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C H A P T E R 7

THE MULTIPLE EFFECTS OF
TELEVISION ON PUBLIC OPINION

Since the classic studies of Paul Lazarsfeld and others described in the previous chapter, a considerable body of research has been accumulated concerning the effects of the mass media on American public opinion. This research demonstrates convincingly that, contrary to the law of minimal consequences, Americans' political thinking is profoundly influenced by the mass media, often in rather subtle ways. Television news reports and other media presentations exert a variety of effects on how people think about politics and what they think as well.

Researchers have identified at least four different avenues by which the media leaves its imprint on public opinion: enabling people to keep up with what is happening in the world (*learning*), defining the major political issues or problems of the day (*agenda setting*), influencing who gets blamed or rewarded for issues and events in the news (*framing responsibility*) and, finally, shaping people's political preferences and choices (*persuasion*).

These four categories of effects approximate a sequence. Dissemination of *information* is typically the initial effect of communication. Increases in awareness lead to *changes in the salience or prominence of particular issues or themes*. For example, during a recession, reading or watching the news makes people aware that thousands of Americans have lost their jobs. The information makes the audience more concerned about the state of the economy. Once people's attention has been directed at particular issues or events, they attempt to understand these issues by *assigning responsibility*. They seek explanations: Why is the economy in such bad shape, and who or what

can turn it around? As we will see, differences in the way television news presentations frame political issues can lead viewers to make differing attributions of responsibility. Finally, the news can *persuade* individuals to alter their political preferences or electoral choices. After months of exposure to gloomy economic news, unemployment becomes the major issue in the eyes of the public; incumbent officials are blamed for the state of the economy; their approval ratings fall; and voters switch their support to challengers.

Learning

Learning corresponds to the general educational function of the news media. The dissemination of information is generally considered the most basic responsibility of the news media in democratic societies. Through the news, Americans might learn that American soldiers are being sent abroad, that the national unemployment rate has increased, or that charges of sexual harassment have been filed against a nominee for the United States Supreme Court. During political campaigns, voters find out who is running and what the candidates are saying about the issues.

Within the broad category of learning, we consider three different classes of effects. The most general type of learning effect concerns the impact of news presentations on the individual's knowledge about public affairs (*information gain*). Of particular importance to election campaigns, exposure to media presentations serves to boost candidates' *name recognition*. Finally, the acquisition of information also enables voters to express opinions about the candidates (*opinionation*). We focus in this chapter on general information gain, reserving the discussion of candidate recognition and opinionation for the next chapter, which deals with campaign effects.

Information Gain

Even by the most generous standards, most Americans are poorly informed about politics and the course of national affairs. This has occasioned a great debate among communications researchers concerning the causes of the public's ignorance. The conventional wis-

dom among political and media analysts alike has been that it is the public's reliance on television that is the primary cause of their low level of political information. With its emphasis on sound bites and good visuals, television news has been considered, at best, a source of trivial information.¹

Research into the relative information value of print and broadcast news has yielded mixed results. During the 1972 presidential campaign, for instance, regular and irregular viewers of network newscasts did not differ in the extent to which they became more informed about the candidates' positions on major issues over the course of the campaign. In contrast, regular newspaper readers learned more than irregular readers by a margin of 2 to 1.² This pattern seems to suggest that newspapers are more informative than television news programs.

More recent work indicates that voters do receive and retain significant public affairs information from television sources, more so than they do from alternative print-based sources. One study investigated how much Americans learned from TV news and newspapers about a series of events that occurred during the summer and fall of 1989.³ Whereas exposure to television news significantly boosted the level of information for *nine* of the sixteen events, exposure to newspapers proved to be a significant learning factor for only *one* (the trial of evangelist Jim Bakker) of the sixteen events. In a different study, researchers examined the relative contributions of newspaper reading and television news viewing to political information after controlling for socioeconomic differences between the users of the two mediums. (Regular newspaper readers tend to be more educated than regular viewers of television newscasts.) This study found that television news was just as informative as

¹See John Robinson and Mark Levy, *The Main Source* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1984).

