

1. In stating "how little solidity and substance there is in the political and social beliefs of nineteen persons out of every twenty," Bryce maintains that income, profession, and education do not differentiate the informed from the uninformed. Check and limit his statements in the light of recent research.
2. What does Lowell consider to be the necessary conditions for "public opinion to be worthy of the name" as compared to public opinion based on majority rule?
3. Restate Calhoun's ideas insofar as they may be accepted as facts about, rather than evaluations of, human societies. Was there any earlier statements of these factual ideas in American politics?
4. In a multi-group society as suggested by Binkley and Moos, how would public opinion tend to resolve a specific issue, e.g. the establishment of a national F.E.P.C. law? Cite the positions that would be taken on this issue by three or more interest groups.
5. Is the ideal of a self-contained community, described by Lippmann, conducive to the formation of a public opinion that encourages dissent and awareness of the universe outside of the immediate environment? Explain.
6. Hyman and Sheatsley have demonstrated that the public is not informed on many concrete issues, especially in peripheral problems; that the public does not think critically; that the public does not take steps to make their opinions effective, that the public distrusts political leaders, and that the public expresses contradictory opinions on the basic ideals of democracy and other fundamental values. Of what possible "use" is the general public then; that is, what behaviors of the public have consequences that are positively valuable from some point of view (your own or another)?
7. By the term public opinion, Allport means a set of characteristics, the first of which refer "to a multi-individual situation in which individuals are expressing themselves..." List and elaborate upon these points and at least five other factors that comprise the term public opinion as contained in that article.
8. Prepare a list of seven to ten items suitable for a test of the degree of political activity of the whole population. Draw a chart containing your predictions of the shape of the curve of scores made by the population or a sample thereof.

9. Mead contends that the "relationship between the character formation of the citizen and political system of which he is a unit" determines the form of public opinion found in that system. Discuss briefly the cross-cultural comparisons that support her hypothesis.

10. Lee describes four types of culture or levels of social organization operative in a society. Using this classification as a frame of reference, briefly explain how public opinion is determined on each of these levels.

11. The articles, "Trials by Newspaper" and "Trial by Mass Media?" present a case for the partiality of the press in its news coverage. Explain the method by which the authors arrived at their conclusions. Do you think that the method is objective? Could you dispute the findings or interpretation of in either or both cases?

12. Do the results of Center's study on attitudes as related to occupational strata demonstrate a widespread homogeneity of attitude on questions affecting the fundamental values of American society?

13. Briefly reconstruct the procedure followed by the Allinsmiths in demonstrating the relationship between political beliefs and socio-economic status in various religious groups? What effect does religious belief have upon political connections?

14. Discuss five factors that determine the degree of access to the legislature that a particular group can establish at a given time. In the light of this discussion, to what degree is the legislative process responsive to a general, undifferentiated public opinion?

15. By tracing the passage of the Employment Act of 1946, Bailey suggests that policy-making is a "largely irresponsible interplay of ideas, interests, institutions, and individuals." What does he mean by "irresponsible"? What would a "responsible" interplay be? Where would examples of such be discovered?

16. Turner assesses the representative process in the United States as one of representative responsibility rather than representative independence. Describe these two concepts of representation and explain why you believe one or the other is more suitable for the expression of public opinion.

17. Moscow's analysis of machines leads him to conclude that a basic fact in the political process is that people vote for candidates "when they want to, not because they have to." If his hypothesis is valid, then there is a closer interaction between the representative and his constituency. Comment on this hypothesis and its implications for the effective expression of public opinion on the part of the constituency.

18. The report of the Buchanan Committee states that "the long-run objective of every significant pressure group in the country is and must inevitably be the creation and control of public opinion..." Use the Committee for Constitutional Government as a case study to explain the technique referred to as "grass-roots pressure."

19. Kefauver, in discounting the effect of "petitions, chain telegrams, form letters...all aimed directly at influencing votes," asserts that the letters "that really count" are from influential people or personal friends. Explain why you think this is or is not an accurate observation of the interaction between the legislator and his constituency.

20. Cartwright deplures "the promiscuous application of public opinion polls to all matters of government." Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using polls to aid the government in formulating policies.

PUBLIC OPINION AND BEHAVIOR

POLITICAL SCIENCE 164

CALENDAR OF LECTURES AND READINGS, AUTUMN, 1955-1956

ALFRED DE GRAZIA

Students taking this course for 4 units are examined on the lectures and readings described below. A midterm examination will be held on a date to be designated. Students desiring 5 units of credit will prepare a research paper on a topic approved by the instructor; appropriate subjects will be suggested in an early meeting of the class; the papers are due on December 5th. Guest lectures, special training periods, and demonstrations will be announced beforehand.

Required readings include the whole of these two works: The Western Public: 1952 and Beyond, by Alfred de Grazia, and Public Opinion and Propaganda by Daniel Katz and others (a book of readings). Students are urged to take notes on classroom discussion and readings, and should aim at a clear command of important theories treated, of some of the essential facts that support them, and of the methods by which the theories and facts are gained. The Western Public precedes the second work in time because the student may thereby earn an appreciation of the scope and nature of public opinion, as provided in a relatively simple work on materials close to home, before moving into the numerous general theories and special studies of Public Opinion and Propaganda.

First Week: Parties and Opinion in the American West (Read The Western Public, Chapters I to VII)

Second Week: Social Determinants and Voting Trends in the West (Read The Western Public, Chapters VIII to XV)

Third Week: The Nature of Public Opinion in a Democracy (Read Public Opinion and Propaganda, Chapters I and II)

Fourth Week: Cultural background of Opinion (Read Ibid., Chapter 3)

Fifth Week: Government and Opinion (Read Ibid., Chapter 4)

Midterm Examination

Sixth Week: The Mass Media (Read Ibid., Chapter 5)

Seventh Week: The Psychological Basis of Opinion (Read Ibid., Chapter 6)

Eighth Week: Group Processes in Opinion Formation (Read Ibid., Chapter 7)

Ninth Week: Nature and Tactics of Propaganda (Read Ibid., Chapters 8 & 9)

Tenth Week: Formation of Public Opinion (Read Ibid., Chapter 10)

Eleventh Week: Identification and Measurement of Opinions and Propaganda (Read Ibid., Chapters 11 and 12).