

Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy
PLSC 486B
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Office Hours:

Wednesday, 3-5; Friday, 10:30-11:30; and by appointment

This seminar will focus on the sources of public opinion about American foreign policy. We will read both classic and contemporary works on the determinants of public opinion, and apply it to broad questions about isolationism, war, trade, military spending, and relations with major American allies and rivals. The goals of the course include familiarizing students with the data and methods used to study public opinion about American foreign policy as well as with the specific topics we will cover.

Course Materials

We will read all or most of three books during the semester. Two are available for purchase in the campus bookstore:

Berinsky, Adam J. 2009. *In Time of War: Understanding American Public Opinion from World War II to Iraq*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

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

The third book is available online with some difficulty, but is out of print. I will post it on Blackboard in its entirety.

Stouffer, Samuel A. 1955 [1992]. *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties*. New York: Transaction Publishers.

In addition to these books, we will read many articles and book excerpts. These materials are available either through the Blackboard page for the class or the JSTOR database, as noted on the syllabus. **Please remember that you will need to log in to the library in order to use the links to the J-STOR database.**

Assignments and Grading

Attendance and Participation. Because this class is a seminar, we will spend nearly all our time discussing the class material. There will be no lectures. Your participation is essential to the success of the class. Completing the assigned reading is vital, but you also need to be prepared to discuss the day's topic, including the material presented in class. The quality of your participation in class discussion will count for 30 percent of your semester grade. The class meets only once each week, so we have relatively few sessions. For this reason, attendance is especially important. If you miss more than one class for any reason, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter grade for each additional session you do not attend.

Quizzes. In many class meetings, I will give brief quizzes. The dates for these quizzes will not be announced in advance. Most will consist of multiple choice questions designed to test your basic knowledge of the assigned reading. A few will require you to write down and justify a testable hypothesis about the topic for that week. No make-up quizzes will be offered if you are absent from class when one of these quizzes takes place, but I will drop the lowest grade you receive on them. Overall, the quizzes will account for 30 percent of your final grade.

Papers. Each student will write 2 papers during the semester. Each paper should be roughly 3-8 pages long, though the precise length is far less important than the quality of the writing and argumentation. The paper should make an argument about the likely causes of individual attitudes on one of the contemporary and historical foreign policy issues given in the syllabus beginning on March 23rd. The paper may apply the general arguments about the sources of public opinion that we will read during the first half of the class to the assigned topic, or propose a new argument. It should conclude by proposing a hypothesis that could test its argument. For instance, if you argue that age or life experience shapes attitudes on a particular issue, you might hypothesize that young people will answer a particular question differently than older people do. **Your hypothesis does not have to be correct, just plausible and logically connected to your argument. Sometimes we learn a lot more by being wrong in an interesting way than we learn by being right!** I will ask each student to briefly summarize his or her paper during our seminar meeting. I will search for polling data that will permit us to test it during class.

Most topics will be assigned at random once the final enrollment for the class is set. However, each student may pick two favorite weeks, and I will try to assign a topic from at least one of those weeks. **If you would like to designate favorite weeks, please do so by Friday, February 5th.** Each paper will be due by noon on the Monday before the class meeting where we will discuss the topic. (For instance, students assigned one of the topics listed for March 23rd should submit their paper to me by noon on Monday, March 21st.) Each paper will constitute 20 percent of your final grade, for a total of 40 percent.

Plagiarism. Originality is extremely important in all writing assignments. Make sure you indicate all excerpts that are quoted or closely paraphrased from another work. The works you use in preparing your papers should be properly cited. Any citation system you like is acceptable, provided that you use it consistently. If you are unsure about your citation practices, please consult me. Submitting as your own the work of another author is plagiarism, and is completely unacceptable. Anyone submitting plagiarized work will receive an "F" in the course and will face further disciplinary action from the University.

