

## Politics and Media: Political Theories and Institutions through Cinematic Eyes

Dr. Yael Shomer

### Goals:

Political institutions and processes shape and affect policy outcomes in democratic countries. In this class we will examine how central political institutions and theories are reflected in movies. The central goal of the course is to examine and discuss central theories in political science and learn about political institutions. To this end we will analyze movies and discuss to what extent they reflect the theories and institutions examined. The following topics will be discussed (among other topics): elections, voters and candidates, lobbyism and corruption, the rally around the flag theory, female suffrage and women rights, the median voter theorem and the calculus of voting paradox, terrorism and revolutions, them and us in politics and more.

### Requirements:

1. Participation 20%:
  1. Students are required to be present in all classes– I will take names.
  2. Students are required to read regularly prior to each class and **to watch the weekly movie prior to each class,**
  3. Students are required to actively participate in class discussion (30%).
2. Presentation (2\*10%): each student will present twice during the semester:
  1. 10-15 minutes presentation of the weekly readings- giving a short overview of the main concepts/theories/phenomenon based on the readings.
  2. 10 minutes presentation to start a debate about the theory/topic/concept

**Note that the two presentations cannot be for the same class.**

3. Discussion questions (20%): each student should send till midnight the day before class a discussion question based on the reading material and the movie we watched for the class. We will use these as starting points for our in class discussions.

4. Final paper (40%): each student will chose a movie and analyze its political theme.

You will need to:

1. Summarize the movie in up to 1.5 pages
2. Present the major political theory/institution the movie presents and discuss it using relevant academic literature.
3. Analyze the movie using the academic literature review presented in section 2.

Option A: regular paper. Submission Date: 30/7/15 (last day in class). Length: Maximum 10 pages.

Option B: seminar paper. Submission Date: 1/11/15. Length: maximum 20 pages.

In option A you focus on one topic/subject/theory and in option B you present two topics.

**I reserve myself the right to decrease the reading load as I see fit.**

### **Class 1: (24/6): Introduction: politics and movies**

### **Class 2 (26/6): Female suffrage and women rights**

**movie:** Iron Jawed Angels

Francisco O. Ramirez, Yasemin Soysal and Suzanne Shanahan. 1997. "The Changing Logic of Political Citizenship: Cross-National Acquisition of Women's Suffrage Rights, 1890 to 1990", *American Sociological Review*, pp. 735-745

Ms. Madeline Vinton Dahlgren. 1871. *Thoughts on Female Suffrage and in Vindication of Women's True Rights*.

### **Class 3 (1/7): Elections and Candidates**

**movie:** The Candidate

Ginsberg Benjamin and Shepsle, Kenneth. 2002. *American Government: Power and Purpose*, pp. 415-428; 438-442.

Davidson Roger and Oleszek, Walter. 2004. *Congress & its Members* 9th edition, pp. 90-96.

### **Class 4 (3/7): Median Voter Theorem; Calculus of Voting Paradox**

**movie:** Swing Voter

Blais, A. and Achen, C. *Taking Civic Duty Seriously: Political Theory and Voter Turnout* <http://www.princeton.edu/csdp/events/Achen031110/Achen031110.pdf>

Holcombe, G. Randall. 1989. "The Median Voter Model in Public Choice Theory", *Public Choice*, 61, pp. 115-125.

### **Class 5 (8/7): Lobbyism and Corruption**

**Movie:** Bag Man

Davidson, Roger and Oleszek, Walter. 2004. *Congress & Its Members*, 9th edition, pp. 367-389.

Earnshaw, David and Judge, David. 2002. "No simple dichotomies: lobbyists and the European Parliament", *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 8(4), pp. 61-79.

### **Class 6 (10/7): Nomination Processes**

**Movie:** Advise and Consent

Segal, Jeffrey. 1987. "Senate Confirmation of Supreme Court Justices: Partisan and Institutional Politics", *The Journal of Politics*, 49(4), pp. 998-1015.

Monaghan, Henry. 1988. "The Confirmation Process: Law or Politics", *Harvard Law Review*, 101, pp. 1202-1212.

### **Class 7 (15/7): Rally Around the Flag/ Media Spins.**

**Movie:** Wag the Dog

Baker, William D, and Oneal, John R. 2001. "Patriotism or Opinion Leadership? The Nature and Origins of the Rally Round the Flag Effect", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 45, pp. 661-687.

Groeling, Tim and Baum, Matthew A. 2008. " Crossing the Water's Edge: Elite Rhetoric, Media Coverage, and the Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon", *The Journal of Politics*, 70 (4), pp. 1065-1085

Lai, Brian and Reiter, Dan. 2005. " Rally 'Round the Union Jack? Public

Opinion and the Use of Force in the United Kingdom, 1948–2001", *International Studies Quarterly*, 49, pp. 255-272.

### **Class 8 (17/7): The U.S involvement in Coups**

**Movie:** Missing

Mi Yung Yoon . 1997. "Explaining U.S. Intervention in Third World Internal Wars, 1945-1989", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 42, pp. 580-602

Schemo, Diana Jean. 2000. "US Victims of Chile's Coup the Uncensored File", *NYT*, < <http://www.tni.org/archives/act/4033>>

Kyle Steenland, Kyle. 1974. "The Coup in Chile", *Latin American Perspectives*, 1(2), pp. 9-29.

### **Class 9 (22/7): Genocide, Crime against Humanity and the World Reaction**

**Movie:** Hotel Rwanda

Alain Destexhe, Alain. 1994. " The Third Genocide", *Foreign Policy* 97, pp. 3-17

Friedman. Thomas L. 2013. " Arm and Shame", *NYT* 5/9/13. < [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/04/opinion/friedman-arm-and-shame.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/04/opinion/friedman-arm-and-shame.html?_r=0) >

### **Class 10 (24/7): Terrorism and Intelligence**

**Movie:** The Little Drummer Girl

Lefebvre, Stéphane. 2006. "Spying on Friends?: The Franklin Case, AIPAC, and Israel", *International Journal of Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence*, 19, pp. 600-621.

Honig, Or. 2008. " Surprise Attacks—Are They Inevitable? Moving Beyond the Orthodox–Revisionist Dichotomy", *Security Studies* 17, pp. 72–106.

**Class 11 (29/7): Multiculturalism, "them" and "us" in Politics/ Conservatism"**

**Movie:** Pleasantville

Kukathas , Chandran. 1998. " Liberalism and Multiculturalism: The Politics of Indifference", *Political Theory* 26(5), pp. 686-699.

Iain McLean and Alistair McMillan, "Conservatism", *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* (3 ed.)

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199207800.001.0001/acref-9780199207800-e-276?rkey=rmb3gm&result=297>

**Class 12 (31/7): Privatization of Social Services: The Good, the Bad and the Evil.**

**Movie:** Sicko

Mehrotra , Santosh and Delamonica , Enrique. 2005. "The Private Sector and Privatization in Social Services Is the Washington Consensus 'Dead'?", *Global Social Policy* 5, pp. 141-174.