

# The Graduate School of Political Management

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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

M.P.S. in Strategic Public Relations

**Public Opinion, Political Socialization and Public Relations - PSPR 6223**  
**3 Credits**

**Course Overview, Introduction & Syllabus - Summer 2020: May 21 – July 23**

**Thursdays – 7:10-9:40 PM via Blackboard**

**Ben Zingman, Ph.D. – Adjunct Professor**  
443.802.8809 (cell) or 410.531.3458 (home/office)  
bzingman@gwu.edu

## **I. BASIC INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **Dr. Z Bio**

A successful issues communications, marketing, crisis and public relations strategist, writer, and manager, I served corporate, trade association and non-profit clients for nearly 40 years. Using the skills and judgment honed at top-tier Washington, DC, public relations firms, in 2003 I formed **bzingcom** to provide clients with personalized, reality-based counseling, program development, media and presentation training and executive writing services including speeches, online content, and feature articles.

Since opening its doors, **bzingcom** produced solid results for a wide range of clients including the American Association of Port Authorities, American Chemistry Council, Chlorine Institute, Edison Electric Institute, Federal Aviation Administration, Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Energy Association, John Adams Associates, National Solid Waste Management Association, Prince William Hospital, Turn Key Office Solutions, Veolia Transportation and more. Projects include national trade show and convention programming, strategic public affairs program development, executive writing, crisis communications plans and drills, marketing communications and media relations programs.

I began my career as a teacher in New York City and at Rutgers University where I earned a Ph.D. in political science. My dissertation, *Beyond the Fourth Branch*, focused on the role of the news media in American politics.

A graduate educator since 2004, at GWU's Graduate School of Political Management I teach courses on "Public Opinion, Political Socialization and Public Relations," and "Managing Association and Non-Profit Communications in a Changing Environment." Earlier, at Johns Hopkins, I introduced graduate courses on "Strategic Communications Program Management," and "Media, Power and Politics." I am proud to have earned the GWU College of Professional Studies Faculty Excellence Award in 2011.

*The bottom line? I am a PR lifer with extensive Washington experience who believes that we can—and should—enjoy what we do and find meaning in our labors.*

### **Communication**

The best way to reach me on an urgent matter is by phone. For routine communications, please use my GWU e-mail. I try to respond to all email within 24 hours, so if you've not received a timely response, please follow-up with me by phone. Course materials will be submitted via Blackboard (see below).

Generally, I will be available for at least two hours prior to class, except on days when there is a guest speaker. I am also available for brief discussions after class, and by appointment.

### **Blackboard Site**

A Blackboard site has been set up for this course. Each student is expected to check the site regularly throughout the semester, as Blackboard will be the primary venue for classroom communications between instructor and students. Students can access the course site at <https://blackboard.gwu.edu>. Support for Blackboard is available at 202-994-4948 or [helpdesk.gwu.edu](http://helpdesk.gwu.edu).

### **Academic Integrity**

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at <https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity>.

### **Support for Students with Disabilities**

GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Please notify your instructor if you require accommodations. Additional information is available at <https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/>.

### **GWU Emergency Communications**

***CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu*** is the university’s primary website used for communicating emergency preparedness and incident-related information (including class cancellations) to the GW community.

***GW Alert*** is a notification system that sends emergency alerts to email addresses and mobile devices. Students, faculty and staff are requested to maintain current contact information and campus location information by logging into the GWeb Information System ([banweb.gwu.edu](http://banweb.gwu.edu)). In emergency situations, alerts may also appear at the top of university webpages.

**Media Outlets**, such as 103.5 FM WTOP, may be contacted with emergency information, such as weather-related delays and closing.

*If I learn of a change in our schedule, I will post the details on Blackboard.*

### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend all classes. If a student needs to miss a class for health, business or family reasons, please email me and your study team partner prior to class. (Students will be assigned to study teams, so please contact your teammate after missed classes to be sure you receive class notes and materials.)

### **Civility & Courtesy Policy**

When in doubt about a particular action or behavior in class, please exercise unrestrained civility and courtesy.

During this course we will be discussing and arguing about ideas, values and concepts that often have deep personal meaning. It is expected that everyone (including yours truly) will maintain a civil tone and demeanor even if we believe we are completely correct and the other person is totally wrong. This means, we will: 1) allow others to speak without interruption; 2) treat one another with respect; 3) avoid raising our voices to levels equal to or louder than a jet engine; and 4) grant guest speakers the freedom to express their views even if, and *especially if*, we disagree.

Cell phones, tablets, laptops and other devices are only to be used for class purposes. If you must check your cousin's email, the status of your most recent online purchase, your order at Papa John's or the balance in your Swiss bank account, please wait for a break, or better still, save it until after class.

Eating during class is often a necessity for students who come straight from work, but please refrain from loud, aggressive or messy eating, especially when we have a guest speaker. Needless to say, this applies to me as well!

### **Course Evaluation**

At the end of the semester, students will have the opportunity to evaluate the course through GW's online course evaluation system. It is very important to complete an evaluation.

Students are also encouraged to provide feedback throughout the semester by contacting me or any of the following:

Professor Lawrence Parnell  
Director, Strategic Public Relations Program  
[lparnell@gwu.edu](mailto:lparnell@gwu.edu) | 703-29- 4150

Ms. Suzanne Farrand  
Director of Academic Administration, GSPM  
[sfarrand@gwu.edu](mailto:sfarrand@gwu.edu) | 202-994-9309

## GWU Academic Calendar

### Summer Semester 2020

#### Session I Begins (6, 8, 10 and 14-Week Sessions)

Independence Day Observed (no classes)

10-Week Session I Ends

Monday, May 18

Friday, July 3

Saturday, July 25

## 2. COURSE OVERVIEW

### Objectives

Through this course, students will:

- Develop awareness and critical thinking regarding the role, formation, measurement, and use of public opinion in contemporary U.S. public affairs and public relations.
- Understand processes that shape opinion, political and marketplace behavior, and the role we play as communicators in engaging and influencing these processes.
- Enhance critical thinking about when and how communications can and should be used to support or change public opinion.
- Write a substantial analysis of how communications activities are utilized in the real world to influence opinions, attitudes, and behavior. (And allow me to add a word about writing. As you will see from the syllabus and the weekly lectures, **I am a firm believer in citing sources to support arguments.** I am not asking for full footnotes, though they are always welcome. But in your papers, please support your views, assertions and conclusions with references and citations that allow me to check sources and how you use them.)
- Enhance written and presentation communications skills.

