

ASTK18177U

Passionate Politics

Spring 2019

Tuesdays 13:15-15:00

Room: CSS-2-1-30

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INTRODUCTION

This course discusses political mobilisation as well as political attitudes formation: the factors that motivate political involvement and the consequences that high levels of public engagement have on elections and the development of public policy. Traditional explanations of political engagement emphasise the role of socialization, economic background, or rationality in mobilising voters. In recent years, however, the role of passion and emotions, such as fear, anger, or anxiety, entered the field of research on political behaviour and involvement.

Today emotions are perceived as cognitive, particular modes of thought in themselves, rather than being contrary to rationality. Nevertheless, if our desires and predilections influence the choices we make, they are necessarily caught up in political judgements, too. The passions are also crucial for providing the emotional basis of individual and social identities, and thus for the collective political communities in which we are situated. Similarly, no movement or ideology could do without the passionate conviction of its members to drive political action or change. Our understanding of key moments of social change thus remains impoverished if we fail to take into account the importance of grief as a response to social upheaval, the role of love and empathy in the creation of political and social solidarities, or the roots of political dissent in anger.

The course aims at uncovering the emotional routes to political and social engagement as well as political attitudes' formation. It begins with information on current levels of citizen engagement in the European context and elsewhere. First, we cover the various ways in which individuals can be mobilised from involvement in election campaigns to the distribution of political information via social networks. The course then shifts focus to cover the psychology of political mobilization in detail, including the importance of group memberships and identities, emotions, and values. Overall, the course is designed to illuminate the psychology of political mobilization and apply these principles to contemporary politics in European countries and beyond.

01 Session – Feb 04: Introduction

What does the seminar cover?

What are the expectations?

02 Session – Feb 12: Levels of political engagement and political activity in Europe and the US

The course begins with a discussion about political engagement in Europe and the US today, including levels and forms of participation. The main question is “how do people engage in politics?”

Q: In the reading list is an example of political involvement in the UK. How did political involvement develop over time in your country?

Readings

Dalton, Russell J. 2009. *The Good Citizen*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press. Chapter 4 “Bowling Alone or Protesting with a Group”.

Zukin et al. 2006. *A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 3 “Engagement in Public Life”.

Political Engagement over the world, PEW report:

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2018/10/17/international-political-engagement/>

Report on civic engagement and participation in the UK:

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/31028/files/folder/Readings?preview=2634651>

(uploaded in Files on Absalon “Who gets involved”)

Additional material

Podcast on the End of Democracy and new forms of participation by David Runciman:

<https://www.talkingpoliticspodcast.com/blog/2018/129-democracy-for-young-people?rq=social%20movement>

03 Session – Feb 19: Major theories of political involvement

This session covers the question “why do people participate in politics” on the base of traditional sociological and psychological explanations, such as the idea of rational voters, the socio-economic model as well as socialisation theories.

Readings

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay L. Schlozman. 1995. “Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation.” *American Political Science Review* 89 (02): 271–94.

Lewis-Beck, Michael S., Jacoby, William G., Norpoth, Helmut, and Weisberg, Herbert F. 2008. *The American Voter Revisited*. Chapter 5 “Voting Turnout”.

Smets, Kaat; van Ham, Carolien. 2013. "The embarrassment of riches? A meta-analysis of individual-level research on voter turnout". *Electoral Studies* 32 (2): 344-359.

Additional material

Jennings, M. K., Laura Stoker, and Jake Bowers. 2009. "Politics across Generations: Family Transmission Reexamined." *The Journal of Politics* 71 (3): 782–99.

Gallego, Aina. 2017. *Unequal Political Participation Around the World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

04 Session – Feb 26: Passionate Politics: Emotions

This session introduces the concept of emotions and how emotions may guide our political decision-making.

Q: Think about concrete examples in the political arena where emotions played a role in the decision making process in recent years!

Readings

Brader, Ted, & Marcus, George E. 2013. "Emotion and Political Psychology." In *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. 2013. Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack Levy (Eds.). New York: Oxford University Press. 2nd. Edition. (pp. 165-204).

Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, Eric W. Groenendyk, Krysha Gregorowicz, and Vincent L. Hutchings. 2011. "Election Night's Alright for Fighting: The Role of Emotions in Political Participation." *Journal of Politics* 73 (1): 156–170.

