Media Effects on Contemporary Politics

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Abstract

One of the major questions in the development of present-day politics has been what *effect does the media have on contemporary politics*. The media has become a single most used tool of influence in many democratic processes to inspire the public and dictate the behavior of candidates and voters*.* Analysts have perceived the effect of media as the comportment and demean us in which the media influences political choices and actions. Studies indicate that over the years, the media has not only been key in shaping political events, but has also been vital in providing reliable source of information to citizens of a nation which they require in order to be self-governing and free. This paper focuses on the media effects on contemporary politics. This paper aims to contribute to the analysis of the effects of the media in the campaign, using data from many online databases.

Key words: Modern communication; Media; Contemporary politics; Middle east

INTRODUCTION

Many books have appeared in the last ten years on the topic of media and politics (Altheide, 1985; Altschull, 1984). Most are quite current in the way they treat modern electronic media, for that is important in emerging democracies. Although few take into account conditions or recent events associated with the Arab world or the Middle East, they are still conceptually useful to guide this research. All are written in English, primarily by American and British authors. Most of the works cited in this section were written for a general audience like Abel, E. & Robert (1983); however, the authors for the most part enjoy very good reputations as scholars and are affiliated with media or political science departments at major universities. Some of their articles appear in peer reviewed scholarly journals, some of which, as well as others, will be covered in the next section of this literature review.

An excellent historical survey by Paul Starr called *The Creation of the Media: Political Origin of Modern Communication* appeared in 2004. Starr previously won the Pulitzer Prize for *Social Transformation of America Medicine*. His current work is primarily concerned with the development of the media in the United States from the colonial period to the present. The book is divided chronologically into three parts, with the first two parts taking the reader up to 1860, and the third part dealing with the "modern" period, 1865-1941. Starr's book cannot be called current, for it doesn't touch on the development of electronic media in the past ten years or some of the key political events occurring internationally. Its next to last chapter is called "The Constitution of the Air (2)" and it is the second of two chapters, as the name suggest, that deals with sound media (radio and television). Although this is good background history, it in no way can account for the revolutionary (both technology and political) changes that have been taking place in recent years, especially in the Arab world. This limits its relevance. However, Starr's book has generated considerable attention by scholars in the field. His last chapter is called "Coda" which suggests that, as a "postscript", it is concerned with the current state of the world. But in fact Starr shows no particular comprehension of current affairs.

If there is one key concept that informs the present research it is what Starr refers to as "constitutive

moments" and the choices that shaped the growth of the media in the American past. Starr contends that technology cannot alone explain the system of communications that we have today. Rather, Starr points to the influence exerted by politics, finance and power. "At times of decision – *constitutive moments*, if you will – ideas and culture come into play, as do constellations of power, preexisting institutional legacies, and models from other countries." (Starr, *supra* note 1, at 1-2) [Italics in original] Moreover, "[a]t moments of change, a typical question is how, if at all, the state will translate the rules and policies for an old medium into rules and policies for a new one." (Starr, *supra* note 1, at 6) The circumstances may have changed – indeed, changed profoundly – but current events point to the fact that we are at a similar crossroads. Decisions may be made on the fly, but today those decisions are being guided by the same ideas that concerned decision makers in the past, only today in a part of the world quite alien to the history of the United States (Alterman, 2011).

While Starr takes a broad historical look at media and politics, Peter Dahlgren takes a decidedly more modern approach. Professor Dahlgren has published a number of books since 1995, and he has come to be an oft quoted authority in the field. In many ways, the present book, *Media and Political Engagement: Citizens, Communication and Democracy*, represent the culmination of his life's work. Mr. Dahlgren is currently professor emeritus of Media and Communication Studies at Lund University in Sweden. Though he writes for an international audience, and is Swedish by nationality, Mr. Dahlgren writes in very clear, easy to understand English that the non-specialist, general audience can appreciate.

Dahlgren's book is up-to-date, readable, incisive, and relevant. He is very much aware of what is going on today, not just in the mature democracies such as the United States and Western European nations, but the developing democracies as well. That includes, of course, the developing democracies where democracy has not only been absent in the recent past, but is going through its birth throes, as the world looks on in amazement.

A key concept in Dahlgren's book is "political engagement" – or the lack of it. If there is a lack of engagement in the mature democracies, that is not the case in the developing democracies, where political engagement is vociferous, and at times violent. According to Dahlgren, without a limited amount of involvement from its citizens, democracy loses its legitimacy. Incisively, Dahlgren points out that "democracy emerges, at best, unevenly across the world . . ." (p. 2) "It rarely comes as a gift to the people from the powerful circles." Not only has democracy manifested itself in different circumstances, depending upon geography, but different societies have had varying conceptions about its ideals, as Dahlgren points out in his introduction.

What makes engagement even more important in the present first decade of the present century is of course the internet, which has a considerable communication dimension. It has changed the prior one-way media information flow into one of greater two way political engagement. The internet has changed the dynamics of how citizens use the media to advance their democratic causes. Grass roots democracy can be smooth and natural, but it can also be violent as it emerges in authoritarian regimes across the globe. Americans steeped in their own history often look in amazement and wonder, as well as fear, at democratic movements in Iran, Egypt and other north African Muslim nations.

One of the distinctive features of Dahlgren's book is how it treats citizenship as a strategic concept in the central analysis of the media and empowerment and the public interest. The book offers an original model of civic culture – one of several Dahlgren uses – as it sets forth the multiple cultural and social roots of political participation.