Tentative Schedule

The dates and reading assignments may change during the semester. The readings are listed in the order I suggest you read them, which is usually chronological.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
January 27	Introduction
February 3	Isolationism and the Origins of Concern about the Public and Foreign Policy Kennan, George F. 1951 [1985]. <i>American Diplomacy</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 55-103. (Blackboard) Lippmann, Walter. 1955. <i>Essays in the Public Philosophy</i> . New York: Little,

- Brown, and Company. 1-27. (Blackboard)
- Klingberg, Frank. 1952. "The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy." *World Politics* 4(2): 239-73. (JSTOR)
- Brewer, Paul R., and Marco R. Steenbergen. 2002. "All against All: How Beliefs about Human Nature Shape Foreign Policy Opinions." *Political Psychology* 23(1): 39-58. (JSTOR)

February 10 Theories of Opinion Formation I: Pessimistic Views

- Almond, Gabriel A. 1950. *The American People and Foreign Policy*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company. 1-135. (Blackboard)
- Converse, Philip. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In David Apter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent*. New York: Free Press. 507-30. Reprinted in *Critical Review*, 18 (2006): 1-74. (Blackboard)

February 17 Theories of Opinion Formation II: Optimistic Views

- Holsti, Ole R., 1992. "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus." *International Studies Quarterly* 36(4): 439-66. (JSTOR)
- Popkin, Samuel. 1994. *The Reasoning Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1-21. (Blackboard)
- Page, Benjamin I., and Robert Shapiro. 1988. "Foreign Policy and the Rational Public." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32(2): 211-247. (JSTOR)
- Kuklinski, James H., and Paul J. Quirk. 2000. "Reconsidering the Rational Public: Cognition, Heuristics, and Mass Opinion," in Arthur Lupia and Matthew McCubbins, eds., *Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice, and the Bounds of Rationality*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 153-82. (Blackboard)

February 24 Theories of Opinion Formation III: An Influential Synthesis

- Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-3, 6, 7 (pp. 118-32), 12. (Blackboard)

March 2 Public Opinion and War I: Casualties and the Iraq War

- Mueller, John. 1971. "Trends in Popular Support for the Wars in Korea and Vietnam." *American Political Science Review* 65(2): 358-75. (JSTOR)
- Christopher Gelpi, Peter D. Feaver, and Jason Riefler. 2005. "Success Matters: Casualty Sensitivity and the War in Iraq." *International Security* 30(3): 7-46. (JSTOR)
- Mueller, John. 2005. "The Iraq Syndrome." *Foreign Affairs* 84(6): 44-54. (JSTOR)
- Gelpi, Christopher. 2007. "Misdiagnosis [with Reply]." *Foreign Affairs* 85(1): 139-44. (JSTOR)
- Jacobson, Gary. 2010. "Perception, Memory, and Partisan Polarization on the Iraq War." *Political Science Quarterly* 125: 1-26. (JSTOR)

March 9 Public Opinion and War II: Elite Opinion and Group Affiliation

- Berinsky, Adam J. 2009. *In Time of War: Understanding American Public Opinion from World War II to Iraq*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Bookstore)

March 16 **No Class Meeting (International Studies Association annual meeting)**

March 23 **Smaller Military Interventions**

Burk, James. 1999. "Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia: Assessing the Casualties Hypothesis." *Political Science Quarterly* 114 (1): 53-78. (JSTOR)

Jentleson, Bruce. 1992. "The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force." *International Studies Quarterly* 36 (1): 49-74. (JSTOR)

Zaller, John. 1994. "Strategic Politicians, Public Opinion, and the Gulf Crisis." In *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*. W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz, eds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

Intervention in Lebanon, 1982-4

Invasion of Grenada, October 1983

Intervention in Somalia, December 1992-March 1994

Proposed Intervention in Syria, March 2011-present

March 30 **No Class Meeting (Spring Break)**

April 6 **Enemy Images and Rivalry**

Jervis, Robert. 1976. *Perception and Misperception in World Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 58-113. (Blackboard)

Boulding, Kenneth E. 1959. "National Images and International Systems." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3(2): 120-131. (JSTOR)

Nincic, Miroslav. 1988. "The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Politics of Opposites." *World Politics* 40(4): 452-75. (JSTOR)

Herrmann, Richard K., James F. Voss, Tonya Y. E. Schooler, and Joseph Ciarrochi. 1997. "Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata." *International Studies Quarterly* 41(3): 403-33. (JSTOR)

Liberman, Peter. 2006. "An Eye for an Eye: Public Support for War against Evildoers." *International Organization* 60(3): 687-722. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

The Beginning of the Cold War, 1945-50

Détente and its collapse, 1970-80

The End of the Cold War, 1986-91

Contemporary Attitudes toward China

Contemporary Attitudes toward Iran

April 13 **Terrorism and Threat Perception**

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav. 2005. "Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies." *American Journal of Political*

Science 49 (3): 593-608. (JSTOR)

Rousseau, David L., and Rocio Garcia-Retamero. 2007. "Identity, Power, and Threat Perception: A Cross-National Experimental Study." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(5): 744-771. (JSTOR)

Merolla, Jennifer L., and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2009. "Terrorist Threat, Leadership, and Vote Choice: Evidence from Three Experiments." *Political Behavior* 31(4): 575-600. (JSTOR)

Hetherington, Marc, and Elizabeth Suhay. 2011. "Authoritarianism, Threat, and Americans' Support for the War on Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 55(3): 546-60. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

The Soviet threat in the 1950s

Fears of terrorism in the 1970s and 1980s

Fears of terrorism after 9/11

April 20

Civil Liberties in Wartime

Stouffer, Samuel A. 1955 [1992]. *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties*. New York: Transaction Publishers. (Blackboard.)