### Required Textbook

- Erikson, Robert, and Tedin, Kent. *American Public Opinion, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition* (2019).

We also will read additional selections: *Applebee's America*, Pew's most recent State of the Media reports, the 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer, thoughtful articles and op-eds, polls and breaking news stories,

### Graduate School Expectations

Students should review and be familiar with [GW University Regulations](#).

In addition, students enrolled in a graduate program should take their academic responsibilities seriously and be prepared to meet the following expectations:

1. Utilize effective time management skills so as to complete and submit their assignments by their required due dates and times.
2. Effectively and responsibly work in groups with other students when required.
3. Attain a mastery of written communication skills including proper sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and word usage.
4. Understand how to properly format in-text citations and references for resources and information integrated into their written assignments.

GSPM prepares students for careers in the professional political world. In politics, words and deadlines matter. Excellent written communication skills are essential for success. Every word used, whether it is in a television or radio ad, direct mail piece, social media post, or a press release will be scrutinized.

Similarly, deadlines are important. Students will be best positioned for success in the practical communications world if they develop and exercise excellent written communication and time management skills.

### Course Structure

Our ten-week course will involve seminar-style online classes, with assigned readings, open discussion and guest speakers. The course is divided into four basic components:

**Section 1 – Public Opinion: What is It and Why Do We Care About It? Class 1-4**

**Section 2 – Political Socialization and Political Engagement: Class 5-6**

**Section 3 – Role of Media in Public Opinion and Public Policy: Class 7-8**

**Section 4 – What Communications Lessons Can We Learn From Donald Trump and The Pandemic? Class 9-10**

### Grade Components and Weighting

Assignment	Point Value
Ungraded paper (One-page assignment for me to assess writing skills. Assigned Week 1; Due Week 2.)	zero
Poll Watching (Three analyses of national or regional polls due in Weeks 3, 6 and 9. Look for the specific requirements once class begins.)	15 pts
Initial Paper (Overview of the issue environment for each student's selected organization. Assigned in Week 1; Due in Week 4. Look for specifics once class begins.)	20 pts
Strategic Paper (Assigned in Week 4; Due in Week 10. Interview questionnaire <i>and</i> three-national poll questions due in Week 6.)	45 pts

Class Work (e.g., participation, class exercises, overall contribution including articles or other materials posted, role in discussions)	10 pts.
Study Team Activity	10 pts – including grade from other team member(s)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Course grades will be determined as follows, according to departmental guidelines:

A	94+
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	0-69

**Note:** Missed or late assignments will be penalized, unless there is an approved excuse. (See p. 9 for details.)

**Note:** I do not offer “extra credit.”

### Grading Standards

**A:** In a business environment your work would distinguish you as a top communications professional. The product is outstanding in every way; e.g., strategic thinking, strong research including a solid use of course readings to support arguments, appropriate style, syntax, and grammar and demonstrates the strategic use of communications to achieve organizational objectives.

**B:** In a business environment this work would reflect well on the student and the student’s work team. The assignment, fulfilled all requirements, and contributed additional ideas and/or insights, but

the end produce was relatively ordinary. The assignment would be judged as adequate, workmanlike and serviceable.

**C:** In a business environment, this work might be sent back for revision. Either you missed a key portion of the assignment, or failed to communicate effectively through. You completed the assignment and fulfilled the requirements but the work would not achieve all of your media relations/communications objectives without major revisions in logic, target media selection or approach strategy.

**D:** You fulfilled some of the requirements of the assignment, but not all. This work would need to be completely reworked before it would represent you or your company professionally and achieve any meaningful media relations objectives.

**F:** You did not submit the assignment.

### Course Requirements

**NOTE – This section explaining the requirements merely provides descriptions. Students should use the actual assignment rubrics to guide their efforts, *not the descriptions*.**

#### 1. Ungraded Paper -

A one-page paper will be assigned in Week 1 and due Week 2 to allow me to assess writing skills. **Note that the quality of writing is important both in this class and in your careers and will be reflected in the grading of subsequent papers.**

#### 2. “Poll Watching” Analyses (15 pts.)

Students will be asked to write three “poll-watching” papers. These are brief (two-page maximum) analyses of key questions from a major public opinion poll. Each poll-watching assignment will be worth five points towards the overall grade (a maximum of 15 pts in all). These papers are due in Weeks 3, 6 and 9. A full rubric for this assignment will be provided during the first class.

Polls to consider include, but are not limited to: ABC News, CBS News, Eagleton Institute (Rutgers), Fox, Gallup, Harris, Kaiser, *LA Times*, Marist, Mason-Dixon, Monmouth University, Morning Consult, National Election Study (NES), NBC/*WSJ*, Pew Research Group, Pollster.com, Quinnipiac, Rasmussen, Roper, *WPost*, Zogby. Check [realclearpolitics.com](http://realclearpolitics.com) or [projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/](http://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/) for the latest polling options.

#### 3. Study Team Evaluation (10 points)

There is a substantial reading load in this class. Study teams of two people (or at most three) allow students to keep pace. Therefore, students are required to participate in study teams, which I will create randomly. (After all, in the workplace, we often do not have the chance to choose our friends as team partners.) It is expected that teams will divide the work and coordinate assignments on their own, but I will be available to assist as needed. I will hold a check-in call or online meeting with each team prior to Week 4.

Your classmates are among the most valuable learning and career resources you will find in any graduate program. Together, you will learn far more than anyone can learn individually. In addition, the nature of our workplace as communicators is increasingly team-oriented and collaborative, so it is beneficial to develop and enhance team performance skills, including those required for virtual teams.

Teams will be responsible for sharing synopses of the readings, general information and class highlights – particularly if one of the members misses a class. Teams should meet or hold a team call at least once per week to ensure members are up-to-date and in synch.

Students will receive a “Reading Synopsis” form for sharing of summaries and commentary. In addition, teams can share and review written assignments before they are submitted. Serving as an editor and proofreader helps improve one’s thinking, and writing skills.

Each team member is expected to do a full share of the work, and teammates will provide a written evaluation of one another at the end of the semester. The evaluation that you write is worth up to five points, and the evaluation your receive is worth up to five points for a total of 10 points towards the course grade.