For Dahlgren, the media are a "prerequisite – though by no means a guarantee" in shaping the newest democracies. Dahlgren states that while he draws generally in his book from various currents in social theory and media theory, not least with constructionist influences, his attempts to deal with the array of problems that cluster around the key notions of democracy and the media derive largely from three specific traditions. He states that he has not, nor would he propose, a synthesis of them. This trilogy consists of political communication, public sphere theory, and culturalist theory.

In *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds* (2006), Ted Brader focuses on television advertising messages. It is common knowledge that TV advertising is important to political campaigns (Brader is mostly focused on politics in the U.S.) and that emotional appeals are at the heart of these ads. But little is known about them and how they work. What Brader does that adds to our knowledge of media and politics is that he has conducted a number of experiments that have achieved startling results. Simply changing the music, for example, but not changing anything else in a TV ad can change the viewer's perceptions and the appeal of a candidate (Al-Jenaibi, 2014). This comes as no particular surprise. But then some of his experiments are surprising and revealing. For example, he shows that politically informed citizens are more easily manipulated by emotional appeals than less involved citizens. One would think the opposite would be true. Also surprising is that positive "enthusiasm ads" are more polarizing than "fear ads". Again, tuition would suggest the opposite. Moreover, black and white images are ten times more likely to signal an appeal to anger or fear than one of enthusiasm or pride. Whatever we thought we knew about political ads is largely dispelled in this excellent study.

The main focus of this book then is on the experiments Brader conducted, focusing on how emotional imagery and music accentuate the influence of ads. The experiments tested whether affective intelligence is at play when we view emotional cues in ads. As Brader explains, affective intelligence hypothesizes that two fundamental systems (enthusiasm / satisfaction or depression / frustration) are at work in shaping our political choices. If the political information we receive is positive, then we use such political habits as partisanship, prejudices and social identity to make sense of the information (Al-Jenaibi, 2011). If, on the other hand, we receive threatening information we pay more attention to alternative arguments and information.

At first glance, Brader's book seems to add little to the discussion of emotional appeals in advertising. But, in actuality, only a very few studies have been done in the area Brader has chosen to work in. Although numerous findings in psychology, neuroscience, and behavioral research suggest that emotional appeals and reactions play an important role when it comes to all kinds of decisions, including voting decisions, social researchers in the United States (Althusser, L. (1971) have tended to primarily concern themselves with the rational mechanisms involved, perhaps in keeping with theoretical democratic ideals, as Brader suggests. Brader breaks with this tradition. As Brader points out, whereas politicians, advertising agencies and journalists assume, rightly, that emotions must play a major role in election advertising, traditional research in the political sciences offers no approach that would allow one to gauge whether this assumptions is in fact true. So, in a sense, those who prepare those ads are relying on guesswork in deciding whether a political ad will work; sometimes they are wrong.

Brader's counterintuitive research findings overturn conventional wisdom we have about political advertising and their emotional content. Though the findings are complex and rich, the book is highly readable with its engaging style. This book tests, for the first time, basic propositions about how emotional appeals affect voters' preferences and behavior. It is a rich, lucid exploration based on many old and new accounts that make this work an important and timely contribution for scholars and practitioners alike. The book shows that emotions matter—but not in the ways we commonly suppose. Brader's book breaks down our reliance on that easy understanding and forces us to think more consciously about how images, emotions, cognitions, and political choices are bound together. Brader writes that anxiety produced by ads that incite fear is a motivating force, not a debilitating force, in politics. And while negative ads that critique, smear, or strike fear into voters are often perceived as a bad element of politics, they are often persuasive. Brader argues that playing on viewers' feelings will help to reinvigorate campaigns and politics as a whole. Although many studies

have been done, few have systematically analyzed the role of emotion in political campaigns. The author seeks to close this gap through the content analysis of more than 1,400 political ads with their systematic experimental investigation of the effect different types of ads have upon citizens. The book assembles and probes a wide range of quantitative and qualitative information. Brader also succinctly summarizes five decades of voting behavior research as well as recent psychological investigations of how the human brain processes affective information.

Dan Hahn has written and spoken widely about American politics. His book, *Political Communication: Rhetoric, Government and Citizens* (2010), offers its readers an opportunity to logically analyze the political rhetoric appearing in newspapers, on television and on radio, especially during election years. The book is more like a textbook, but an excellent textbook, yet as a textbook it breaks no new ground in scholarship.

The book covers a variety of suggestions on ways to analyze politics. Hahn addresses ways of looking at American political ideology, ideology and the media, sexual language and politics, the use of language in politics, and political campaigns.

Throughout the book, Hahn argues that the basic issues of politics center around a single question: How much freedom versus how much order? Depending on the issue, liberals and conservatives will answer differently. For example, Hahn notes that while liberals believe in freedom in the civil-rights arena, conservatives believe in order in the civil-rights arena; and while liberals believe in order in the economic arena, conservatives believe in freedom in the economic arena (p.5).

As mentioned above, the book also offers concrete ideas about how to be more rigorous in analyzing the rhetoric of politicians. Hahn uses the example of President Ronald Reagan's promise in his 1980 Inaugural Address that it was "morning in America." This is an example of brilliant rhetoric, according to Hahn. It is a phrase that is easy to recall even several decades later, and now appears in standard biographies of Reagan. But what does it really tell us? More recently, President Clinton promised the American people that he would help lead them to "build a bridge to the 21st Century." Again, this sounds great, but such metaphors in print sound rather empty.