²Thomas Patterson and Robert McClure, *The Unseeing Eye: The Myth of Television Power in National Elections* (New York: G.P. Putnam's, 1976), pp. 50-52.

³The list of events included the resignation of the speaker of the U.S. House, former President Reagan's surgery, a major speech by President Bush, the crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Iowa, and the Jim Bakker trial. See Vincent Price and John Zaller, "Who Gets the News?: The Measurement Problem in Media Research," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, 1990.

newspapers.⁴ Overall, therefore, it is unclear whether television has contributed positively or negatively (by supplanting newspaper readership) to the dissemination of political information.

Agenda Setting

As we noted in Chapter 3, the devastating famine in Ethiopia attracted virtually no attention in the United States prior to October 1987, even though it had claimed thousands of victims. On October 23, 1987, NBC News aired a four-minute report (prepared by the British Broadcasting Corporation) called "The Faces of Death in Africa." The decision to air the report set in motion an avalanche of relief efforts and fund-raising activities by Americans. As Steve Friedman, executive producer of NBC's "Today" show explained: "This famine has been going on for a long time and nobody cared. Now its on TV and everybody cares. I guess a picture is worth many words."⁵

The idea of agenda setting is that the public's social or political priorities and concerns—their beliefs about what is a significant issue or event—are determined by the amount of news coverage accorded various issues and events.⁶ The concept was initially proposed by analysts pursuing the connections between public opinion and the course of American foreign policy. In his book *The American Public and Foreign Policy*, Bernard Cohen outlined the agenda-setting hypothesis as follows.

The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful in telling its readers what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think

⁴Roy Behr, Pradeep Chibber, and Shanto Iyengar, "TV News as a Source of Public Affairs Information," Unpublished paper, Department of Political Science, UCLA, 1990.

⁵Quoted in Peter Boyer, "Famine in Africa: The TV Accident That Exploded," in Michael Emery and Ted Smythe (eds.), *Readings in Mass Communication* (Dubuque, Ia: William C. Brown, 1986) p. 293

⁶Antecedents of the agenda-setting argument can be found in the works of the great American journalist Walter Lippmann, who suggested that the press's job was to "signalize" events and who warned of the impossibility of the news and reality being one and the same.

about... The editor may believe he is only printing the things people want to read, but he is thereby putting a claim on their attention, powerfully determining what they will be thinking about, and talking about, until the next wave laps their shore.⁷

The most convincing evidence of agenda setting comes from carefully designed and realistic experiments that manipulated the level of news coverage accorded particular issues. These experiments reveal that the insertion of only a modest degree of news coverage into network newscasts can induce significant shifts in viewers' beliefs about the importance of issues. In one experiment conducted in 1982, for example, viewers were shown a series of newscasts containing either three, six, or no stories dealing with U.S. dependence on foreign sources of energy. When exposed to no news coverage on this subject, 24 percent of the participants cited energy as among the three most important problems facing the country. When participants watched three stories, 50 percent of them regarded energy as an important problem. Finally, when the participants watched six stories, energy was cited as an important national problem by 65 percent of the viewers.⁸

Researchers have discussed several antecedent factors that condition the media's ability to shape the public's priorities. These factors include the remoteness or immediacy of the issue, the demographic characteristics of the people who receive the news, and differences in the way the news is presented. Some research indicates that the more remote an issue or event is from the direct personal experience of the typical viewer, the stronger the agenda-setting effect of news coverage of the issue or event is likely to be. Perceptions of the importance of pervasive issues such as crime and inflation are less affected by news coverage because people have their own insights

⁷Bernard Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 13.

⁸See Shanto Iyengar and Donald Kinder, *News That Matters: Television and American Opinion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 24. Early agenda-setting studies were plagued by a number of methodological difficulties, most notably, confusion between cause and effect. Did the correlation between newspaper readers' political concerns and the content of the news mean that news coverage had set the audience agenda, or did it mean instead that newspaper editors had tailored their coverage of issues to suit the concerns and interests of their readers? Concerns such as these led the way to the use of experimental design in agenda-setting research.

