Leicester Inter-disciplinary Workshop on Elections, Public Opinion, Participation and Parties

Agenda
1st workshop, 23rd January 2013
ATT 212 Attenborough Seminar Block, Second Floor LR 212

(Coffee & tea refreshments available from 10.15)

10:30 - Workshop introduction and short presentation of the attendants

10:50 - First Paper Presentation (Dr Leah Bassel - Department of Sociology)

The Choice of Resonance: Grammars of Contemporary French Resistance
This paper analyzes two social movements in France: the ‘Mouvement des Indigènes de la République’ [Movement of the ‘Indigenous’ of the Republic], and the ‘Réseau Éducation Sans Frontières’ [Education without Borders Network]. I argue that while both movements name and challenge exclusionary processes of ‘internal’ and ‘external’ boundary-drawing, they do so by making the ‘choice’ of resonance with the Republican ideology that they simultaneously challenge and operate within. I demonstrate that through their respective deployments, resonances and dissonances with the Republican script they challenge but do not transcend republican ideology. I conclude by considering, more generally, whether such a rupture is possible, or desirable.

11:05 - Discussant: Peter Thomas (Department of Politics & IR)

11:10 - General discussion of the paper

11:25 - Second Paper Presentation (Dr Vincent Campbell - Department of Media and Communications)

'This paper reports findings from a study of the changing nature of the narrative contents and production formats of Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs) produced by the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democratic parties for UK General Elections from 1979 to 2010. This analysis tracked production changes that might signal a movement on the part of the political parties towards using marketing-oriented techniques of the kind found in televised advertising. Although PEBs are not technically classified as advertisements by the broadcasting industry, but rather as programmes, they nevertheless present an opportunity to political parties to promote themselves and their policies. Using content analysis, it was found that PEBs have grown progressively shorter from 1979 to 2010 and become faster paced. They have become more sophisticated as productions with wider use of dramatised documentary formats rather than talking heads, popular music and professional performers.'

11:40 – Discussant: Dr Laura Morales (Department of Politics & IR)

11:45 - General discussion of the Paper
Invisible Women? Explaining the Gender Gap in Candidates' News Media coverage

Previous research offers some evidence that news media cover female candidates less frequently than male candidates, while providing little insight to why this is the case. The aim of this article is to investigate possible mechanisms behind gender differences in the amounts of candidates’ news media coverage in the context of the 2009 European Parliamentary Elections. The paper relies on the Media Content Data from the 2009 European Election Study based on media in 27 EU member states. Similarly to most previous research, the current paper finds evidence of a gender gap in the amount of media coverage. Moreover, when investigating highly prominent and competitive candidates only, the gender bias in media coverage remains. However, this paper also shows that the media largely follows the parties' pre-selection of viable candidates when deciding which candidates to cover. This paper, therefore, proposes that the gap in media coverage may not be as much about gender, as it is about whether women are selected by parties as ‘viable’ candidates, and thus uncovers how unfavorable election list rankings can be one of the main barriers to female leadership in the European Union. In order to model such selection, the research employs Heckman selection procedure.

12:35 – Discussant: James Rockey (Department of Economics)

12:40- General discussion of the Paper

12:55 – 13:00 Brief exchange about future proposals for the workshop