**Lecture Notes for Exam 3**

**Vote Choice:**

* Vote choice (how do we decide which candidate to vote for); turnout (do we show up or not); and electoral participation more broadly (what type of people are voting)
  + A lot of the same explanations for not showing up to vote and not working for a campaign are also reflected in the general electoral participation

**Gosnell’s “non-voting: Causes and Methods of Control”:**

* Gosnell's "non-Voting: Causes and Methods of Control" (around 1920s-30s) very focused on turnout
  + Physical Difficulties (Illness, absence, detained by helpless members of family)
  + Legal and Administrative obstacles (insufficient legal residence, fear of loss of business or wages, congestion at the polls, poor location of polling booth, fear of disclosure of age)
    1. Get registered, know where an how to vote
  + Disbelief in Voting (disbelief in women voting, objections of husband, disgust with politics, belief that votes count for nothing, belief that ballot box is corrupted, disbelief in all political action)
  + Inertia (general indifference, indifference to particular election, intended to vote but forgot, ignorance or timidity regarding elections, failure of party worker- no one reminded me)

**Verba Scholzman:**

* Verba Scholzman and Brady (1990s)- focus on electoral participation & find relatively same things
  + They can't (lacking resources- time and money, not effective at using resources)
  + they don't want to (little interest in politics-overall or now-, it won't make a difference-efficacy, Little/no knowledge about the process)
  + nobody asked (Isolated from networks of recruitment- do you have friends interested in campaigns?, people around them aren't political)
  + People do get involved when:
    1. Material Benefits: they want to solve personal problems
    2. Social gratification: exciting, enjoyment
    3. Civic gratification: sense of duty, doing one's share
    4. Collective outcomes: want to influence policy for all of society more broadly

**Defining Mobilization:**

* Defining Mobilization: process by which candidates/parties/activists/groups convince others to participate
  + Two types:
    1. Direct- personal contact from campaign through door-to-door/mail/speeches
    2. Indirect- contact through surrogates (like media, supporters, & endorsers)
  + Strategies for political mobilization
    1. Don't mobilize everyone, don't mobilize all the time
    2. Get the most effective # of people with least amount of effort
       - Go after existing networks

**Voting: Socialization**

**Mobilizing to do what?**

* Persuade others to vote
* Actively work for party or candidate
* Attend political meeting or rally
* Contribute money to party or candidate
* Become a member
* Vote

**What shapes vote choice?**

* Party identification
* Social identities (groups)
* Incumbent/candidate performance
* Policy issues
* Candidate traits

**Policy Issues**

* Ideally: voters would engage in “proximity voting”
  + Proximity voting is the evaluation of candidate ideology/positions, and choosing who is closest to their own beliefs
* Reality: many do not engage in this
* Why? Takes more time and effort than other shortcuts

**Pessimists on issue voting**

* It’s rare because of 3 conditional thresholds
  + 1. Have to be aware of an issue and have an opinion
  + 2. Have to feel intensely about an issue
  + 3. Have to know where candidates are, that one is better for you than the other

**Optimists on issue voting**

* Some issues are easier than others to understand
* Even “imperfect information” is something

**Candidates: Helpful or Hurtful?**

* Candidates: not always helpful with information (clearer on some issues for specific reasons)
* Candidates: fluid depending on time during campaign (primary v. general)

**Candidate Traits**

* A simpler strategy? Requires less time/effort
* Links between positive assessments on personality and likelihood of voting for someone
* Might matter more when there’s less information to draw on
* Examples: caring/compassionate, understanding of people like me, experienced, qualified, trustworthy, leadership, intelligent, honest

**Who has which traits?**

* Which candidate is most caring? Least caring?
  + Least: most likely would be Donald Trump due to his “wrecking ball” approach to politics. He is “tough” and not soft/too caring
  + Most: maybe Bernie sanders. He seems to want to make a majority happy
* Which candidate is most experienced? Least experienced?
  + Most: probably Hilary Clinton due to her large amount of time serving in political office, her time as first lady, as secretary of state, etc.
  + Least:
* Which candidate is most trustworthy and honest? Least trustworthy and honest?
  + Most:
  + Least: some would argue that the Clinton emails might make her seem less trustworthy
* Which candidate would be the best leader? Worst Leader?

