



Department of Social and Political Sciences

2nd term Research Seminar

Winter 2016

Dynamics of politics

Hanspeter Kriesi

Tuesdays 9:00 AM-11:00 AM, Badia Seminar Room 4

Registration with Maureen Lechleitner (Maureen.Lechleitner@EUI.eu)

Description

This seminar is an attempt to come to terms with political processes that develop over time. Such processes are, of course, key to our understanding of politics. They pose fundamental conceptual and technical problems for the political analyst. We know that ‘time matters’ and we also know that we should be ‘taking time seriously’. However, this is easier said than done. In this seminar, I propose to take a look at different ways that have been proposed and are used in comparative politics (and political sociology) to deal with the variation of politics over time, i.e. with the dynamics of politics.

The goal is to learn more about the analysis of time-dependent processes, with a special eye to a) processes of interaction between economic conditions, public opinion, electoral and contentious politics, and public policy, b) the distinction between ‘normal’ (routine day-to-day) politics and ‘extraordinary’ (crisis) politics, as well as c) the role of ‘events’ in these processes.

The relevant literature is vast and I had some difficulties in making a choice. The texts proposed by the seminar obviously constitute a rather idiosyncratic selection which brings together authors and approaches that do not usually cohabit in the same syllabus. This is, however, intentional.

All too often we only pay lip-service to the generally accepted advice that we should use a methodological mix. The selection of texts for this seminar tries to take this advice seriously. In the discussion of the texts, we shall not only discuss the concepts and substantive results, but we shall also pay close attention to methodological issues which prove to be decisive for the way we treat time in our analyses.

As usual in my seminars, the students are expected to submit three 500-word response papers to the readings for a given session and post that paper on the course website by noon on the day before class at the latest. These response papers are fundamental for the holding of a good discussion of the materials, as is a thorough reading of the assigned texts.

Writing a term paper is encouraged. Those who wish to write a term paper should submit it to me by email and in paper copy, with a cc to Maureen Lechleitner.

Sessions, topics and readings

1. Towards eventful political science? (January 12)

- Sewell, William H. 1996. Three temporalities: toward an eventful sociology, pp. 245-280 in *The historic turn in the human sciences*, edited by Terrence J. MacDonald, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- Sewell, William H. 1996. Historical events as transformations of structures: Inventing revolution at the Bastille, *Theory and Society* 25: 841-881.
- Abbott, Andrew 2001. From Causes to Events, pp. 183-205 in Andrew Abbott: *Time Matters. On Theory and Method*, Chicago: The U of Chicago Press.
- Bartolini, Stefano 1993. On Time and Comparative Research, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 5 April: 131-167.

2. Path dependency, critical junctures, drift and conversion (January 19)

- Pierson, Paul 2000. Increasing returns, path dependence, and the study of politics, *American Political Science Review* 94, June: 251-269.
- Capoccia, Giovanni 2015. Critical junctures and institutional change, pp. 147-179 in *Advances in comparative-historical analysis*, edited by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, Cambridge University Press.
- Hacker, Jacob S., Paul Pierson and Kathleen Thelen 2015. Drift and conversion: hidden faces of institutional change, pp. 180-208 in *Advances in comparative-historical analysis*, edited by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, Cambridge University Press.
- Bermeo, Nancy 2010. Interests, Inequality, and Illusion in the Choice for Fair Elections, *Comparative Political Studies* 43, 8/9: 1119-1147.

3. Turning points, thresholds, cascades, positive and negative feedbacks (January 26)

- Granovetter, Mark 1978. Threshold Models of Collective Behavior, *American Journal of Sociology* 83, 6: 1420-1443.
- Lohmann, Susanne 1994. The dynamics of informational cascades. The Monday demonstrations in Leipzig, East Germany, 1989-91, *World Politics* 47: 42-101.
- Biggs, Michael 2003. Positive feedback in collective mobilization: The American strike wave of 1886, *Theory and Society* 32: 217-54.

- Abbott, Andrew 2001. On the Concept of the Turning Point, pp. 240-260 in Andrew Abbott: *Time Matters. On Theory and Method*, Chicago: The U of Chicago Press.

4. **Punctuated equilibrium and the death penalty in the US (February 2)**

- Baumgartner, Frank R., Bryan D. Jones, and Peter B. Mortensen 2014. Punctuated equilibrium theory: explaining stability and change in public policymaking, pp. 59-103 in *Theories of the Policy Process*, edited by Paul A. Sabatier and Christopher M. Weible, Boulder, Col: Westview Press.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., Suzanna L. De Boef, and Amber E. Boydstun 2008. *The decline of the death penalty and the discovery of innocence*, Cambridge U Press, Chapter 1: Innocence and the Death Penalty Debate (pp. 1-22; 136-230)

5. **Dynamic representation: the basic models (February 9)**

- Stimson, James A., Michael B. MacKuen, and Robert S. Erikson 1995. Dynamic representation, *American Political Science Review* 89, 3: 543-565.
- Stimson, James A. 2004. *Tides of consent*. Cambridge U Press, Chapters 1, 5 and 6 (pp. 1-22, 137-174).
- Soroka, Stuart N. and Christopher Wlezien 2010. *Degrees of democracy. Politics, public opinion, and policy*, Cambridge U Press. Chapter 2: The thermostatic model, (pp. 22-42)
- Wlezien, Christopher and Stuart N. Soroka 2012. Political institutions and the opinion-policy link, *West European Politics* 35, 6: 1407-1432.