Among the most interesting chapters in the book are those dealing with the use of language in political communication. For example, Chapter Eight deals with sexual language and political rhetoric (pp.133-63) and how political communication reinforces binary categories such as masculine and feminine. As Hahn notes, these binary categories include male versus female, rationality versus emotionality, activity versus passivity, hard versus soft, war versus peace, with all the characteristics we associate with maleness on one side and those associated with femaleness on the other (p.135). Such binary language, Hahn argues, tends to favor men, particularly

in the public sphere of politics. In Chapter Nine Hahn continues in a similar vein in his analysis of the marriage metaphor in politics. Hahn offers good examples of how the marriage metaphor works, and how they can be easily found in the rhetoric of presidential candidates during the campaign season.

Phillippe Maarek's *Campaign Communication and Political Marketing* (2011) is a comprehensive, international study of the modern political campaign. Maarek is a professor of Information and Communication Science at the University of Paris East. He is also the founder and director of the Center for Comparative Studies in Political and Public Communication. Maarek has authored numerous books on political marketing, though the present book is perhaps his most comprehensive book on the subject to appear in English. It is a comprehensive internationalist study of the modern political campaign. He is equally at home writing about American political campaigns as well as those in his native France. It offers comparative analysis of campaigns from country to country, and covers such topics as advertising strategy, demography, to the effect of campaign finance reduction on funding. His case studies include those of Barack Obama and Nicolas Sarkozy.

What is most impressive is Maarek's analysis of the structure and development of political marketing. It is a thorough examination of the strategies used by election campaign teams. His book – in four parts – begins by giving an account of the development of modern political marketing, starting in the modern era with John F. Kennedy. The next part gives an account of the general "rules" in the political marketing campaigns (such as being on message). He then goes on to give an analysis of different marketing tools and the best way of structuring a campaign team. Some might accuse him of being overly clinical, but he is at his best when he describes with scientific precision a complex system within marketing. For example, in the arcane area of targeting a campaign, Maarek uses a series of complex diagrams to describe the relations between the "transmitter", the medium, and "opinion relays". Finally, he describes how opinion polling must influence one's targeting, and includes in this section a detailed summary of socio-cultural categories for different kinds of voters. If the book can be faulted, it his less than in-depth knowledge or appreciation for the more cutting-edges of technology, including the internet. While he points out the importance of online campaigning in the Obama campaign, his detached way of handling the internet suggests that he sees it is an ephemeral phenomenon. If the book is found by political science students twenty years from now, that might have the effect of making Maarek appear to be out of touch with the current world. Perhaps he is hedging, but compared to other writers he is less incisive in appreciating the new technology. He has failed to sufficiently take into account the growing online readership that has begun to eclipse the printed versions of newspapers. The internet, in fact, has profound consequences for the rest of the world, especially in the emerging democracies of developing countries, and especially in the area the present research is interested in.

There is another weakness in the book. Unlike other books on the topic of political marketing, Maarek's book is not about the "art" of political marketing; rather, it deals with the science of marketing. He describes every detail of the political marketing campaign with meticulous precision and with precise subdivisions and diagrams. It is the diagrams that are most fascinating in their complexity and number. They are interspersed throughout the text of the book. But Maarek offers little insight into the more creative thinking that goes into political campaigns, and the emotional responses they have. Perhaps that is because he writes from the vantage point of an academic institution, rather than one who is involved in actual day to day campaigns himself. While covering political campaigns on a grand international, and historical, scale, Maarek does not discuss the actual marketing process of a campaign itself or how ideas are generated in campaigns – of how ideas are rejected and embraced in the brainstorming period in the early stages of a campaign.

John Gastil has been a major voice on the issue of deliberative democracy, for the past 15 years. His book *Political Communication and Deliberation* thoroughly captures the broad work being done in the field concerning public deliberation and political communication. The act of deliberation can be defined as the act of reflecting carefully on an issue, weighing the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions to a problem. Its aim is to reach a judgment or decision that is factually based, but also considers values and emotions. Professor Gastil is most interested in deliberation done as a group act, whether in a small grass roots organization, a jury, or in a nation. This book takes a unique approach by viewing key concepts and research in the light of democratic theory.

This book has the appearance of a textbook, and that of course is Professor Gastil's intention that it be used as such. It can easily fit into introductory political communication courses. But as a textbook, it is more of a survey than a thorough treatment of one narrow topic. Yet, it gives excellent examples to connect ideas with real world events, and this is its value to the present research.

Gastil's book is a valuable addition to a field that has not been well covered by other political scientists. Too much attention is given by others on mass media and government, and not enough on other topics. Moreover, while they are justifiably critical of mass political communication, the grounds of their criticism are not sufficiently covered. Gastil fills that gap with incisive analysis. Rather than merely complain about the mass

media, as many others do, he goes into the normative basis in which they operate, an area which is rarely discussed. Again, Gastil fills the gap by offering greater depth to the discussion. In chapters 2- 5 he covers introductory matters having to do with political communication, but adds chapters on juries, public meetings, community discussions, and even to international communication.

Gastil uses a deliberative framework to connect the book's disparate subjects together. Each chapter begins by placing its subject within a deliberative frame. It looks at the empirical literature to evaluate the degree to which the current state meets deliberative ideals. Gastil is not shy about offering his critique, offering a dark picture of the American democratic system. He says that Americans tend to avoid meaningful political conversations (p.26) and that the mass media tend to erode public trust in government, making Americans more cynical about public life (p.62). Moreover, he contends that political elections do little to promote a deliberative process.