Davis, Darren, and Brian D. Silver. 2004. "Civil liberties vs. security: Public opinion in the context of the terrorist attacks on America." *American Journal of Political Science* 48(1): 28-46. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

Domestic Communism in the 1950s

The Vietnam-era Antiwar movement

Civil liberties after 9/11

April 27

Diplomacy and International Agreements

Yankelovich, Daniel, and John Doble. 1984. "The Public Mood: Nuclear Weapons and the U.S.S.R." *Foreign Affairs* 63(1): 33-46. (JSTOR)

Graham, Thomas W. 1988. "The Pattern and Importance of Public Knowledge in the Nuclear Age." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32(2): 319-34. (JSTOR)

Kaufman, Natalie Hevener, and David Whiteman. 1988. "Opposition to Human Rights Treaties in the United States Senate: The Legacy of the Bricker Amendment." *Human Rights Quarterly* 10(3): 309-37. (JSTOR)

Nisbet, Matthew C., and Teresa Myers. 2007. "The Polls--Trends: Twenty Years of Public Opinion about Global Warming." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 79(4): 444-70. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963

SALT I agreements, 1972

SALT II agreement, 1979

Kyoto Protocol, 1997

UN Covenants on Human Rights

Nuclear deal with Iran, 2015

May 4

Allocating Resources for Foreign Policy: Foreign Aid and Military Spending

- Milner, Helen, and Dustin Tingley. 2013. "Public Opinion and Foreign Aid: A Review Essay." *International Interactions* 39(3): 389-401. (JSTOR)
- Gilens, Martin. 2001. "Political Ignorance and Collective Policy Preferences." *American Political Science Review* 95(2): 379-96. (JSTOR)
- Bartels, Larry M. 1994. "The American Public's Defense Spending Preferences in the Post-Cold War Era." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 58(4): 479-508. (JSTOR)
- Knopf, Jeffrey W. 1998. How Rational Is "The Rational Public"? Evidence from U.S. Public Opinion on Military Spending." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42(5): 544-71. (JSTOR)
- Simon, Christopher A., and Nicholas P. Lovrich. 2010. Citizen Support for Military Expenditures: A Longitudinal Analysis of U.S. Public Opinion, 1999-2002." *Armed Forces and Society* 36(3): 454-480. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

- Aid to El Salvador, 1979-96
- The World Bank and Multilateral Development Aid
- Military Spending during the Vietnam War era, 1965-73
- The Carter-Reagan military buildup, 1979-86
- Military spending after 9/11

May 11

Globalization and Foreign Economic Policy

- Herrmann, Richard K., Philip E. Tetlock, and Matthew N. DiScro. 2001. "How Americans Think About Trade: Reconciling Conflicts Among Money, Power, and Principles." *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (2): 191-218. (JSTOR)
- Scheve, Kenneth F., and Matthew J. Slaughter. 2001. "What Determines Individual Trade-Policy Preferences?" *Journal of International Economics* 54 (2): 267-92. (JSTOR)
- Milner, Helen V., and Dustin H. Tingley. 2011. "Who Supports Global Economic Engagement? The Sources of Preferences in American Foreign Economic Policy." *International Organization* 65(1): 37-68. (JSTOR)
- Mansfield, Edward D., and Diana C. Mutz. 2009. "Support for Free Trade: Self-Interest, Sociotropic Politics, and Out-Group Anxiety." *International Organization* 63 (3): 425-57. (JSTOR)
- Fordham, Benjamin O., and Katja B. Kleinberg. 2012. "How Can Economic Interests Affect Support for Free Trade?" *International Organization* 66(2): 311-28. (JSTOR)

Possible Paper Topics:

- NAFTA, 1992-94
- WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle and associated protests, 1999
- CAFTA, 2002-06
- China's "Most Favored Nation" status, 1990-2001
- Foreign Direct Investment and the Dubai Ports World controversy, 2006

