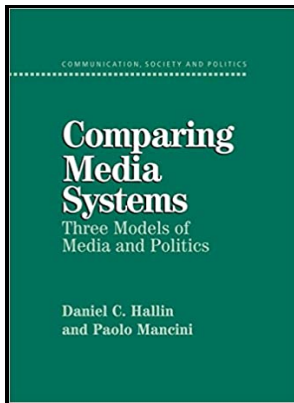# Comparing media systems - three models of media and politics

Cambridge University Press - Comparing media systems : three models of media and politics / Daniel C. Hallin, Paolo Mancini

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Mass media -- Political aspectsComparing media systems - three models of media and politics

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Comparing media systems : three models of media and politics / Daniel C. Hallin, Paolo Mancini

Our purpose here is to develop a framework for comparing media systems and a set of hypotheses about how they are linked structurally and historically to the development of the political system, but we do not claim to have tested those hypotheses here, in part because of severe limitations of data underscored in the following text. We will in fact introduce three media system models. The second reason comparison is important in social investigation is that it allows us in many cases to test hypotheses about the interrelationships among social phenomena.

Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics

This has become the standard methodology in much of the social sciences, particularly among those interested in analyzing social phenomena at the system level, where variation will often not exist in a single-country study. But this would involve other literatures and require very different sets of concepts and we will not try to take it on here. We attempt to identify the major variations that have developed in Western democracies in the structure and political role of the news media, and to explore some ideas about how to account for these variations and think about their consequences for democratic politics.

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In the United States, for example, media coverage of politicians has become increasingly negative over the past few decades. To see the social systems in their true relationship to the press, one has to look at certain basic beliefs and assumptions which the society holds: the nature of man, the nature of society and the state, the relation of man to the state, and the nature of knowledge and truth. There are three models of media, liberal, polarized pluralist or mediterranean, and democratic corporatist or central european.

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Indeed, it is virtually universal across Western democracies.

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We will argue later in this chapter that ethnocentrism has been intensified in the field of communication by the strongly normative character of much theory.

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Our own study is primarily exploratory in character, using comparative analysis to serve the first cluster of purposes previously outlined, for conceptual clarification and theory development, much more than for the second, for hypothesis testing and causal inference. If comparison can sensitize us to variation, it can also sensitize us to similarity, and that too can force us to think more clearly about how we might explain media systems.

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Mediterranean or polarized model; 6. North Atlantic or liberal model; Part III.

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