**Who/What shapes Political Development?**

* Family
* Peers/Friends
* Schools
* History/Events
* Genetics
* Media

**Why do parents succeed?**

* Time spent together equals opportunities
* Frequent political discussions = 20 percent more likely to vote and continue voting
* Strong directional bonds between family and children translate to politics
  + i.e. : “Here’s what to do, here’s what not to do”
  + can be applied to voting
* Still as successful?
  + Children more rebellious?
  + Change in family structure?

**Pees: A secondary influence**

* Substantial time spent with friends
* Can reinforce, undermine lessons (or maybe be completely apolitical)

**Socialization: The Survey Process**

**Schools: Modern Classroom Roles**

* Teach political knowledge
* Teach political participation skills
* Teach tolerance
* Teach acceptance of/support for democratic values
* College?
  + More people are going to college than ever
  + More attending equals more education
  + More education means greater tolerance, support for democratic values
  + Increasing critical thinking as well

**History and Events**

* Generation effects (time you come of age affects opinions)
* Life cycle effects (aging affects opinions)
* Specific effects (events affect opinions)

**Genetic evidence?**

* Minnesota Center for Twin and Family Research: examines 1400 sets of twins
* Identical twins: more likely to be ideologically similar than fraternal twins
* John Alford: gets 9000 twins to react to 28 political words (e.g. segregation, immigration, capitalism)
  + Identical twins: reactions correlated more highly for all 28 words
* University College: scientists predict individual liberal-conservative ideology via MRI
  + More conservative students: larger right amygdala
  + More liberal students: larger anterior cingulate

**Opinion Stability**

* By mid-20’s: partisanship, ideology start to stick, persist
* Opinions on specific issues: a little more fluid

**What could cause opinion change?**

* New job?
* New community?
* New circle of friends?
* Marriage?

**Marriage Effects**

* Huber and Malhotra: many take place in “assertive mating” (choosing someone with similar beliefs)
* Most married couples: political beliefs grow even more similar over time

**Literary Digest and 1936**

* Literary Digest: correctly predicts the presidential election winner from 1920-1932
* 1936: predicts Alf Landon (Republican) will defeat Franklin Roosevelt (Democrat) 57-43
* How they drew this conclusion: sent 10 million postcards to Americans
* Addresses: from phone books, club and association rosters, city directories, lists of car owners
* 2.2 million postcards back
* They were wrong because their samples were skewed towards wealthy people, who are usually Republican

**The Broken Branch**

**4 Flaws in Literary Digest’s Method**

* 1. The sample was biased toward the wealthy (and during the Depression)
* 2. The postcards were sent out too early (couldn’t capture late movement)
* 3. The “New Deal Coalition” had solidified (and were behind Roosevelt yet not sampled)
* 4. The survey relied on self-selection (who sends back postcards? Educated, wealthy, strong opinions?)

**Considerations with Survey Questions and Answers**

* “Have you taken a vacation in the last few years?”
  + Question wording needs to be clear
* Recognize words/phrases have power
* Example: Americans 31 percent less likely to cut “aid to the needy” than “public welfare programs”
* Think about the possible responses respondents can give as well
* Think about opt-outs like “don’t know” or middle categories (e.g. “neither approve nor disapprove”)
* Question ordering could affect outcomes as well

**Modern Survey Challenges**

* Response rates declining
* Shift to robotic polls turns people off
* Rise of cell phones (no autodialing, area code matching issues)
* Internet as solution?