#### **4. Class Work/In-Class Performance (10 points)**

**Students’ in-class performance** (including **periodic exercises, quizzes, and participation in discussions**) will account for 10 percent of their grade. **Students are expected to attend each class. if you must miss a class please alert your team members and me in advance. Teammates are expected to brief the absentee on the missed class, including guest speakers.**

Class participation is not simply a matter of how often students speak up in class, but rather, how well they are prepared to **discuss specific concepts and readings**, and whether their input is thoughtful, provocative, and lively. Do students inject relevant breaking news stories and other timely materials? Do they use the readings to help explain their views? Are they advancing the discussion? Are they utilizing their “poll watching” to help us understand what is really going on?

#### **5. Initial Paper (20 pts) & Strategic Paper (45 pts): How Organizations Influence Public Opinion**

Each student will study a specific business organization (a company, professional group, or trade association), *or* a not-for-profit organization (such as a charity, labor union, university or NGO) *or* a political entity (such as a legislative committee or government agency at the federal, state or local level). **Candidates, elected officials, campaign organizations, PACs and Super PACs are not allowed.**

- A. **Initial Paper (5-6 pps.):** Examine the public opinion environment for the chosen organization: What are the main drivers? Who are the main players? Adversaries? Allies? Competitors? Why is your organization trying to shape public opinion and how does the effort relate to the mission or goals of the organization? Put another way, what is the organization’s strategic objective and what role does public opinion play in achieving it? The paper will be assigned during Class 1 and is due at Class 5. (A fully detailed rubric will be provided for Class 1.)
- B. **Strategic Paper (10-12 pps.):** Building on the initial paper, the strategic paper will require students to analyze how effectively their subject organizations utilize and manage public opinion to achieve organizational goals. How does the organization engage in the public opinion process and with what effect? How can or should the organization refocus communications efforts? The analysis must utilize, support, or if you prefer, refute course readings, speakers and



other materials. The use of additional sources is permitted, *but not as a substitute* for course materials.

Students' analyses will be based on publicly available information including websites, news articles, social media, testimony and speeches, **and at least one interview with a "player" from your organization, its adversaries, allies or competitors, or a journalist covering the organization.** The questionnaire you develop for the interview will be graded for a maximum of 5 points of the total 45. In addition you will be asked to develop three strategically relevant questions for your organization to use in a national opinion poll. These question too will be worth 5 points of the 45 for the strategic paper. The full assignment rubric will be provided during **Class 4**. Survey questions and interview questionnaires are due at **Class 6** and the papers are due at the **last class**.

**No duplication of organizations to be studied will be allowed. Students may not choose organizations where they worked or are currently employed or consulting. Specific organization choices will be accepted during the first two classes or by email after the first class, with "ties" resolved on a "first come first served" basis.**

**All papers and other written work will be submitted and graded via Blackboard. Papers will be due by 7:10 PM (the start of class) on the designated days, unless otherwise stated. Unexcused late papers will be subject to a one (1) pt. penalty for the first day, and an additional two (2) pts for the second day for a maximum three-point penalty. Unexcused late papers will not be accepted if they are more than 48 hours (2 days) late.**

### **3. COURSE INTRODUCTION**

#### **PART 1 – Where Are We Today?**

This is a remarkable time to study public opinion and public relations. Consider our recent, increasingly polarized past that includes:

- A deadly and controversial pandemic
- Unimaginable unemployment and economic hardship
- An impeachment
- President Donald Trump's unexpected win and Hillary Clinton's Greek-drama fail in 2016
- The resurgence of the Democrats in 2018
- Questions about the performance and credibility of the media, old and new
- Fake news and "alternative facts"
- Russian interference in American – and foreign – politics
- BLM, #MeToo, March for Our Lives, anti-quarantine and other social media-driven grassroots movements that seem to express heightened polarization
- Violence against houses of worship, and hate crimes against Asian, African-American, Jewish, Muslim and other ethnic targets
- America's distrust of - and flight from - the global institutions upon which we've relied for decades, including trade groups, health organizations. development programs and human rights groups

- New challenges regarding a host of issues including: immigration, health care, gay and transgender rights, gender equality, gun violence and Second Amendment rights, race and racism including reparations, income inequality, abortion, trade policy, the decline of the Baby Boomers, Millennial ascendance and other demographic changes in the population
- Brexit and the rise of populist/nationalist governments in Hungary, Italy, Brazil and other nations
- America's continuing military engagement in Afghanistan
- Numerous other barely localized wars that destroy communities and individuals from Africa to the Middle East, and other parts of the world as well

Many observers suggested that the rise of Trumpism marks a new era in public opinion and the relationship of the public to government, the media, education, the workplace and other institutions. Others suggest that Trump is more the product of an ongoing change process than the cause of such change. Did he create the frightened and disaffected blue collar voters of the Rust Belt and rural America, or did he surf the wave of resentment they represented? Did he decide America needed to be great again, or merely create a slogan that captured the longing of his otherwise ignored supporters? Did he give rise to the neo-Nazi, "alt-Right" movement that marched in Charlottesville in 2017 and in were seen in some state capitals this year, or did he rise to power because they were already in place, searching for a champion?

As this is being written, we are in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rising resentment about the public health and economic changes it has precipitated. Schools are closed. Colleges are folding. Childcare is all but lost for middle and working class families. Small businesses, often the mainstay of many families over several generations, have closed their doors possibly forever. Big business is reeling and as we are all too well aware, unemployment is reaching an epic scale. Whenever and however we come through the pandemic, there is a strong chance our nation will be changed for years, perhaps even for several generations, in ways both large and small. Professional and big-time college sports? Movie theaters and shows? Trips to the dentist? The nature of work and the workplace? The hard-fought battle for gender equality? The fundamental structure of education at all levels? Indeed, what has the pandemic not affected?

Clearly, we are in the vortex of a change process. Positions on all sides seem to grow harder and more brittle as each new issue arises. Why are we becoming so intolerant not only of our "adversaries," but also of our allies who may seek compromises in order to get things done? Part of Bernie supporters' and other progressive Democrats' problem with Joe Biden were his role in the Clarence Thomas hearings, his support for the three-strikes criminal conviction rule, and his mention of working with leading segregationists as proof of his ability to work with adversaries. But as Nancy Pelosi's ongoing battle with progressives reminds us, part of Joe's problem was that he thought compromise itself was a good thing. That's one reason why so many progressives and supporters of Bernie Sanders are reluctant to support Biden, even after Sanders' and Liz Warren's endorsements. (As this is being written the impact of Tara Reade's sexual assault allegation against Biden is unclear, but it too may have a lasting impact.)