Gastil defines deliberation in terms of five practices: the acquisition of information; identification and prioritization of values; consideration of a broad range of solutions that could address a problem; consideration of potential consequences, and their trade-offs; and choosing among proposed solutions. (p.9) According to Gastil, though it may be manifested in a variety of ways, deliberation will always entail some variation of these five practices. This definition, which is simultaneously concrete and abstract is useful because it builds on prior attempts by others to define the term. While deliberation is universal, it must be seen in its particular manifestation or context. Gastil says, rightly I think, that reason is central to deliberation, but does not rule out other communicative forms (e.g. emotional appeals and storytelling).

Practitioners, not just academics, will find a lot that is valuable in this work. They will read that vibrant deliberative communities are characterized by multiple and overlapping systems and processes. According to Gastil, from informal conversations to formal public meetings, or from electoral competition to community dialogue, a variety of modes of communication and social interaction fit into a complex deliberative democratic system. (p.284) By making this systems framework explicit, Gastil suggests to deliberative practitioners to think in terms of systems and processes when seeking to promote deliberation in their communities.

If there is anything missing from this book it is the lack of a discussion of alternative views of democracy. There are of course many ways of viewing this abstract concept. We too often take it as self-evident that democracy ought to be more deliberative. But this view is not universal adhered to, especially among theorists of democracy. Such views include representative theories to elitist theories, and agonistic theories to pluralism. Gastil might have suggested that if the mature Western democracies would consider alternatives views of democracy, they might be less surprised, and more understanding, of events that are taking place in the Muslim world today. There, democratic movements are happening before the world's eyes in ways that 18th century American and French revolutionists would have never envisioned.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The work of media is possibly surrounded by factual information (Aday et al., 2010). This is mainly due to the fact that most of what is reported can be seen and proved, therefore making the information undoubtedly correct. The notion of availing the factual information has been the key icon in making media the major eye and a peephole that can be used to focus at the intrinsic connotation of political systems and actions that could otherwise remain forever untold. However, some occurrences generally get beyond one's comprehension capacity and therefore lack the simplicity of expression that can be used to relay the message.

From a political point of view, the potential influence that the media has in shaping a nation's political system is immense. Heyrman (2007, p.1246) indicates that this is due to the fact that the message broadcasted in the media reaches a majority of people. It is imperative to note that the ability to effectively employ media in a logical and critical mode to provide the correct and timely information is very critical in contemporary politics. Its importance is however even more critical during wars in generating the necessary responses and therefore facilitating the correct decisions making by the opposing parties and the international community.

Roselle (2011, p.199) explains that following the rising levels of media especially with the masses, states both at the local and international level have seen an expanded tool for defeating their rivals and enhancing their political interests. History indicates that earlier on, majority of global communities were increasingly shifting their focus towards getting external states and colonies. Organization of communication and use of media therefore took a central outlook where governments regulated not only the main operations, but also the manner in which communication was done. The media was therefore seen and employed as a tool for political gain to infer propagandas on one state by another. Ogundimu (2007, p.117) indicates that in Britain, the popular journalists who had great influence on the masses were recruited to directly influence the opinion of the public through propagandas. Unlike in Britain where the communication industry was strongly used to spread propaganda mainly oriented towards promoting war, the United States used the media to spread propagandas that condemned war during the World War I.

Besides, the need to control the media has over the years continued to intensify from the earlier years of the

20th century. During its period, governments cemented their need for stronger leadership and expounded influence of the local people. Therefore, the approach towards control shifted from the direct control to a more advanced control of the system executed through licensing. It is no doubt as Ruppert (2005, p.1221) indicates the influence of media on politics was not only fast growing by 1930s, but also threatened to get out of proportions. Licensing was therefore assimilated to contain the reach of the people and reduce unwanted influences while further maintaining the ruling elites' opinions only as opposed to application of democratic management and leadership. The mass media industries were indirectly coerced and forced to give information only to stable societies especially after the oppressive regimes were shocked by the great depression of 1930 (Roskin, 2004, p.240).

The public often form its opinion in response to the cueing of voices in the media or news which they relate with their wellbeing. For instance, before the invasion of Iraq in the year 2003, opinion polls indicated that more people preferred to war but only if there was effective coalition with the media to update them on the progress. Thus the government used the politics of misinformation to win over the public to its side. Compared to other western democratic press system, the US media is much more closed to the opinion of the entire world. This brings out the culture of isolation and patriotism in various interventions (Kinkley, 2001, p.199). This can cost politicians their patriotic credentials whenever they question values and motives as to why the government opted to use force on terrorism. As a result, the administration has been taking the advantage in making majority if the decisions and implement them knowing very well that no one would question them.