**The Slippery Slope: when polls have other motivations**

* Begging polls
* Pseudo polls
* Push polls

**The South Carolina 2000 Example**

* “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?”
  + Stir up questions of race in key Southern primary
  + Play on questions about McCain family adoption

**The Broken Branch and Congressional Styles**

**Common Complaints**

* Unable to represent diverse interests
* Unable to solve major problems
* Inefficient
* Too removed from ordinary people
* Too heavily influenced by interest groups
* Too focused on Washington

**The Roots of the Broken Branch Idea**

* Congress appears broken (Mann and Ornstein)
* Many problems: partisanship-centered
* Hurts the ability to get along in general
* Hurts the ability to formally work together
* Hurts the speed and reception of outcomes

**What can be done?**

* Can change come from inside (i.e. new rules)? Or must it be forced from outside (new elected officials)?
* Suggestion one: new schedule
* Suggestion two: time to deliberate
  + A lot of legislation that is rushed because of deadlines is a big problem now. Suggestion is to create a “cool-off” period for legislatures to think
* Suggestion three: independent office to deal with outside influences

**An institution without a Spokesman**

* Congress: 538 individuals who represent districts, not institutions
* No reward for standing up for Congress
* Members relish running against Congress

**Fenno’s Paradox**

* Surveys show: we hate congress
* Despite that: 90+ percent of members get re-elected
* Answer: members looking out for themselves
* Why? They focus on building “Home Style” and “Hill Style”
  + Homestyle – relationship that member of congress build with their district
  + Hill style – when in Washington, what do congressmen want their image to be

**What is Home Style?**

* Term originated by Richard Fenno
* Unique relationship Members build with constituents
* All constituencies are different
* Home style is about actual interactions with constituents and groups
* Home Style is about decisions of allocation (time, resources, residence)

**What to Convey When Home?**

* Qualifications (I can handle this job)
* Identification (I am one of you)
* Empathy (I understand your problems)
* Explaining Washington when home:
  + Description (what’s happening)
  + Interpretation (why it’s happening)
  + Justification (why I’m doing what I’m doing)

**Setting Priorities in DC**

* Members have too much to do
* Result: picking and choosing what gets on the schedule
* Two ways of participating (formal and informal)
* Formal:
  + Actions like voting on bills, attending hearings, participating in debate
* Informal:
  + Working behind the scenes (studying legislation, coalition building, negotiating, meeting with public and groups)

**Congressional Horse Racing**

* Show-horses versus workhorses
* Workhorses are the behind-the-scenes workers
* Show-horses are the media seekers

**Many Issues or Few Issues?**

* Specialists versus generalists

**What Shapes Participation and Decision-Making?**

* Personal interests
* Constituency interests
* Presidential interests
* Party interests
* Group interests

**Kingdon’s “Field of Forces”**

* Often times, interests push in similar direction
* When they conflict, tough decisions must be made
* Kingdon offers important questions that shape tough decisions:
  + Is the bill controversial?
  + Is there conflict amongst cue givers (and what does that conflict look like)?
  + Are my goals related to this legislation?

**Persuasion**

* Neustadt: presidential power is the power to persuade
* Going public: use public as a weapon
* Public can be leverage
* The “How” of going public
  + More and more addresses/speeches (ex. Hoover 5, GWB 170)
  + More appearing in public (ex. Hoover 15, GWB 230)
  + More travel (ex: Hoover 8 days, GWB 115)
  + More local press
  + More one-on-one interviews

**Presidential News Management Strategies**

* Winning favor (with journalists, public)
* Shaping news flow (feeding the media vs. “take out the trash day”)
* Orchestrating coverage (what will get attention and what won’t?)
* Getting around the filters (direct messaging, technology)

**Explaining Going Public**

* Technology: transportation, radio/television/satellites
* Politics: electing outsiders, era of bargaining and divided government

**Getting through?**

* Presidents losing audiences?
* More options = less attention?
* Big “going public” moments: often fall on deaf ears