Albertson, Bethany, and Shana Kushner Gadarian. 2015. *Anxious Politics. Democratic Citizenship in a Threatening World*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 "Anxiety in Democratic Life".

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/07/voting-irrational-emotions-politics-ideology>

No class on March 05

05 Session – March 12: The Psychology of Electoral Mobilization I: Persuasion, Priming, and Framing

How do political leaders and the media use emotions to mobilize voters? The next two sessions will address this issue and concentrate on terms such as framing, persuasion, social media and media in general.

Readings

Cottam, Martha L, Mastors, Elena, Preston, Thomas, and Beth Dietz. 2010. *Introduction to Political Psychology*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 7 "The Political Psychology of the Media in Politics".

Brader, Ted. 2005. "Striking a Responsive Chord: How Political Ads Motivate and Persuade Voters by Appealing to Emotions." *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2): 388–405.

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/head-quarters/2017/jul/20/the-power-of-framing-its-not-what-you-say-its-how-you-say-it>

Podcast by George Lakoff: <https://cmsw.mit.edu/podcast-george-lakoff-the-brains-politics/>

Additional material

Valentino, Nicholas A., Vincent L. Hutchings, and Ismail K. White. 2002. "Cues That Matter: How Political Ads Prime Racial Attitudes during Campaigns." *The American Political Science Review* 96 (1): 75–90.

No class on March 19

06 Session – March 26: The Psychology of Electoral Mobilization II: Influence on turnout

How can turnout be decreased or increased? What role does the social media play?

Readings

Bond RM, et al. (2012) A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization. *Nature* **489**(7415):295–298.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. "An Experiment Testing the Relative Effectiveness of Encouraging Voter Participation by Inducing Feelings of Pride or Shame." *Political Behavior* 32, no. 3 (September 1, 2010): 409–422.

Green, Donald P.; McGrath, Mary C.; Aronow, Peter M. (2013): Field Experiments and the Study of Voter Turnout. *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 23 (1), pp. 27-48.

Ted Talk by Todd Rogers (Harvard University): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fn82cNy52a4>

07 Session – April 02: Social identity as a driver of individual and collective action

Attention: This is a double session, i.e. from 13:00-17:00!

This session focusses on the implications of the social identity theory as well as issues such as nationalism and patriotism. How do these factors guide our emotions and political behaviour?

Readings

Tajfel, Henri and Turner, John C. 1979. An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. in W. G. Austin and S. Worchel (Eds.), *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Huddy, Leonie. 2001. "From Social to Political Identity: A Critical Examination of Social Identity Theory." *Political Psychology* 22 (1): 127–56.

Huddy, Leonie, and Nadia Khatib. 2007. "American Patriotism, National Identity, and Political Involvement." *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (1): 63–77.

08 Session - April 02: The passionate partisan and polarized politics

This session focusses on the implications of the social identity theory as well as issues such as nationalism and patriotism. How do these factors guide our emotions and political behaviour?

Q: Do you think that controversial issues or controversial candidates mobilise more voters? Think about the examples of the Trump election and the Brexit vote. What do you know about these events and their ability to motivated voters?

Readings

Fiorina, Morris P. 2013. "America's Polarized Politics: Causes and Solutions". *Perspectives on Politics* 11 (03): 852-859.

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/politics-is-more-partisan-now-but-its-not-more-divisive/>

Lavine, Howard G., Christopher D. Johnston, and Marco R. Steenbergen. *The Ambivalent Partisan: How Critical Loyalty Promotes Democracy*. Oxford University Press, 2012. Chapter 2 "Getting it right, making it easy, and validating our partisan commitments".

Huddy, Leonie; Mason, Lilliana, and Lene Aarøe. 2015. "Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity". *American Political Science Review* 109 (01): 1-17.

Podcast by Jonathan Haidt:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/podcasts/item/jonathan_haidt_on_politics_and_emotion

No class on April 09

EASTER BREAK

09 + 10 Session – April 23: Collective action and social movements: Examples

Attention: This is a four-hour session from 13:15-17:00! We are in room 02-0-36 from 15:15-17:00!