into these problems. However, other studies show that people who are personally affected by issues in the news are particularly likely to have their agendas set by the media. After being exposed to news reports detailing the financial difficulties confronting the social security fund, elderly viewers of network newscasts were found to be much more likely than younger viewers to nominate social security as one of the most important problems facing the country. In addition, viewers who are more interested in politics and who participate more actively in the political process tend to be less susceptible to agenda-setting effects. As Iyengar and Kinder note, "The more removed the viewer is from the world of public affairs, the stronger the agenda-setting power of television news."⁹

Finally, the manner in which a news story is presented vastly affects its ability to set the public agenda. Stories that are more likely to catch the public's attention (such as front-page stories in the newspaper, newspaper stories accompanied by photographs, and lead stories in television newscasts) tend to be particularly influential. Although the finding is counterintuitive, it has been shown that episodic coverage of public affairs—news stories that deal with the vivid, human element of national issues—are *not* more effective in setting viewers' political agendas than more pallid stories featuring "talking heads."¹⁰

Framing Responsibility for Political Issues

People's attitudes and actions depend upon the manner in which they attribute responsibility. Psychological research shows that attribution of responsibility is a convenient method of simplifying and understanding complex issues. In fact, responsibility is such a compelling concept that people may even invent responsibility for purely chance or random events.

Politics is no exception to this rule. When issues and problems hit the public agenda, voters instinctively allocate responsibility and blame (or credit, in the case of outcomes judged successes). This

is why politicians rush to disassociate themselves from unfavorable outcomes and claim responsibility for favorable outcomes.

Television is one of several forces that influences the attribution of responsibility for political issues. In the case of network newscasts, the factor that most affects the attribution of responsibility is the manner in which the news is *framed* or presented. As we noted in Chapter 3, television can frame issues in either *episodic* or *thematic* terms. Episodic framing depicts issues in terms of concrete instances or specific events—a homeless person, an unemployed worker, a victim of racial discrimination, the bombing of an airliner, an attempted murder, and so on. The thematic news frame, on the other hand, places public issues in some general or abstract context. The thematic news frame typically takes the form of an in-depth, "backgrounder" report dealing with general outcomes or conditions. While episodic reports are often visually appealing, thematic reports, consist primarily of "talking heads."¹¹

Given the nature of television news, it is to be expected that the networks rely extensively on episodic framing to report on public issues. Episodic framing is characterized by on-the-scene, live reports that are fairly brief. Thematic coverage, which requires interpretive analyses, would take more time and crowd out other news items. Moreover, producers regard extensive thematic coverage as simply too dull to keep viewers' interest.

As might be expected, television news coverage of political issues is more episodic than thematic. Eighty-nine percent of network news reports on crime broadcast between 1981 and 1986 focused on a specific perpetrator, victim, or criminal act. Of the nearly two thousand stories on terrorism broadcast between 1981 and 1986, 74 percent consisted of live reports of some specific terrorist act, group, victim, or event, while 26 percent discussed terrorism as a general political problem.¹²

¹¹In practice, very few news reports are purely episodic or thematic. Even the most detailed, close-up look at a poor person, for instance, might include lead-in remarks by the anchorperson or reporter on the scope of poverty nationwide. Conversely, an account of the legislative struggle over budgetary cuts in social welfare might include a brief scene of children in a day care center scheduled to shut down as a result of the funding cuts.

¹²For details, see Shanto Iyengar, *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

⁹Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, p. 63.

¹⁰See Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, Chapter 4.

It is not true, however, that television always avoids the thematic frame. News reports on the economy tend to be heavily thematic, conveying information about the latest national economic indicators and presenting interviews with economists, businessmen, or public officials. Between 1981 and 1986, the networks' news coverage of unemployment was predominantly thematic (thematic reports outnumbered episodic reports by 2:1).¹³

The distinction between episodic and thematic framing of political and social issues has important consequences for the attribution of responsibility. Viewers who are exposed to news coverage that is thematically framed tend to assign responsibility for national issues to societal factors—cultural values; economic circumstances; or the motives, actions and inactions of government officials. For example, in the case of unemployment, viewers who are exposed to heavily thematic news coverage focus on politicians in assigning responsibility. However, when television news coverage is heavily episodic (as is usually the case for issues such as poverty, crime, and terrorism), viewers attribute responsibility not to societal forces, but to the private motives and actions of poor people, criminals, and terrorists, respectively. When confronted with news stories describing particular instances of national issues, viewers tend to focus on the individuals concerned rather than on public officials.