Despite the government using the media to get the war started, it denied it the necessary freedom to report on any matter that would raise doubts in people's minds for its war views credibility (Al-Jenaibi, 2012). For instance, the existence of black water in Iraq was not mentioned at any one point in the media reports as they would bring controversy on the government's intention to conquer the country for economic interest (Winston, 2007, p.1048). The public would also have wanted to find out whether the existence of backwaters in Iraq was legal

However, it is worth noting that due to its international orientation, it has become hard to regulate and specifically constrain the media under particular national legislations. Majority of media practitioners across the globe have lamented over the current trend where freedom of the press has to a large extent been constrained using various laws crafted by political institutions (Hyden, 2006, p.359). Notably, the use of social network sites has opened a new chapter where politicians are able to directly meet and influence the communities with an even greater convincing ability (Al-Jenaibi, 2014). Though analysts indicate that the political elite still seek to control the

media as a repositioning strategy, the need to embrace a more democratic and open system is necessary. In the current political arena, the levels of enlightenment by the communities have culminated to intensification of the media commercialization through advertisements. Tsfati (2006, p.201) indicates that it is this combination as has brought a new ideological commitment at the political and leadership realms. In Britain and United States, the politics of de-regulation of media industry has become a core element in gauging their general orientation towards their commitment to liberalization and application of democratic ideals.

It is from this consideration that this paper explores the *effect of media on contemporary politics* to identify how it is currently used, regulated and organized. Besides, the paper also evaluates the extent to which emergence of new technologies has posted key challenges to the manner in which the media is reporting political affairs in the society.

Nearly two-thirds of British citizens cite television as their primary source of information policy. The print is in second position with only 29%. Newspapers seem to be primarily a source of information. Additional knowing that 44% of respondents ranked the press as a second source of information. The radio comes in all cases far behind with 4% of Britons who cite as primary source of information. The statement is true for all industrialized countries.

The great paradox of this primacy of television as a means of discrediting information comes from the massive overwhelming wild the house on its ability to provide reliable information. Surveys of public confidence in the media, such that publishes Télérama, are indeed systematically television behind newspapers and radio when the variable informational is considered . The second function of the media is to receive, relay and stimulate public debate. In this sense, the media and especially television replace the Parliament as the privileged place of confrontation between political opponents. As shown including Iyengar, citizens are the political game based on reflection they have during televised debates. The case of presidential elections is the best illustration. The key moment of a campaign presi- dential is the debate between the two competing broadcast on television. More than any election meeting or parliamentary debate, the controversial broadcast on TV screens will build the image that Citizens of competition for accession to the presidency. The development and especially the diffusion of new modern communication, which become obligatory points of passage of career politicians with national ambitions have caused a progressive displacement of the center of gravity of the space political, parliamentary assemblies to the media. Finally, the last function, which also raises the more debate, is that the media are opinion makers. They do content to transmit political information, they build also. As articulate Butler and Ranney: The role of the media has moved increasingly from Merely Being a channel of commu-tion to be has major actor in the

campaign process, as it seeks the persons and the issues to be covered. Examples of the active role of the media in the construction of political reality are many. In 1992, the virulent campaign. Britain tabloids conservatives against the party Labour helped create the image of a radically Labour left (Looney left). This campaign was then asked to in- influence of the media knowing that almost all popular tabloidslar favored the Conservative Party. In the same logic, as explained in page, the support of Times and the Washington Post to the first Gulf War conditioned the perception of the conflict by U.S. citizens. Support of Fox News in the last conflict Iraq played in the same direction. In Italy, the political career of Silvio Berlusconi illustrates perfectly the way, as he proved this via hirelings television (channels his Mediaset group) and accomplices (Public television RAI) who promoted his political developments questions that can conquer exercise power facilities can be found when we control, politically and / or economically, stations collecting nine-tenths of the hearing of the nation, we tend to govern. The next legislative transalpine us also offer an interesting fight international media, since, through the more or less pressed in one or the other of the candidates oppose competing in an almost perfect homogeneity, the two major means of communication in the last century. The press, to Liberal Corriere della Sera indeed ranks behind Romano Prodi, while television, no need to specify apparent more or less discreetly Berlusconi. Moreover, two candidates all objects on the form and substance, it is not surprising that the messages and the Professor Sua Emittenza express themselves through different channels. This string of examples of media support for a cause triumph should not infer mechanical influence of the media opinion, far from it. In fact, one could multiply in the environment against-the examples of media almost unanimously contradicted by elector since Roosevelt fighting against a Republican press in its majority to the recent French constitutional referendum.

This active role of the media in the construction of political reality, it is undeniable, must be tempered in the light of its translations alleged election. We even find in this area, facing what Jacques Le Bohec calls journalistic myth.

> In for electoral influence, we observe that all the denials offered by the election results and the work of researchers have failed end to the belief (particularly prevalent among men political) importance of the media as a means to persuade the public.

Being aware of the strong influence of the media on the construction political reality, the question for political science, but more broadly for democratic societies is to determine whether is good to let the information be transmitted by media groups-ticks with political goals (Al-Jenaibi, 2014, Al-Jenaibi, 2011). Such a situation does not exclude certain political views that are not consistent with the guidelines of the owners of large political groups questions? And even when the political bias are not

aware, the generalist TV channels through their constant search for less- objection program does not lock out their political expression prohibiting antenna interlocutors most radical, even those which are often the most innovative? This will Rassem-driving bridge the wider audience, producing a consensus media Guy Debord led, with many others, to lament in an analysis standing, this endless series of trivial confrontations.