By the way, how trusting are we today? Do we trust the White House press office, even under new press secretary Kayleigh McEnany? Nancy Pelosi's statements? Mitch McConnell's? Elon Musk's? Mark

Zuckerberg's? Boeing's CEO, Dennis Mullenberg? The Flint, MI water people? The police chief who promises the body cam tapes will be available soon? The owners of your favorite sports team regarding success next season? USA Gymnastics' and Michigan State's promise to prevent sexual abuse of young athletes? The Weather Channel's forecast for your big weekend at the beach (assuming we'll again have weekends at the beach)? Your uncle's promise that this is the one tech stock to buy this year?

The [2017 Edelman Trust Barometer](#) noted the growth of worldwide mistrust in business, government, the media and even NGOs (p 2). "This is a profound crisis in trust that has its origins in the Great Recession of 2008," the Barometer stated. (For our class, we'll read the 2020 edition, which was published before the pandemic.) In 2017, Richard Edelman added that globalization and technological change further fuel widespread mistrust of institutions. After all, why should farmers in Iowa – or France for that matter, where the populist "Yellow Vest" protests that began in 2018 showed deep mistrust of "the establishment" - believe the economy is doing well when their hometowns are dying? Why should unemployed American factory workers believe that overall, NAFTA was beneficial to the US economy? Who is educating us about these complex issues?

Are all these pressures bringing us closer together with a sense of shared risk, exposure and responsibility to help one another? Or, in the face of these pressures, do we fall back into our familiar circles, dig a deeper foxhole and along with our friends, families and "tribal" allies, await the next assault on our dreams?

The divisions between us are not necessarily new, I believe, nor are they greater than the shared values, experiences, hopes and wishes that unite us. But the differences have been ignored, misunderstood, stoked and exploited at times by the media, politicians and other interests that seek our attention, votes, commerce and allegiance. Many attribute these differences to the have-or-have-not dichotomy that marks our society, the profound inequality that the 2020 Edelman barometer discusses. Others attribute the differences to race, gender, ethnicity, age, education, location or other demographic factors. The authors of *Applebee's America* think the root cause lies in our values. Being an old guy, I've learned the answer to these two-in-the-morning-last-call-apocalyptic-discussions is often "all the above."

In short, I think most of us will agree, this is one heckuva time to try to figure out what's going on in the public mind and the role communications plays in messing up or improving the human condition.

## **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

### **PART 2 – How Did We Get Here?**

Some of you may recall the 2008 election. Talking heads from Bill O'Reilly to Chris Matthews debated whether or not President Obama's election was a sign that America had entered its post-racial, post-industrial, post-traumatic stress - or simply post-Bush - era. President Obama received the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2009, after barely nine months in office. Public opinion in the U.S. reflected surprise, but the Nobel Committee and many Europeans welcomed a president who was someone other than George W. Bush. (See this 2009 story for a typical perspective from Time Magazine - <http://content.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1929433,00.html>) So, what did it all mean?

Then, they held the 2010 off-year elections. Talking heads from Jon Stewart to Mike Huckabee debated whether or not this was a sign that America had entered the post-Obama, post-health care reform, post-post-racial era. Suddenly, the conservative Tea Party flexed its muscle in local, state and Congressional elections. Then, whammo! Along came Occupy Wall Street, fueled by frustrated young progressives, and taken by some as a sign the American Dream is dead or dying. (*Time* magazine asked, "Can You Still Move Up in America?" in its cover story on Nov. 14, 2011, a question frequently repeated in the press, not to mention corner bars, over the next several years.) Leading thinkers speculated about the new generational gap, the civilian-military gap, the technology literacy gap and the jobs and income gaps, to name a few. What did it all mean?

We next held the elections of 2012. Tea Partiers and Occupiers vied for attention and influence with each other *and* with traditional party hacks and power brokers from the left, right, and center. The fate of the nation appeared to be at stake, as we struggled to balance our wish lists, and we re-elected President Obama, who was seen by the GOP as radical threat to America (a familiar refrain during the 2016 GOP campaign as well). But, if one factors out health care and the Affordable Care Act, the Obama administration continued many Bush era policies: Iraq and Afghanistan, TARP and bailouts, free trade agreements and even the Guantanamo prison. So was his administration really so far outside the mainstream of U.S. politics? What did it all mean?

Next, came the elections of 2014 - an overwhelming GOP win. One of the widely-touted hallmarks of the 2008 campaign was the return to political life of young Americans, especially African-American and Latino youth. Yet, those younger voters, as well as older Latinos and African Americans upon whose shoulders Obama won two national elections, failed to vote in substantial numbers during the off-year.

For Democrats, the message should have been to "re-engage with young people who had provided more support in the 2008 Senate races," concluded CIRCLE <sup>1</sup> on Nov. 6, 2014. Prophetic words indeed.

2014 was especially significant:

- "General election voter turnout for the 2014 midterms was the lowest it has been in any election cycle since World War II, according to the United States Election Project. Just 36.4 percent of the voting-eligible population cast ballots... continuing a steady decline in midterm voter participation that has spanned several decades." ("Voter turnout lowest since World War II," *Washington Post*, 11 Nov 14, p. A3.)
- Like the two that preceded it, the election of 2014 brought to Congress a new cadre of ultra-conservative Republican legislators with an apparent distaste for the status quo, and sufficient

support from their home district voters to allow them to challenge leadership in their own party. Speaker John Boehner (R-OH)? Gone! Former Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA)? Gone. Now-retired Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) was on thin ice throughout the 2016 campaign in the new Age of Trump? What does it mean?

### **Oh Yes, The Election of 2016**

By now, we've all read a great deal about the election of Donald Trump, and Hillary Clinton's surprising loss. Many explanations have been offered:

- The public wanted a change agent, a real outsider.
- Hillary (and her inner circle) ran a dreadful campaign that ignored warning signs in key "Rust Belt" states.
- She was a terrible candidate who did and said the wrong things (as did her husband).
- She wasn't "authentic." By comparison, Trump was.
- FBI Director James Comey influenced the outcome.
- The media influenced the outcome, by ineffectively exposing Trump's flaws and over-playing Hillary's private server and the WikiLeaks revelations.
- Russian President Putin and Russian hacking influenced the outcome..
- State-level efforts by GOP-controlled legislatures limited the access of minorities and low-income voters to the polls, thereby influencing the outcome.
- State-level gerrymandering also created virtually unassailable Red and Blue districts, making incumbents less vulnerable and helping to ensure the GOP majority in the House. (The U.S. Supreme Court later ruled that Gerrymandering issues must be left up to the states. See <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/27/us/politics/supreme-court-gerrymandering.html>.)
- Trump had a better message; Hillary's was fuzzy and seemed to change with different audiences.
- He was a better campaigner.
- He used Twitter (and other communications vehicles) to own the news cycle. Trump would Tweet something outrageous at 5:00 AM, and the media would spend the rest of the day discussing it!
- He tapped into the alienated, disregarded and disrespected voters, especially white working class and rural Americans. In fact, one might argue, his campaign allowed these otherwise isolated folks to enjoy the benefits of being part of a community of like-minded individuals who previously were ignored and alone. Community, as we will see, is a powerful force.
- He talked about American jobs. She talked about global warming, race, women's rights and other issues.