Overall, the manner in which television frames national problems has the effect of either shielding or exposing politicians to the public's attributions of responsibility. For those issues that are typically covered by thematically framed reports, public officials are more apt to be held responsible. Conversely, issues that are framed primarily in episodic terms tend to produce attributions of responsibility that do not focus on the behavior of politicians.

Persuasion

The concept of persuasion refers to instances in which individuals alter their preferences for a candidate, policy, or some other object or idea in response to a particular message. President Reagan,

¹³For details, see Iyengar, 1991.

for example, was a consistent opponent of gun control legislation. After leaving the presidency, however, he endorsed the Brady Bill (named for his former press secretary who was shot during John Hinckley's failed attempt to assassinate Reagan), which sought to impose strict registration requirements on handgun owners. As this case illustrates, people sometimes undergo a political rebirth of sorts (although not usually at such a late stage of their lives). A more typical example of persuasion might be found in the New Hampshire Republican who, in the aftermath of the war in the Persian Gulf, feels that George Bush is an outstanding president. One year later, amidst glaring signs of American economic decline, the same individual concludes that President Bush is not up to the task of economic recovery and decides to vote for Pat Buchanan in the New Hampshire Republican primary.

Persuasion via Priming

The case of the New Hampshire voter illustrates how persuasion—a change in political preference—can be the end product of learning, agenda setting, and attribution of responsibility. When the news was dominated by reports on the Persian Gulf War, this crisis was paramount in the minds of Americans. Because the outcome was so favorable, President Bush, as the commander in chief, was credited with the responsibility for the lopsided victory. One year later, when the flagging economy replaced the Gulf War as the paramount news story, President Bush appeared in a different light. What Americans saw was a president who initially claimed the recession was over, later showed up in a department store to suggest that Christmas shopping might help end the recession, and then traveled to Japan (ostensibly to open up the Japanese market for U.S. goods and services) in a highly publicized but disastrous policy initiative. Because of the salience of the economy and the apparent presidential impotence in matters of economic policy, President Bush's approval ratings dropped precipitously. On February 1, 1991, 83 percent of the public gave Bush a "good" or "very good" performance rating. One year later, the rating was down to 46 percent.

Clearly, the free-fall in President Bush's popularity during 1991 was brought about by changes in the public agenda and by the con-

sequences of being held responsible for national issues. Communication researchers refer to this process as *priming*. While agenda setting reflects the impact of news coverage on the importance accorded issues, *priming* refers to the capacity of the media to isolate particular issues, events, or themes in the news as criteria for evaluating politicians.

The changes in President Bush's standing induced by priming occurred over a matter of months. In other instances priming works more rapidly, leaving its mark on the public's political preferences in a matter of days. In 1986 it was disclosed that the Reagan administration had been secretly channeling to the Nicaraguan Contras funds received from the sale of arms to Iran. The national media zeroed in on the issue. Because this issue dominated the news, the public's views on U.S. aid for the Contras (most people opposed such aid) became a major yardstick for evaluating Reagan, with the result that his popularity sagged to the lowest level of his second term.

Priming is really an extension of agenda setting, and addresses the impact of news coverage on the weight assigned to specific issues in making political judgments. In general, the more prominent an issue is in the national information stream, the greater is its weight in political evaluations. During the war in the Persian Gulf—while Americans were fascinated by images of smart bombs zooming in on Iraqi targets, Patriot missiles reliably intercepting Iraqi Scuds, and similar successes of the U.S. and allied forces—the news directed the public's attention to international affairs and defense (and simultaneously distracted them from domestic issues such as the savings and loan scandal). As a result, foreign policy and defense considerations became more important criteria for evaluating presidential performance. Americans surveyed during this period gave President Bush very high marks for his handling of foreign policy in general and the Gulf War in particular. At the same time, they gave him only average marks for his handling of the economy (see Figure 7.1). Yet his overall popularity reached record levels, suggesting that Americans gave precedence to the war and foreign affairs as bases for rating the president.