Many detractors of a single thought this expression was, Ironically, flourished into the most media circles agreed and in the most diverse meanings, take their arguments herring the most salient. Beyond these debates on media functions in a demo- democracy, the second line of approach to science policy in relation to the relationship between politics and the press about the effects of the mediation of politics. Various studies have been examined in this regard how the growing media and television has changed the way policy is made and how its players are organized. The small screen is not just to provide political exercise power or aspire to conquer the powerful and immediate contact with the people. It requires them to change their agenda to transform their language and treat their appearance

For starters, the omnipresence of the media and their dominant role in the construction of political reality has changed profoundly the political action itself. Indeed, to be a decision a position or even a political actor must be present in Media. In these circumstances, any action must be before reflected all over the advertising that can be drawn. One of consequences of this logic dictated by the media is that ministers and policy-makers are increasingly surrounded by advisers of communication. The weight spokesman grew at the expense other collaborators (Al-Jenaibi, 2014). This evolution is marked at the ministerial level, but also within the parties themselves. When the media were not the channel information dominant political parties should have a broad base of activists. They had the task of informing citizens on the actions and pronouncements of their training.

In a system where the media are central to these grassroots activists have lost their appeal. The parties are therefore professionalized and have increasingly engaged in communication consultants, spin doctors. Direct contact with the voters of the party activists through was gradually replaced by indirect links through the media and public relations specialists. The time of politics where the centrality of communication and the media is the most striking is the campaign. The fight for access to elective gradually reformed to meet the interests and needs of the media. In particular, the parties have changed their field craft. Increasingly, they had recourse to experts in communication, polls opinion and marketing specialists to carry out a campaign election. As stated by Bowler and Farrell, "it is no exaggeration to state quale use of political advertising companies by parts is the

norm in electoral campaigning". Many examples come to confirm this assertion. The advertising companies who participated the great campaigns in different countries are increasing, with, you know, more or less fortune (Al-Jenaibi, 2014). But more than change the entourage of politicians in political action and election campaigns, the media profoundly changed the heart of democratic life by placing individual candidates over parties. "These are not parties used to relay communication between policy makers and citizens". For many authors, the personalization of politics is the most important brand of television on life democratic. As explained Swanson and Mancini: In general, the size of television favors for formal structural and reasons. formally the medium favors the representation of human figures over complex institutions such as political parties, while structurally, the medium's commercial offering access logic favors to all candidates who can pay the cost of advertising, passing over the parts.

In other words, the media had such a major effect on individual candidates forward at the expense of their party. In the Belgian case, the most striking example is that of the five tele- tubbiest of sp.a. Freya Vandenbossche, Johan Vande Lanotte, Frank Vandenbroucke, Steve and Patrick Janssens Stevaert were omnipresent in the Flemish media during election campaigns Federal regional 2003 and 2004. These five popular personalities clearly took the ascendancy over their party. It is not, however, an exceptional case, but rather one of many. Thus, the Netherlands Low, the success of the Pim Fortuyn List in 2002 he built the popularity and strong media presence of Pim Fortuyn.

A corollary of the personalization of politics induced by the media, especially television, is the emergence of a new type of candidates, celebrity Politicians. These are two types. On one side are the elected officials who had gained noto- Riete outside the political sphere and which are used to enter successfully in the electoral race. There are many examples: Ronald Reagan, Sebastian Coe (Olympic athletics champion became British MP), Bernard Tapie, Arnold Schwarzenegger . The phenomenon has also not spared Belgium. In Flanders, the Bekende Vlamingen (BVS) are many: Jean-Marie Dedecker (VLD, coach of the national team judo), Dirck Sterckx (VLD, journalist), Anke Van Dermeersch (Vlaams Belang, former Miss Belgium) Herman Schueremans (VLD organizer Rock Werchter), Chokri Mahassine (SP.A, Pukkelpop organizer). In the Francophone Also, the phenomenon has grown with Marc Wilmots (MR, footballer), Frédérique Ries (MR, journalist), Antonio Di Carlo (CDH, Dour Festival organizer), Jean-Marc Nollet (Ecolo, former President of the ETF).

The other category includes celebrity Politicians officials policies that become famous for their participation in events ments and activities that are not directly related to their political functions ticks. It is, for example, elected officials who have gained in popularity through their

participation in television do not have a political purpose. The presence of Flemish policy makers to entertainment such as Mens Slimste could allow the emergence of this new type of celebrity Politicians. In the same logic include the involvement of former Liberal president British, Charles Kennedy, the popular show Have I Got News for You? Even if the link-celebrity political career is different for two types of celebrity politicians, the logic behind their presence increased policy is the same. Given the centrality of media and especially television, access to information policy, will media resource is increasingly sought by the parties to win an election. Being known and present in the media is a new resource that is aspiring to electoffice argue in the same way that any local roots or associated ciatif. Television and endorses a selection function elites policies breaking with the traditional course and gradual militant who, through hard work and commitment through the ranks of the noto-Riete partisan, from the local to the national. Activism, and said work "Field", qualities necessary and sufficient political leaders of the past must now be matched by telegenic to allow access to positions of high responsibility, so high visibility. This process of personalization of politics is to ex- reforms in some institutionally primer applied to life internal parties and the selection of candidates for elective positions. In, indeed, the three traditional parties now elect their French president by universal suffrage of their members, liberals and socialists who joined successively in the late 1980s and the late 1990s, a movement launched in the 1960s by the party Christian social. What time of ratification obvious symbolic the influence of one person - the party is for me. On an organized that these partisan elections - often - a foregone, although wreathed in phraseology participatory? On a broader scale, since reaching directly the entire system via supporter revisions to the electoral law, the halving effect devotion the case decided under the head of government arc-en-ciel, and Wallonia, the recent amendment to the Municipal Act establishing a semblance of direct election of the mayor part of the same trend towards individualization of political competition. These institutional embodiments the iron law of customizing have to point it, was welcomed by most opinion leaders, media, or political landscape of the French.

