

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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