Priming by television news has been established in several experimental and survey-based studies, for ratings of both presidents and members of Congress. Such priming is found to take place across a

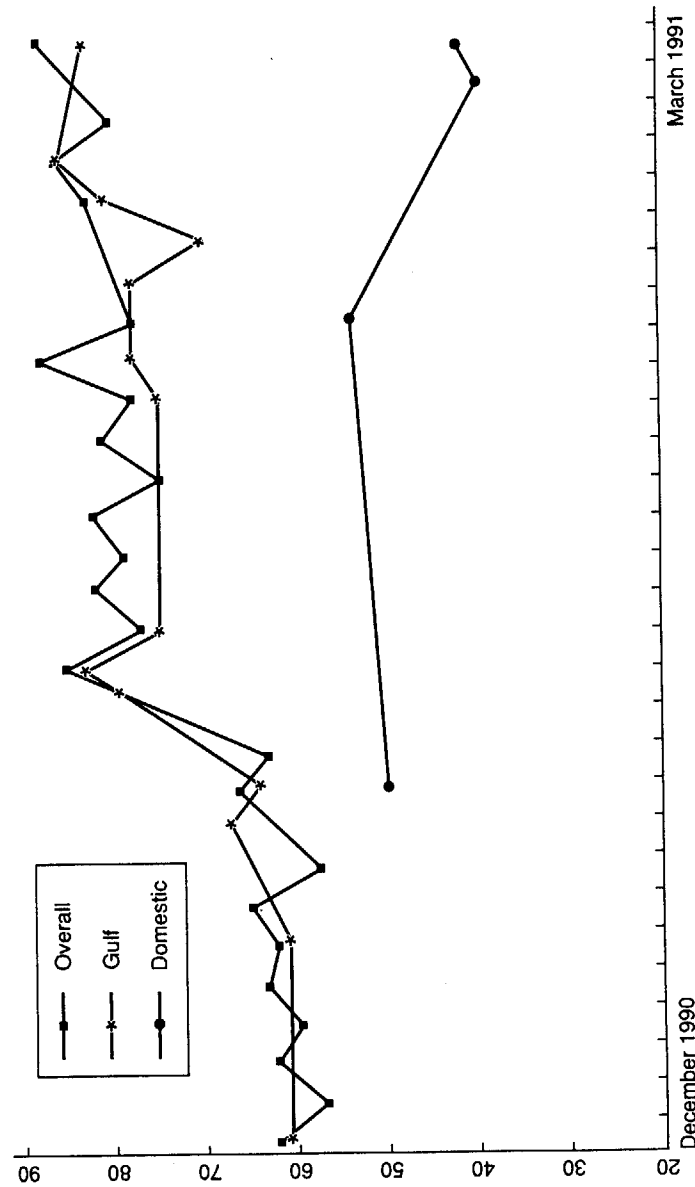


Figure 7.1 Bush's Approval Rating: Approval of Persian Gulf, Economic and Overall Performance (December 1990 to March 1991).

Source: Shanto Iyengar and Adam Simon, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion: A Survey of Effects." Paper presented at the International Communication Association Meetings, Miami, 1992.

wide range of evaluations, including evaluations of job performance and assessments of political leaders' personal traits. In general, the priming effect is particularly strong when news stories explicitly suggest that incumbent politicians are responsible for the state of national affairs. For example, when television news stories suggested that "Reaganomics" was the principal cause of rising unemployment, evaluations of President Reagan's overall performance and competence were more strongly colored by assessments of his ability to manage the economy than were the evaluations of a control group who watched news stories that suggested alternative causes of unemployment.¹⁴

Finally, the priming effect is triggered by both news of political failures and news of political accomplishments. As the case of George Bush illustrates so vividly, priming can either help or harm incumbent officials. As we will see in Chapter 9, what this means is that public opinion is a double-edged sword; at times it boosts incumbents' ability to govern, but at other times it can shackle and paralyze them.

Direct Persuasion

Persuasion can also occur directly, without intervening effects such as agenda setting or priming. In such cases the central notion is that of diffusion—"who says what to whom?" The major determinants of direct persuasion, accordingly, are *source*, *message*, and *audience* characteristics.

