987. "Networks in Context: The Social Flow of Political Information." *APSR* 81: 1197-1216.

___ King, Gary. 1996. "Why Context Should Not Count." *Political Geography* 15:159-164.

___ MacKuen, Michael, and Courtney Brown. 1986. "Political Context and Attitude Change" *APSR* 81:471-90.

___ Oliver, Eric, and Tali Mendelberg. 2000. "Reconsidering the Environmental Determinants of Racial Attitudes." *AJPS* 44: 574-589.

___ Stein, Robert M., Stephanie Shirley Post, and Allison Rinden. 2000. "Reconciling Context and Contact Effects on Racial Attitudes," *PRQ* 53:285-303.

6. February 19: Information environment – media and government

- Iyengar, Shanto, and Adam F. Simon. 2000. "New Perspectives and Evidence on Political Communication and Campaign Effects." *Annual Review of Psychology* 51:149-169.
- Prior, Markus. 2007. *Post-Broadcast Democracy: How Media Choice Increases Inequality in Political Involvement and Polarizes Elections*. Cambridge University Press ISBN 9780521675338.
- ___ Bartels, Larry. 1993. "Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure." *APSR* 87:267-85.
- ___ Druckman, James N. 2004. "Political Preference Formation: Competition, Deliberation, and the (Ir)relevance of Framing Effects." *APSR* 98 (4): 671-81.
- ___ Gilliam, Franklin D., Jr., Nicholas A. Valentino, and Matthew N. Beckmann. 2002. "Where You Live and What You Watch: The Impact of Racial Proximity and Local Television News on Attitudes about Race and Crime." *PRQ* 55(4):755-780.
- ___ Miller, Joanne M., and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable Citizens Are Guided by a Trusted Source." *AJPS* 44(2):301-315.
- ___ Mutz, Diana C., and Byron Reeves. 2005. "The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust." *American Political Science Review* 99(1):1-16.
- ___ Vallone, R. P., Ross, L., & Lepper, M. R. 1985. "The Hostile Media Phenomenon: Biased Perception and Perceptions of Media Bias in Coverage of the 'Beirut Massacre.'" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 49:577-585.
- ___ Wlezien, Christopher B. 1995. "The Public as Thermostat: Dynamics of Preferences for Spending." *AJPS* 39:981-1000.

Recommended

- Kinder, Donald R. 1998. "Communication and Opinion." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1: 167-197.

7. February 26: Experimental research on public opinion and media effects

- Iyengar, Shanto, and Donald R. Kinder. 1987. *News That Matters: Television and American opinion*. University of Chicago Press.
- Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2002. Reclaiming the Experimental Tradition in Political Science. In Helen V. Milner and Ira Katznelson, eds., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, 3rd ed.. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., pp. 805-32.
- ___ Arceneaux, Kevin, and Martin Johnson, "Channel Surfing: Does Choice Reduce Videomalaise?" Typescript. Temple University and University of California, Riverside.
- ___ Esterling, Kevin. TBA
- ___ Lau, Richard R., Lee Sigelman, Caroline Heldman, and Paul Babbitt. 1999. "The Effects of Negative Political Advertisements: A Meta-Analytic Assessment." *APSR* 93(4):851-75.
- ___ Mutz, Diana C., and Byron Reeves. 2005. "The New Videomalaise: Effects of Televised Incivility on Political Trust." *American Political Science Review* 99(1): 1-15.
- ___ Nelson, Thomas E., Rosalee A. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance" *APSR* 91(3): 567-583
- ___ Sears, David. 1986. "College sophomores in the laboratory: Influences of a narrow data base on psychology's view of human nature." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 51: 513-30
- ___ Sniderman, Paul M. and Douglas B. Grob. 1996. "Innovations in Experimental Design in Attitude Surveys." *Annual Review of Sociology* 22:377-99.

8. March 4: Qualitative approaches to the study of public opinion and media effects

Hochschild, Jennifer L. 1986. *What's Fair: American Beliefs about Distributive Justice*. Harvard University Press.

9. March 11: Textual data and public opinion

Hart, Roderick. *Campaign Talk*. Excerpt.

Lakoff, George. *Moral Politics*. Excerpt

Lee, Taeku. 2002. *Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and Racial Attitudes in the Civil Rights Era*. University of Chicago Press.

MARCH 14 SURVEY RESEARCH PROJECT DUE

MARCH 21 FINAL EXAM DEADLINE