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<sup>1</sup> CIRCLE - The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement at Tufts University is one of the nation's leading sources of data and analysis on the ways young people engage in political and civic activity, as cited in "Civic Learning in the News. CIRCLE: 21.5% Youth Turnout: Two-Day Estimate Comparable to Recent Midterm Years," (published by The Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, a Project of the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics of the Annenberg Public Policy Center University of Pennsylvania).

- She focused too much on "identity politics," failing to reach out beyond her urban and liberal base.
- A bit too much of that base, especially younger and African-American voters, stayed home on Election Day. <sup>2</sup>

Bernie Sanders, an avowed socialist, maintained strong support among many voters, especially Millennials. Sanders was the closest thing to an outsider Democrats had seen in quite a while, and if nothing else, he was “authentic.” (Ask Larry David and the SNL writers.) Is he still seen that way today? If so, by whom?

Can you recall how often during the 2016 presidential campaign the concept of authenticity was invoked? Hillary was not “authentic,” and was too stiff and scripted, the critique ran. Bernie was authentic – in fact he was saying things in 2016 that he said 30 or 40 years earlier, and continued to say throughout the 2020 campaign. And Donald Trump was seen as authenticity on steroids! When we read Chapter One of *Applebee’s America* we’ll have a chance to explore authenticity and community a bit more.

Despite the variety of explanations, most analysts agree that Donald Trump wrote a new chapter in communications and campaign tactics with every controversial statement he made, Tweeted and repeated, a set of lessons he continues to teach as we approach his possible re-election.

Why did the pollsters and so-called experts fail to anticipate the rise of this “outsider” and Trump’s remarkable staying power? Why were the pre-election polls that showed Hillary easily winning the election so remarkably wrong?

### **2018 – A New Normal?**

In 2018, Democrats took control of the House. Was this a sign of things to come or an anomaly? Note that Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is faced with much the same challenge that former Speaker Boehner faced – a strong, “ideologically pure” wing of the party (Democratic progressives, versus Boehner’s Tea Party conservatives) bolstered by several activist newcomers, who are reluctant to compromise with not only the other party but also with moderates in their own party. As Yogi Berra said, “It’s like déjà vu all over again!”

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<sup>2</sup>...2016 black voters didn't coalesce behind Clinton the same way they did Obama, with Clinton earning 88% of their vote (to Trump's 8%) as compared to Obama's 93% in 2012. That being said, the overwhelming majority of African-Americans did show their support by voting for Clinton, particularly as compared to white Americans, who ultimately won Trump the election by giving him 58% of the white vote. “ <https://www.mic.com/articles/159402/here-s-a-break-down-of-how-african-americans-voted-in-the-2016-election>”

Most analyses attribute the 2018 vote to highly motivated young voters who turned out in far greater numbers than in 2014, and also to women voters who rejected the GOP. Spurred by the Parkland, FL shooting survivors, who utilized the full power of social media to mobilize walkouts and rallies, high school and college-aged first-time voters in many states were energized and highly motivated. For an excellent analysis see Brian Schaffner's essay from the November 10, 2018 *WPost*, "The 5 charts explain who voted how in the 2018 midterm election," ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/11/10/these-5-charts-explain-who-voted-how-in-the-2018-midterm-election/?utm\\_term=.059b29bb3b0a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/11/10/these-5-charts-explain-who-voted-how-in-the-2018-midterm-election/?utm_term=.059b29bb3b0a)).

Also see CIRCLE's analyses including the estimate that 28 percent of young people voted in 2018, more than double the rate from 2014 (See "New National Youth Turnout Estimate: 28 of Young People Voted in 2018" at: <https://civicyouth.org/new-national-youth-turnout-estimate-28-of-young-people-voted-in-2018>)

Regarding women, Schaffner wrote, "Another pattern **everyone was watching** was the gender gap — which...was the largest we have seen in at least a decade. While nearly 60 percent of women who voted for one of the two major parties voted for Democratic candidates, only 47 percent of men did. That's a gender gap of 13 points." And we might add, it is a gender gap upon which Democrats are counting upon for success in 2020.

Other key factors noted in these analyses of 2018 include:

- Young voters voted for Democrats by almost 2:1.
- Suburban districts, except in the South, strongly supported Democrats.
- Among the general shift towards Democrats, white, college-educated women were overwhelmingly pro-Democratic, followed by white women without college and then white men without college.
- People of color were overwhelmingly Democratic as well, and in many states composed the key Democratic base.
- Voters' attitudes towards women played a huge role in shaping their choices, Schaffner explained.
- Among youth, engagement in efforts to reduce gun violence led to a strong Democratic turnout.

As the Democratic campaign for 2020 unfolded, no single candidate (remember there were more than 20) initially seemed able to benefit from all these trends. Instead some were vying for leadership on one or two particular issues, but no one established a broad multi-issue leadership position. The race finally seemed to boil down to Bernie and Biden and might have remained a toss-up had not Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-SC) dramatically endorsed Joe Biden on the brink of Super Tuesday. That one endorsement empowered African American voters to turn out in force for Biden, altered the trajectory of the campaign, and may have demonstrated the surprising power of endorsement by the right individual.. (See <https://apnews.com/74ca4d1c3976887be54477b934abe4ae>.)

In contrast, Trump maintains leadership in the GOP over all issues all the time. In fact, Trump loomed large over all the Republican challengers back in 2016, making them appear small in both substance and style. As students of public affairs, politics and communications, what are we to conclude about the power of personality?