A source can be evaluated with regard to how credible or trustworthy it is. One of the advantages enjoyed by people who work in broadcast journalism is that their product is seen as more credible than that of their competitors in the newspaper business.

Different properties of messages themselves have also been found to affect the likelihood of persuasion, but the relationship between message characteristics and attitude change is complicated by other factors such as the type of issue and the makeup of the audience. For example, *argument-based* messages tend to be more

¹⁴See Iyengar and Kinder, 1987, Chapter 9.

effective when the audience is relatively informed about the issue in question, but *image-based* appeals are more effective when the audience has no knowledge about the subject.¹⁵

Finally, two critically important aspects of the audience are the likelihood of exposure and acceptance of the message. Persuasion, according to McGuire's famous *two-factor theory*, depends upon people first getting the message (exposure) and then adopting it as their own (acceptance).¹⁶ What is particularly interesting about McGuire's theory is that *the characteristics of the audience that increase the likelihood of exposure are the same characteristics that reduce the likelihood of acceptance*. More educated people, for example, are more likely to become exposed to information about current events. However, they are also more able to call upon alternative sources of information and a greater mass of stored information to question a particular item of new information. Thus, more educated people are better equipped to counterargue and hence less likely to accept or be persuaded by new information. Because exposure and acceptance work in opposite directions in determining the likelihood of persuasion, McGuire's two-factor model predicts a \cap -shaped relationship between characteristics of the audience such as education and the extent of attitude change. This pattern is shown in Figure 7.2.

Using McGuire's framework, the diffusion of preferences through the electorate can be predicted according to the intensity of particular news messages and the degree to which the message is consistent with the receiver's political values. When a pro-liberal message reaches a liberal audience, more-aware liberals—because they are more apt to get the message—will show more persuasion. When the same liberal message reaches a conservative audience, however, the more-aware conservatives—recognizing the message as liberal—will reject it and remain unpersuaded.

¹⁵For a review of message-related research, see Richard Petty and John Cacioppo, *Attitudes and Persuasion—Classic and Contemporary Approaches* (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown, 1981).

¹⁶See William J. McGuire, "Personality and Susceptibility to Social Influence," in E. F. Borgatta and W. W. Lambert, eds., *Handbook of Personality Theory and Research* (New York: Rand-McNally, 1968).

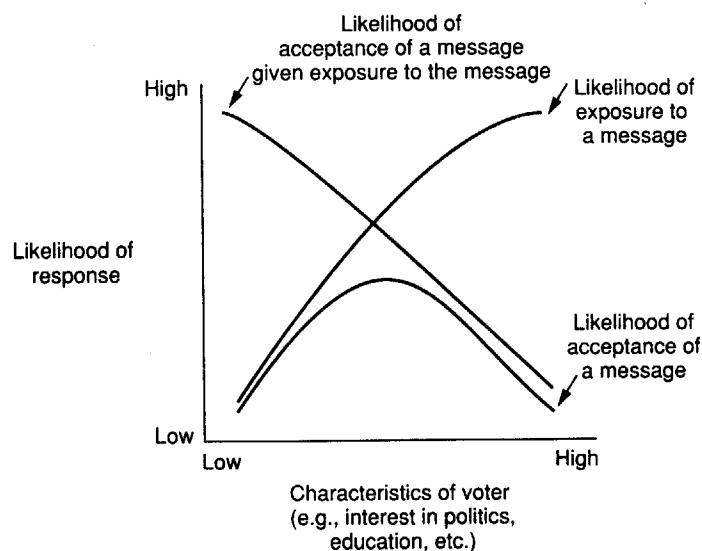


Figure 7.2 McGuire's Two-Factor Model.

McGuire's basic model can be extended to consider both one-sided and two-sided flows of information.¹⁷ When information on a particular issue is one-sided, the more-aware receiver is more likely to accept the dominant perspective. However, when two sides of a story are presented (for example, a news story that includes both an official message and a countervailing oppositional message), the public's preferences on the issue are determined by a combination of their political awareness and partisan values. For instance, during the initial phases of the Vietnam War, news coverage conveyed a predominantly prowar message. During this period, less-aware liberals were more supportive of the war than more-aware liberals. The latter group, because of their attentiveness, were able to receive the less-audible antiwar signals. Over time, as the antiwar message in the media began to drown out the prowar message, less-aware liberals equaled their more attentive counterparts in opposition to the war.