Now we move from individual participation to more collective action. In this session, we will concentrate on specific examples of collective action, such as Occupy Wallstreet and the Arab Spring. We will also briefly touch upon other famous social movements. The aim is understand the motivation, the aims, and the success of these movements as well as the question who actually participates in these

Q: Which other movements can you think of? Prepare an example!

Readings

Castells, Manuel. 2015. *Networks of Outrage and Hope. Social Movements in the Internet Age*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.

Chapter 3 “The Egyptian Revolution”

Chapter 6 “Occupy Wall Street: Harvesting the Salt of the Earth”

How to understand the Tea Party:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_understand_the_tea_party

Arab Spring podcast:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/audio/2011/dec/23/focus-podcast-arab-spring-review>

11 Session – April 30: Political psychology and collective action: Major Theories I

This session presents a mix of theoretical approaches from psychology, sociology, and political science that try to explain why and how people take collective action. Moreover, we look at approaches concerning group consciousness, resource mobilization theory, and the role of organizations as well as forces working against collective action: system justification theory, the free-rider problem. We discuss these theories and approaches in line with the examples from the last session.

Q: Did you ever take part in some form of collective action? What was your motivation behind this?

Klandermans, Bert and Jaquelin van Stekelenburg. 2013. “Social Movements and the Dynamic of Collective Action.” In *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. 2013. Leonie Huddy, David O. Sears, and Jack Levy (Eds.). New York: Oxford University Press. 2nd. Edition. (pp. 774-811).

Pinard, Maurice. 2011. *Motivational Dimensions in Social Movements and Contentious Collective Action*. Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press. Chapter 1 “Approaches to Motivation in the Social Movement Literature”.

Osborne, Danny, & Chris G. Sibley. 2013. Through Rose-Colored Glasses: System-Justifying Beliefs Dampen the Effects of Relative Deprivation on Well-Being and Political Mobilization. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 39(8) 991–1004.

McClendon, Gwyneth. 2014. “Social Esteem and Participation in Contentious Politics: A Field Experiment at an LGBT Pride Rally.” *American Journal of Political Science* 58(2): 279– 290.

12 Session – May 07: Political psychology and collective action: Major Theories II

We are still looking at explanations of why social movements occur and how individuals are motivated to participate. The focus lies on emotional explanations.

Q: In how far do the explanations of collective action, differ from explanations of conventional/institutionalised political participation?

Readings

Tarrow, Sidney G. 2011. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7, Making Meanings. 140-156.

Thomas, Emma F., Craig McGarty, and Kenneth I. Mavor. 2009. "Aligning Identities, Emotions, and Beliefs to Create Commitment to Sustainable Social and Political Action." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 13 (3): 194–218.

Miller, Joanne M. and Jon A. Krosnick. 2004. "Threat as a Motivator of Political Activism: A Field Experiment". *Political Psychology* 25(4): 507-523.

No class on May 14

13 Session – May 21: Cognition vs. gut-level decisions: The case of political tolerance

We move to a slightly different topic, which is loosely connected to political action. It is more about the question whether and if there should be a limit to expressing one's attitudes in public. The question of whether, for example, the freedom of speech should be limited is highly discussed and divides the public as well as political leaders. We will talk about this issue in regard to recent social rallies in the US (e.g. Charlottesville) as well as in the European context (right-wing extremist parties).

Readings

Kuklinski, James H., Ellen Riggle, Victor Ottati, Norbert Schwarz, and Robert S. Wyer. 1991. "The Cognitive and Affective Bases of Political Tolerance Judgments." *American Journal of Political Science* 35 (1): 1-27.

Petersen, Michael, Rune Slothuus, Rune Stubager, and Lise Togeby. 2011. "Freedom for All? The Strength and Limits of Political Tolerance." *British Journal of Political Science* 41 (3): 581–97.

Gibson, James; Claassen, Christopher; Barceló, Joan. 2019. "Deplorables: Emotions, Political Sophistication, and Political Intolerance". *American Politics Research*, online first.

Podcast: <https://slate.com/technology/2017/03/tolerance-isnt-the-goal-truth-is.html>

14 Session – May 28: Peer-feedback round and wrap-up

In this session, we will discuss your mock take-home exam in small peer-feedback groups.