6. **Dynamic representation: public opinion (February 16)**

- Page, Benjamin I. and Robert Y. Shapiro 1993. The Rational Public and Democracy, pp. 35-64 in *Reconsidering the Democratic Public*, edited by George E. Marcus and Russell L. Hanson. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University.
- Page, Benjamin J., Robert Y. Shapiro and Glenn R. Dempsey 1987. What moves public opinion? *American Political Science Review* 81, 1: 23-43.
- Manza, Jeff, Fay Lomax Cook and Benjamin J. Page (eds.) 2002 *Navigating Public Opinion. Polls, Policy, and the Future of American Democracy*, Oxford U Press.
 - Jacobs, Lawrence R. and Robert Y. Shapiro 2002. Politics and Policymaking in the Real World. Crafted Talk and the Loss of Democratic Responsiveness, pp. 54-75
 - Erikson, Robert S., Michael B. MacKuen and James A. Stimson 2002. Panderers or Shirkers? Politicians and Public Opinion, pp. 76-85
 - Page, Benjamin J. 2002. The Semi-Sovereign Public, pp. 325-344

- Burstein, Paul 2014. *American Public Opinion, Advocacy, and Policy in Congress. What the Public Wants and What It Gets*, Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 2-3: pp. 20-70).

7. Dynamics of representation: the economy (February 23)

- De Boeuf, Suzanna and Luke Keele 2008. Taking Time Seriously, *American Journal of Political Science* 52, 1: 184-200.
- De Boeuf, Suzanna and Paul M. Kellstedt 2004. The Political (and Economic) Origins of Consumer Confidence, *American Journal of Political Science* 48, 4: 633-649.
- Soroka, Stuart N., Dominik A. Stecula, and Christopher Wlezien 2015. It's (Change in) the (Future) Economy, Stupid: Economic Indicators, the Media and Public Opinion, *American Journal of Political Science* 59, 2: 457-474.
- Hansen, Bruce E. 2001. The New Econometrics of Structural Change: Dating Breaks in U.S. Labor Productivity, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 15, 4: 117-128.

8. Dynamics of representation: government approval (March 1)

- Clarke, Harold D. and Marianne C. Stewart 1995. Economic evaluations, prime ministerial approval and governing party support: rival models reconsidered, *British Journal of Political Science* 25: 145-70.
- Clarke, Harold D., Karl Ho, Marianne C. Stewart 2000. Major's lesser (not minor) effects: prime ministerial approval and governing party support in Britain since 1979, *Electoral Studies* 19: 255-73.
- Clarke, Harold D., David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart and Paul Whiteley 2004. *Political Choice in Britain*, Oxford U Press (Chapter on Party Support, 1964-2001; 39-75)
- Treisman, Daniel 2011. Presidential popularity in a hybrid regime: Russia under Yeltsin and Putin, *American Journal of Political Science* 55, 3: 590-609.

9. The impact of crucial events on elections (March 8)

- Marsh, Michael and Slava Mihaylov 2012. Economic voting in a crisis: the Irish election of 2011, *Electoral Studies* 31: 478-484.
- Sanders, David 1999. Conservative incompetence, Labour responsibility and the feelgood factor: why the economy failed to save the Conservatives in 1997, *Electoral Studies* 18: 251-270.
- Montalvo, Jose G. 2012. Re-examining the evidence of terrorist attacks: The Spanish election of 2004, *Electoral Studies* 31: 96-106.

- Getmansky, Anna and Thomas Zeitzoff 2014. Terrorism and Voting: The effect of rocket threat on voting in Israeli elections, *American Political Science Review* 108, 3: 588-604.

10. Event history analysis (March 15)

- Blossfeld, Hans-Peter, Katrin Golsch and Götz Rohwer 2009. *Event History Analysis with Stata*. London: Psychology Press. (Chapter 1: 1-37)
- Beissinger, Mark 2002. *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*. Cambridge U Press. (Chapters 2-3: pp. 47-146)
- Andrews, Kenneth T. and Michael Biggs 2006. The Dynamics of Protest Diffusion: Movement Organizations, Social Networks and News Media in the 1960 Sit-Ins, *American Sociological Review* 71, October: 752-77.