And, while we're at it, 21 years after Columbine, 13 years after Virginia Tech, seven years after Newtown, five years after Charleston, five years after Umpqua Community College, roughly four-and-a-half after Colorado Springs and San Bernadino, four years after Orlando, three years after Las Vegas, and two years after Parkland, why is the nation still so sharply divided on questions relating to gun violence, ownership and access? Why was Canada able to outlaw assault-style rifles within days of the Nova Scotia shooting. What makes gun issues, or other issues such as abortion, voting rights, gay rights, citizenship, immigration and refugees so intractable and difficult to resolve in the US?

Racial justice encompasses powerful, and at times polarizing, high-visibility issues and events. Trayvon Martin? Michael Brown? Laquan McDonald? Black Lives Matter? Federal consent decrees in Baltimore and Chicago regarding excessive use of force by police? The list seems endless. Virtually every day, people of color have interactions with the police and the broader judicial system that leave them convinced change in this arena comes marginally and slowly, if at all. Why does change seem to take so long, or conversely, why haven't prior changes made a greater difference?

The racially divided perception of the response to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 or to the O.J. Simpson trial and verdict in 1995, or other more recent events such as Colin Kapaernick's lock-out by NFL owners and the racial disparity among COVID-19 pandemic fatalities show what many academics and journalists regard as a nation divided by separate black and white narratives and *realities*. Note for example Pew Research's conclusion ten years after Katrina that blacks and whites, "drew very different lessons from the disaster: Most blacks (71%) said it showed that racial inequality remained a major problem in the United States; most whites (56%) said that this was not a particularly important lesson of Katrina." (<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/08/27/remembering-katrina-wide-racial-divide-over-governments-response/>)

Of course, black-white tensions are not America's only racial and ethnic concerns. Latino American and Asian American populations are growing, and bringing with them additional challenges in politics, culture, economics and education. Despite what many critics see as the Trump Administration's ongoing disregard for the people of Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria in 2017, Latinos are already a recognized force in both U.S. culture and politics. The frequent use of spoken Spanish during the first Democratic debates in Miami last year testify to this awareness.

Less visibly perhaps, Asian-Americans are rapidly gaining a political voice as well, although they have become more frequent targets of racism, violence and hate crimes in the wake of Coronavirus. Add the concerns of religious minorities, including Muslim Americans and Sikhs, and we may be inclined to ask how such issues can ever be resolved? Where lies the common ground? How can America get past these emotional and intellectual divides?

And what about the LGBTQ community? During the Obama years, it seemed as if the nation had resolved many highly polarizing issues regarding same-sex marriage, partner rights and overall acceptance. Then, in North Carolina and other states, along came the "battle of the bathrooms" reflected in state-level legislation regarding transgender school students. What are we to make of the Supreme Court's 2018 decision allowing a Colorado bakery to refuse service to a gay couple because of the baker's religious beliefs (*Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*). The court said members of the Colorado Civil Rights Commission showed animus toward the baker when they suggested his claims of religious freedom were made to justify discrimination. (See:



<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/04/us/politics/supreme-court-sides-with-baker-who-turned-away-gay-couple.html>)

Many Americans see gender identity issues as a clash between traditional religious values and progressive values about equality, the role of religion in public life and more. Is this easily dismissed as mere prejudice or are we in fact facing a constant contest of competing values that enshrouds virtually every major issue in the country?

And dare we mention abortion? What does the presence of Vice President Mike Pence and more recently President Trump at the annual Right to Life march in Washington indicate, if anything? Here too, are we seeing a clash of values or a polarization based on ideology, economics, region or personal experience?

In this course, we're going to stop, take a deep breath, and try to understand what—if anything—the elections and other events tell us about public opinion, the public mind and hopefully, public relations.

For communicators, the presidential and Congressional political races, unemployment and income inequality, scandals from Wall Street, to politics, to the college and professional sports locker room, the ongoing issues of public health and safety, war and peace, the environment, education, social justice and more raise several important questions. These questions, which carry greater urgency in times of crisis, such as the dual health and economic crises we face today, include:

- Who exactly is “the public?” Me? You? Everyone?
- What is public opinion? What I think? What you think? What the “power brokers” think or want us to think, including those who spread fake news.?
- How can we tell when we see public opinion in operation? How do we measure it?
- Where does public opinion come from—family, school, religious upbringing, ethnic background, jobs, the old media? The new media? Hackers sitting in their basements spreading gossip? The moms on the soccer field?
- What can influence public opinion and who tries to do this?
- And at the foundation of these inquiries, what implications does public opinion have for us as communicators and *vice versa*? How does it affect the roles we play for our organizations and clients, and how do our communications efforts affect public opinion?

Interestingly, in recent years we've seen renewed interest in political socialization, the process by which people view their engagement in politics and acquire and maintain their political attitudes, biases, beliefs – in short, their public opinions. Here too, we face a laundry list of important questions about what people learn, how they learn it, where they learn it, how they reinforce or alter what they've learned, and why all this is important to us as citizens and, for purposes of this course, as *communicators*.

Much of the debate naturally centers on the power of the press and the media broadly, and their impact on our institutions of government, business and not-for-profit endeavor. But, where does that power come from and how is it exercised? Through what mechanisms do the media affect our political and social decisions? Is it only through news? What about advertising, film, entertainment, TV programs, talk radio, and music? What about the role of new, alternative media, or, alternatives to media? For example, does President Trump's use of Twitter to circumvent the mainstream press and talk directly to his followers represent an important new aspect of the presidential “bully pulpit” or is it just the same

old outreach with new technology? Is it the right tool for policy as well as promotion, serious matters of state as well as more trivial matters of personal preference and pique?

After noting the random nature of then President-elect Trump's tweets, and how he picked fights with North Korea, U.S. businesses, allies and others, veteran WSJ columnist Gerald Seib asked "Is it method or madness?" (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-method-in-donald-trumps-maddening-communications-habits-1483377825>) Seib then speculated on three possible goals for the ongoing Tweet storms:

1. (Trump) "is positioning himself for a negotiation or a deal."
2. "He is seeking to control the agenda," particularly through early morning tweets that dominate the day's news cycle.
3. "He is creating rabbits for others to chase."

Whichever the reason – or reasons – it worked to his advantage so far. But Trump is not the first to figure out how to play this game. For example, did the release of Beyoncé's eponymous album in December, 2013 change the way products, candidates and ideas are marketed?

Beyoncé said she was bored with traditional album marketing and that she wanted to release the album in her own way. What she really did, however, was illustrate the true power of social media. **Within 12 hours, 1.2 million tweets were posted about "Beyoncé"** and within the first 24 hours more than 430,000 albums had sold for \$15.99 on iTunes.

