

2016-10-14

## Linkage Institutions

### Big Ideas

- Media and its influence on politics
- Media role in public discourse and how it changes
- Media's role in changing majority opinion

### What is a “Linkage Institution”?

- **Linkage Institution** = some organized body that connects subjects of the government with the government itself
  - Examples
    - Mass media
      - \* Television
      - \* Radio
        - Who the f&%# listens to *radio*?
      - \* Newspapers
        - *Wat.*
      - \* Internet publications
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### The Development of Media

- Herbert Hoover(1929-1933)
  - Little to no media involvement in politics
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt(1933-1945)
  - Modern media becomes intertwined with politics
  - “Fireside chats”
    - \* Press conferences twice per week
    - \* Based on radio
    - \* Press thought highly of FDR
  - Personality is FDR's greatest asset

- Uses media to help mental health of nation
    - \* Morale booster
    - \* Sympathizes with issues Americans face
  - 1960's see beginning of scornful media
    - Watergate scandal lampoons Nixon
    - Vietnam war creates sense of disillusionment with government
    - **Investigative journalism** = The use of in-depth study of a case to reveal the details of a particular subject
      - \* Helps to reinforce negative view of government
      - \* Media is seen as limiting force on government
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### Media Coverage

- Media holds a lot of leverage in what gets airtime
- ↑Coverage = ↑Public engagement
- Can also affect tone
- **Policy Agenda** = the collection of issues the media brings into focus that the government can address
  - “spin” = a unique framing of a problem that leads people towards a certain view
  - **Political Capital** = reputation among other politicians and the public that can be expended for policy
    - \* Almost like a currency

### Practice FRQ

One of the most important ways the news media influence politics is through agenda setting. - a. Define policy agenda - b. Explain how the national news media engage in agenda setting - c. Explain the primary reason the president tends to have an advantage over Congress in gaining media attention

### Answer

- a. **Policy agenda** is the collection of issues the media chooses to focus on through selective airing and tone.

- b. Media sources only have a limited amount of time they can expect their audience to consume their media. Through selectively choosing to give airtime to certain issues and putting a “spin” on their presentation, they can develop the issues that are prevalent in the common consciousness.
- c. Electoral elections get much higher voter turnout than do congressional elections; more people pay attention to the president. Additionally, the president is easier to tie into a narrative; individual intentions become clearer when they are directed by a single person as opposed to a body of elected officials.

### Bias in the Media

- Two types of bias
    - **Ideological bias** = some media outlets exhibit a right-left lean
      - \* CNN(Clinton News Network)
      - \* Fox News
    - **Structural bias** = stories are chosen and presented in order to get good ratings—not necessarily to present the truth
      - \* “If it bleeds, it leads.”
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### Political Parties as Linkage Institutions

- **Political Party** = an organization that strives for maintaining political office
- Can be thought of as three parts
  - The electorate
  - The organization
  - Elected officials
- Actions
  - Nominate political candidates
  - Run and administer campaigns
  - Coordinate policy-making
- **Incumbent** = an official seeking re-election
- **Grassroots Mobilization** = a political movement organized with a bottom-up approach

- For example, an Anarchist revolution :D
  - **Ticket-Splitting** = in an election where multiple ballots are cast for different positions, the voter votes for different parties for each position
    - causes **divided government**
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### **Divided Government**

- Caused by a number of factors
  - Development of social issues over last 4 decades
    - \* Gay marriage
    - \* Abortion
    - \* Women's rights
    - \* Civil rights

### **Emergence of Political Parties**

- Political machines emerged in the early 1800's
  - Exchanged favors for votes
    - \* Especially immigrants
- **Patronage** = elected officials giving benefits to loyal party supporters
  - Giving jobs to campaigners
- **Pendleton Civil Service Act** = an attempt to make civil service meritocratic
  - Hurt power of political machines
- Local parties have better organization than national parties
- **Primary**
  - An election orchestrated by a political party that selects a candidate
  - **Closed Primary** = only voters registered as that party can vote
  - **Open Primary** = independents and those registered as that party can vote
  - Inhibits parties from *choosing* the candidate they want
    - \* Unless you're the DNC; in which case, *screw that lol*
- **Coalition** = a group of voters that share a common interest
  - Typically support one party over a period of time
  - Voting in blocks makes endorsements important for candidates

## Party Eras

- **Party Era** = a period of time when one political party is dominant
  - Caused by coalitions growing and shrinking in size
- **Critical Election** = an election that serves as boundaries between party eras
  - e.g. FDR in 1932
- **Party Realignment** = new issue redraws coalition bounds, changing the political parties in the process