After reading the preceding pages, we see many of the importance of the media in contemporary political life, but also their multiple influences on the democratic system. In this context, a study of the sensationalism of political figures in television programs in the French Community is that is relevant to better understand the complex relationship of multiple stakes and ambiguous relationship between media and politics. In particular, one of the central questions that arise is who dominates the relationship between media and politics. For some, it is a logical media where they set the political agenda. The choice of the central themes of politics and personalities making the news is determined by the press according

to its own requirements. The political world would be and helpless, forced to constantly sniff the air for media responds appropriately. Thus, we have already had occasion to emphasize that many analysts are questioning disenchanted Amendment on what the media to our policy, with the assumption logic permanent media that corrupt the public mind, and therefore impose the themes that are topical themes on which Politicians are asked to position themselves. It has already been extensively glossed the alleged highlighted the theme of insecurity by French newscasts in the months before the presidential 2002. A major beneficiary of a campaign oriented and has also admitted deliberately pressed the issue of security because of multiple television reports about it. "You know, I also look at the news. What I see from the months and months: Every day, these acts of violence, delinquency, crime. It is the reflection of a certain situation. It is not me who chose your subjects," declared Jacques Chirac indeed Olivier Mazerolles April 24, 2002. The media do not directly opinion, do not give less of your news and political debates. "[The media] may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, it is stunningly successful purpose in telling its readers what to think about".

Conversely, other authors consider that despite their centrality, media remain subject to the policies. It is the latter that set the agenda and decides who will be in the press. The requirements that determine media presence are those parties and not those media too dependent financially and politically able to effectively oppose the power of communicating. These antagonistic discourse on media power, and in particular the agenda-setting, overlapping the sociological distinction between populism miserabilism and, depending on whether the observer is in solidarity with the condition journalistic or contemporary political condition. If reality is probably more mixed and more complex, it remains true that the question of the relative strengths of the media and politicians is one of central issues to consider if you want to avoid drift.

A significant pan of the sociology of communication, since Mc Combs and Shaw. And especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, has attempted to empirically measure the function of agenda-setting, with variable success, but makes some compelling observations. The synthesis work conducted in Belgium by Stefean Walgrave, Michiel Nuytemans Lieven De Winter and as such is called to quickly figure reference. These authors conclude their particular analysis-by-modest assertion that the media setting the agenda policy very contingent, depending on circumstances media powers which have no control: the where, what, who and when to of political agenda-setting. In addition, this function agenda-setting does take its full potential on the symbolic aspect policy agenda (the agenda of parliament), and less its institutional aspect (government program)

In any case, the perception of the influence of television feeds findings more or less controversial circular flow of information and standardization of media content, especially television news. But scientific studies on the subject unable to decide definitely in favor of homogeneity or increasing heterogeneity of television news content. Thus Sinardet, Dandoy and De Swert have for Belgium, concluded that logs four generalist channels Belgian public and private, French and Flemish kept positioning of separate editorials throughout the nineties, especially RTBF with content significantly different from those of its competitors

2. AN EXPLORATION OF THE EFFECTS OF TELEVISION

Election campaigns are a time of political life that is both good and bad known. As noted by the American political scientist James Stimson, their role and function remain highly debated. Some approaches tend to relativize voting influence campaigns. Thus, economic models of voting, such as Iowa, have shown that the economic parameters (growth, unemployment rate) or political (Popularity executive) were generally good predictors of election results. If the outcome of an election depends primarily on the state of the economy of a country and variables structural or long-term, what good is therefore to campaign and deploy strategies communication? Conversely, other studies underline the increasing volatility of electorates, the tendency of some citizens to choose the candidate for whom they will vote in the weeks before the election, and the greater sensitivity of voters to conditions and supply policy. In this perspective, campaigns play a decisive role on electoral outcomes.

Similarly, the role and influence of the media are the subject of much debate (Arafa, Auter & Al-Jaber, 2005). For number of citizens and political actors, the media "do" the election. Many are convinced that some TV channels and radio stations, by their coverage of the campaign, and direct voting a candidate to win. Political scientists and sociologists media themselves more nuance enough to think that belief in the power of the media is stronger than their real influence. The consensus among specialists is to consider the media as players not have a direct power persuasion, but only likely to have indirect effects: cognitive effects (Including information on environmental distant voter) calendar effects and / or initiation (definition questions structuring the political debate or criteria evaluation of candidates); framing effects (patterns of interpretation problems social). The media do not say who to vote for, but have an influence on what to what we think of when we decide our vote.