(<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2524814/Beyonces-new-album-sells-800-000-copies-days.html>)

Just a one-time occurrence? What about Taylor Swift's album, "1989" and her career since then?

Swift's hard push out of country territory may have alienated her first fans, but the new album...won her legions more. A big part of that had to do with her extensive marketing campaign, which included a blitz of television and radio appearances and those ubiquitous Diet Coke ads...In response to news from Nielsen SoundScan that she sold 1.287 million copies of "1989" within the first week, Swift posted a ridiculous video of her lip-synching to Kendrick Lamar in her car.

That the Internetizens fell for it was no surprise, given that **Swift is a social media master**. On platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook she makes direct connections with fans, often reposting images of them with her album. "When you do that, you generate a kind of advocacy and excitement that no level of advertising could," Matt Britton, chief executive of MRY, a youth marketing agency with the Publicis Groupe, told the *New York Times*. When fans see her hanging out at a Knicks game, they feel like they're a part of her life, and **that makes her authentic**.

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/06/arts/music/sales-of-taylor-swifts-1989-intensify-streaming-debate.html>)

When Beyoncé released her "visual album," *Lemonade*, Time Magazine's Daniel D'Addario wrote:

Beyoncé is at a level where she defines what the marketplace is. She's buoyed by the sheer brio of an individual **who knows that she cannot fail**—and though particular components of *Lemonade* fell short for this viewer, its unabashed confidence carried it so far past the finish line that few other pop-world contemporaries are in sight. (my emphasis added).  
(<https://time.com/4305810/beyonce-lemonade-hbo/>)

“Knows she cannot fail?” Sound like anyone we know?

Note Laura Tong, blogging back in February, 2016 for *The Huffington Post*:

Donald's presidential campaign inspires equal measures of love or hate, but one thing few people could deny is his breathtaking self-esteem and confidence. When everyone believed him finished after he owed billions, he defied the world and gained an entry in the *Guinness Book Of Records* for the largest financial turnaround in history. Now he's worth billions. Whatever you think of him as a businessman or politician, only someone with awesome self-esteem could pull off such a feat...

I suspect Seib – and others – would agree.

So are there lessons here for communicators? One lesson may be about the power of celebrity and personality. In Trump's case, as President Obama hinted in his remarks at his final White House Correspondent's Dinner, the major media were unprepared to confront the power of The Donald's celebrity status. ABC's Margaret Chadbourn explained, “Obama poked fun at the media for the amount of coverage Trump has received. ‘I hope you all are proud of yourselves,” Obama said.  
(<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/president-obama-jokes-gop-race-trump-correspondents-dinner/story?id=38791638>)

Clearly, it was good for ratings for news outlets to keep Trump in the limelight, but does this also reflect a journalistic failure? Today, we witness what many decry as the decline of traditional news, and not coincidentally, the growth of “fake news.” As Washington Post media columnist Margaret Sullivan noted in December, 2016, “The term fake news...can refer to a multitude of problems including disinformation, propaganda, conspiracy mongering or...very biased takes on public affairs.”  
([https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/fake-news-is-sickening-but-dont-make-the-cure-worse-than-the-disease/2016/12/15/8c957994-c234-11e6-9578-0054287507db\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/fake-news-is-sickening-but-dont-make-the-cure-worse-than-the-disease/2016/12/15/8c957994-c234-11e6-9578-0054287507db_story.html))

Should the media have provided “wall-to-wall” coverage of the then-daily Trump “briefings” on Covid-19? Did they simply serve as a channel for White House propaganda? Why did the media allow the White House to avoid regular press briefings for more than a year? Has standard journalistic practice failed to to effectively report and analyze this administration, in its current, polarized, Fox-versus-everyone media positioning? One may argue the media are still trying to figure out how to do their job regarding this president, and that he's still playing them like a fiddle.

Compounding the problem, the rise of social media has created new ways to “reach out and touch someone.”<sup>3</sup> Are Twitter and Facebook the stuff of public opinion? “Sure,” we might say, adding, “They’re a whole new ballgame!” Maybe...

In November of 2016, Pew published results of a survey on the use of various SM platforms by adults concluding, “A majority of Americans now say they get news via social media and half of the public has turned to these sites to learn about the 2016 presidential election.” Indeed!

As communicators, we should ask if SM are really a new concept or are they simply using the latest technology to facilitate an age-old quest for community, meaning, and relevance? And, are the new SM platforms able to effectively fulfill these roles, or do they water down the experience so much they we learn to accept superficial communication as the shadowy substitute for real social, political, and personal relationships?

Note this excerpt from the 2013 movie, *Her*, about a man who falls in love with the female voice of the operating system on his cell phone:

**Theodore:** Do you talk to someone else while we're talking?

**Samantha:** Yes.

**Theodore:** Are you talking with someone else right now? People, OS, whatever...

**Samantha:** Yeah.

**Theodore:** How many others?

**Samantha:** 8,316.

**Theodore:** Are you in love with anybody else?

**Samantha:** Why do you ask that?

**Theodore:** I do not know. Are you?

**Samantha:** I've been thinking about how to talk to you about this.

**Theodore:** How many others?

**Samantha:** 641. ([http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1798709/quotes?ref=tt\\_q1\\_3](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1798709/quotes?ref=tt_q1_3))

Most of us have trouble loving a few close relatives and a Beagle. Is it possible to love 641 people, or must that many relationships be inherently superficial? Are we doomed to this level of meaning in our lives?

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<sup>3</sup> Starting in 1979 and well into the 80's, this was the tagline of an ad campaign from AT&T to encourage consumers to use their direct-dial long-distance telephone phone service.

This class will explore the questions noted in the pages above, and a great many more. As the choreographer of this ballet, I should share with you some of my biases about public opinion:

1. I believe many of the questions we wrestle with today were raised generations ago and continue to define our understanding of democracy and how it works. The Jeffersonian model of citizenship is often a starting point. We must not yield to a generational conceit that we are the first to question it and its ongoing validity.
2. In trying to understand public opinion, researchers often focus on what they can measure, and this can leave us with detailed knowledge of the wrong information. Often too, the methodology used (including the phrasing and ordering of poll questions) shapes individual responses, and the result can be a precise delineation of unimportant or incorrect data.
3. There is an expectation that the media are “the window to the soul” of public opinion. Yet, our own experience, as well as a strong tradition of critical analysis, suggest the traditional media are an imperfect lens. Are social media any better?
4. Moreover, the impact of the media on public opinion and political socialization may in fact be greater through cultural and entertainment content and programs than through news. Which has more impact—news reports about genocide, or, the movie *Hotel Rwanda*? Why? Note that a Tweet can often trigger more emotion than either a film or a newscast. Why?
5. And finally, the role of public relations regarding public opinion is frequently confusing and often misunderstood. So, we should try to clarify it!