¹⁷See John Zaller, *The Origins and Nature of Mass Opinion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Other researchers have searched for traces of diffusion at the collective or aggregate level of public opinion. Taken as a whole, the American public is relatively stable in its policy preferences. When public opinion does shift, it tends to follow the interpretations and "spin" conveyed by news reports. When the news suggests the desirability of a particular policy option, the American public increasingly prefers that option. Reports that emphasized the risks of American dependence on foreign sources of oil, for instance, had the effect of increasing public support for government subsidies to domestic energy producers.

In addition to the spin placed on particular policies, the public also responds to the preferences expressed by media analysts and commentators. When there is a preponderance of commentary suggesting that unemployment is a more pressing problem than inflation, public opinion will show a significant shift in this direction.¹⁸

Do the significant persuasive powers wielded by news commentators and anchors indicate that these individuals are particularly credible or trustworthy? Not necessarily. Research on news commentators shows that commentators tend to reflect the Washington "climate of opinion."¹⁹ John Chancellor, Bill Moyers, and others who offer interpretation and analysis are, in this view, political chameleons whose interests are to reflect the dominant elite perspective in Washington. Even during the war in Vietnam, television coverage became critical of the war effort *only after key members of the Washington elite had come out in opposition to continued U.S. military involvement.*²⁰ In other words, elites develop preferences; because the media reflect these preferences, elite preferences shape the public's opinion. When newsmakers tilt in favor of a particular policy or ideology, the American public moves in that direction. The pattern of elite control over the flow of news, which is a recurring theme in this book, calls into question the idea of an independent or adversarial press. If reporters are unable to counter the official per-

¹⁸Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro, *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

¹⁹See, for instance, Daniel Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1986).

²⁰See Hallin, 1987.

spective on events, the public's ability to evaluate issues independently is diminished. We will return to this issue in Part Four.

Summary

The study of media effects has come full circle since the 1940s and 1950s. The public's dependence upon television news and the ability of political elites to shape the course of news create significant potential for the media to shape opinion. As we have shown, news coverage affects public opinion in many ways. By providing voters with information, the media enable voters to develop relevant opinions. By emphasizing a particular issue, news coverage boosts the salience of that issue and encourages voters to use their opinions relating to the issue as the criteria for evaluating candidates. By presenting the news in episodic form, television directs viewers away from societal forces in attributing responsibility for political issues. Finally, depending upon their degree of political involvement and their initial predispositions, individuals may be persuaded by the news. The public is likely to adopt the views that are dominant in the news, and those views tend to be the views of the Washington policy-setting elites.

The multiple effects of the news may have contributed to the early conclusion that the media had minimal consequences in campaigns. Some of the effects we have just described can pull voters in opposite directions, and wash out in the aggregate. For example, a high-school graduate who encounters a news story on the shrinking job market for unskilled workers is likely to become highly concerned about this issue. Because his job prospects appear dim, the salience of the issue is likely to make him feel less positive about the performance of his incumbent representatives in Congress. However, if the news story is framed in episodic terms, he might absolve the incumbent of responsibility for the problem, instead blaming the Japanese for the loss of jobs. Thus, the combination of agenda setting and framing can result in no net change in the voter's political preference.

Analysis of the effects of the media on public opinion are complicated further because citizens can express their opinions in many

ways. Of course, such expressions do not necessarily reveal the basis for the formation of the opinion. During elections, citizens may choose to vote for the candidate of one of the major parties, for a minor party candidate, or not to vote at all. Any of these choices may be motivated by different opinions about the state of the country and the qualities of the candidates. Those who vote for a Democrat may do so out of partisan loyalty, or because they were persuaded by television ads that attacked the Republican candidate. Those who do not vote may be either insufficiently informed about the issues and candidates or thoroughly alienated from the political process. In the next chapter we examine the effects of campaign communication on voting.

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