The idea that media campaigns or have very little influence on the elections appears cons-intuitive. If the

TV has so little power, why are they candidates so hard to appear to their advantage? If the campaign has so little impact, how to explain the impressive progression of François Bayrou in the polls, in the space of two months, from 7% to about 20% of voting intentions? Can explain the results of one round of the 2002 presidential election regardless of media treatment of the issue of insecurity and the importance given to certain facts by various television channels? These factors argue in favor of a good influence of the media and the country, but relativize the other as well. How and Nicolas Sarkozy, despite his repositioning "consensus" reached in December 2006 and his talents communicator, worried many French in February 2007 that it was the case in March 2006? How is it that audiences of television and major newspapers television do not vote more evenly and, for example, there were more Lionel Jospin voters among viewers than among those of TF1 France 2? Clearly, the effects of the media and the election campaign are complex and vary the candidate channels or categories of voters considered. This report aims to contribute to the analysis of the effects of the media in the campaign, using data from four waves of the French political barometer, studying more particularly the relationships between images of three candidates (François Bayrou, Ségolène Royal and Nicolas Sarkozy) and listening to news broadcasts (these being the main source of political information for voters). Watching a particular newscast (JT) he changed the perception of the candidates in the presidential election between March 2006 and February 2007? Possible to measure this influence, we must consider the ability of voters to "resist" effect or an effect media campaign (Apter, 1987). It is likely that a voter left watching the JT TF1 does not see, and do not store, exactly the same right thing a voter who looks the same JT. Presumably directions policies of voters - for example their self-positioning on a left-right scale- play as a filter on the collection of information disseminated by the media. By also, some people are more sensitive than the other effects of the media? Can say for example that very politicized voters are more vulnerable to the effects of media because they have fewer resources to decrypt the communication strategies candidates? Or, more politicized voters are not they the most sensitive to media effects because they are big consumers and follow more than other continuous flow of news?

On the methodological level, the study of media effects can be conducted in different ways. One approach would be to study the correspondence between the image of broadcast by each candidate JT and the image perceived by their respective audiences. But this approach requires a research heavy since we perform an analysis numerous qualitative JT. Moreover, even adopting a very precise analytical and rigorous coding protocol, we know that this type of analysis has been largely, subjectivity. That

is why we have adopted an alternative approach that is based on variations pictures of candidates from different viewers JT between March 2006 (wave 1 Barometer) and February 2007 (Wave 2). If these images change, is that there well influence the media watched. However that this conclusion can be drawn, it is also necessary that these variations are not related to a change in the composition of audiences. We will see that this condition is well respected in the first part of this report in which we show the great stability information practices: the sociological or political profile of different JT has hardly changed. Then in a second part, we establish the existence of a "chain effect" that transcends political preferences and can be summarized as follows: policy-oriented equivalently, voters do not have the same image after the JT candidates they look, and these perceptual differences increased between March 2006 and February 2007.

3. THE STABILITY OF PRACTICES OF INFORMATION VOTERS

The various waves Barometer indicate the high stability practices voter information that can be examined along three dimensions: the media privileged to inform policy on the frequency of listening to the newscast, the news (JT) most regularly watched (Atwood, Bullion & Murphy, 1982). The development of the campaign has changed little in this regard. He has no particular caused a greater interest in the Internet. For example, searching for information of different nature) which remains a source of very secondary information (used by 16% of voters as first or second source of information, but only 6% in first). Even if the frequency of the use of Internet to search for information policy appears to have increased since November 2006. This does not undermine the hierarchy of sources of information.

4. THE EFFECTS OF MEDIA ON THE IMAGES OF CANDIDATES

Before examining the possible influence of media images of candidates, recall developments that have been measured globally over the past year (Almond & Verba, 1963).The French political barometer can observe a certain stability but also significant changes in the images of Nicolas Sarkozy, Ségolène Royal and François Bayrou, measured through three questions: Does the candidate the makings of a President (Ability to the presidential office) it includes people like me (listening skills); he worried?

CONCLUSION

The influence of the media on the current politics is predominant due to facts that may seem obvious.

However, it is important to justify the importance of the phenomenon to consider in more detail. This change is to try to identify the contours and effects. In Here, for many authors, the significance of the media and a fortiori television are a major feature of the policy since the 1960s. According to Pippa Norris, the centrality of media in the political game is the same specificity, the heart of the political modern policy. Some authors postulate even leave entanglement nit ale policy and communication, so the media. Sofor Breton, like other sociologists of media, politics the communication is inherently democratic era. Otherwise, it is not. Still, the emergence of television in the home-ball pays unquestionably gives media and hence political, from the late 1960s, a period from which the small screen starts its domination of the media system, relegating press and radio, other- Once dominant, the trailer audiovisual.

Many scholars to adopt a vision of trilogy media history. Thereon describes in three successive ages, respectively through the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century: The age of press opinion, the age of the press infarction, and the age of the spectacle. Taking the same trilogy structure and correlating practices policies, as political scientist Pippa Norris three different eras: pre-modern, modern and post-modern. During the pre-modern period, the policy is characterized by a communication campaign and managed locally by the parties and activists. These are the main source of political information through pamphlets, meetings and partisan newspapers. In this era the modern era successor whose distinctive feature is that politics is structured around independent media, the news of course, but also and especially television. Campaigns become leading in national and pluralistic media supersede the partisan press. Finally, Norris sees the beginnings emerge a post-modern era where new information technologies supplant traditional media and will decentralize campaigns to tailor the message to every voter Share this observation with a centrality of media, and in particu- bind television in contemporary political life, many political scientists have developed research on relationship between media and politics. These studies have mainly followed two directions. On the one hand, many works were devoted to functions of the media in the political system. The other, more analyzes have studied the effects of media on politics in democracies. To the stage of this study, the prin-cipaux teachings of two approaches to the relationship between media and policies will be presented. With regard to the functions of the media in democratic lifetion, they are threefold. The first, most obvious, is information. The press and television are responsible for transmitting citizens what are proposed, agreed and implemented by the responsible policy makers. In this regard, it appears that the size of the television lion's share with respect to the information function. Thus, as Negrine noted, television is by far the Media Reference information policy in Britain.

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