Because we share this course in the fourth year of one of the nation’s most controversial presidencies and in the midst of a crucial, highly polarized U.S. election, a terrifying pandemic and economic crisis that may produce long-term changes in our society, a global refugee crisis, climate uncertainty, the withdrawal of Great Britain from the European Union, a rapidly changing geopolitical situation marked by the rise of China and the return of U.S-Russian tensions, the deconstruction of Venezuela and heightened have-versus-have not tensions elsewhere in Latin America, resurgent ISIS and other terrorist activity in the Middle East and Africa, this may be a spectacular moment to ask—and possibly, answer—questions about public opinion. As the course unfolds, we will include news stories and other late-breaking developments that help shed light on our subject.

There are another two or three hundred presumptions I can share with you, but I think you get the picture—the course, the projects, the materials, and the discussions do not exist in a vacuum. Students are expressly and specifically “*forbidden*” to be ignorant of the political and professional worlds around them.

So, welcome to PSPR6223.

## 4. ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE – (Z) indicates material provided by professor

### Section 1 – Public Opinion: What is it and why do we care about it? Class 1-4

#### Prior to Class 1 - May 21

Pre-read:

- Syllabus and Course Introduction (Z)
- V.O. Key, *Public Opinion and American Democracy*, 17 pps (Z)

#### Class 1 – May 21

General Intro – Politics, Public Opinion & Political Socialization & Public Relations - Course Overview

Student Intros (“Elevator Speeches”)

Study Teams Created, Discussed

Synopsis Forms Discussed

Initial Choice of Topics/Organizations to Study Discussed

Poll Watching Analyses Assigned

Ungraded paper assigned

Initial Paper Assigned

- Madison, “Federalist Paper #10” 8 pps (Z)
- Lippmann, *Public Opinion*, Chap. 1 – “The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads” (17 pps. (Z)
- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap 1 “Public Opinion in Democratic Societies” (pp.1-23)

#### Class 2 – May 28

Public Opinion Polling – A Conundrum of Controversy

Ungraded Paper Due

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap. 2 “Polling: The Scientific Assessment Of Public Opinion” (pps. 24-52)
- Zaller, Chap. 2 (pp. 6-39) (Z)
- Bishop, Chap 1 (pp. 1-17) (Z)
- Herbst, *Numbered Voices*, “Techniques of Opinion Expression and Measurement,” 15 pps. (Z)

#### Class 3 – June 4

Dynamics of Public Opinion

First Poll Watching Report Due

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap. 3 “Microlevel Opinion: The Psychology of Opinion Holding (53-90)
- Erikson and Tedin, Chap. 7, “Group Differences in Political Opinions,” (pp 184-218)
- Allen, “America’s seismic divide on race continues,” *WPost*, Jan. 8 2016 (Z)
- Other readings TBD

## Class 4 – June 11

### Public Opinion Change & Stability

#### Initial Paper Due

#### Strategic Paper (Final Paper) Assigned

- Erikson and Tedin, Chap 7, “Group Differences in Political Opinions,” (pp 184-218)
- Eriksen and Tedin, Chap 4, “Macro Level Opinion – The Flow of Public Sentiment” (pp. 90-122)
- Cillizza, “Is the American dream dead?” (Z)
- Additional readings TBD

<b>Section 2 – Political Socialization and Political Engagement: Class 5-6</b>
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## Class 5 – June 18

### Socialization and Engagement – What Are They and Why Should We Care?

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap 5 (pp.123-154)
- Lippmann, *Phantom Public*, Chap. 1, “The Disenchanted Man” (pp. 3-11) (Z)
- Multimedia: “You’ve Got to Be Taught,” from *South Pacific* (Z)
- Pew and CIRCLE material TBD
- King, “In DC schools the racial gap is a chasm, not a crack” (Z)

## Class 6 – June 25

### Values, Genes and Molecules

#### Second Poll Watching Report Due

#### Strategic Paper Interview Questionnaire Due

#### Strategic Paper Polling Questions Due

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap. 6 “Public Opinion and Democratic Stability” (pp. 155 -183)
- Edelman, *Trust Barometer* 2020, Exec. Summary – 11 pps (Z)
- Zak, “The Trust Molecule” (4 pps) (Z)
- Glueck, “Left, right: the brain science of politics” (4 pps) (Z)
- Sosnick, et al, *Applebee’s America*, Intro. and Chap. 61 pp. (Z)
- Multimedia:
  - Intro to Superman TV Show (1957): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2l4bz1FT8U>
  - Intro to The Jeffersons TV Show (1975):  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHDwRECFL8M>
  - Intro to Black-ish TV Show (2017) – TBD

**Section 3 – Role of Media in Public Opinion and Public Policy: Class 7-8**

**Class 7 – July 2**

**Understanding Media Influence**

- Eriksen and Tedin, Chap 8 “The News Media and Political Opinions” (pp 221-254)
- Goidel: Chap 4 : Dunaway, “Poll Centered News Coverage” (pp. 71-84) & Chap. 5 Herbst, “(Un)Numbered Voices,” (pp. 85-98)
- Social media articles TBD

**Class 8 – July 9**

**The Media’s Love-Hate Relationship With the Public And Public Officials – And Vice Versa**

- Pew Research Center “State of the Media” and Additional Fact Sheets
- Berry & Sberaj, *Outrage Industry*, Chap. 1 (pps. 3-25)
- Additional readings TBD

**Section 4 – Lessons for Communicators from the Trump Presidency and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Class 9-10**

**Class 9 – July 16**

**Lessons for Communicators From Donald Trump’s Presidency**

**Third Poll Watching Report Due**

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap 9 “Elections as Instruments of Popular Control” (pp 255-82)
- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap 10 “The Public and Its Elected Leaders” (pp 283-313)
- Trump-related readings TBD

**Class 10 – July 23**

**Lessons for Communicators From the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Strategic Papers Due**

- Eriksen & Tedin, Chap 11 “Public Opinion and the Performance of Democracy” (pp 314-28)
- Pandemic-related readings TBD

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