

Tyler Johnson

Department of Political Science
Texas A&M University
4348 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4348

Phone: (979) 862-8523
Fax: (979) 847-8924
e-mail: tjohnson@politics.tamu.edu

Education

- Ph.D., Texas A&M University, Political Science, expected August 2008
 - Dissertation Committee: Paul Kellstedt (chair), David Peterson, Alexander Pacek, Kurt Ritter
 - Dissertation: *Covering Congress: Media Effects on Evaluations of the Legislative Branch*
- B.A., Northwestern University, Political Science, 2001

Research Under Review

- Johnson, Tyler, and Johanna Dunaway. 2007. “Consider the Source: Variations in the Effects of Negative Campaign Information.” Under review.
- Johnson, Tyler, and Paul M. Kellstedt. 2007. “Media Usage and the Dynamics of Policy Mood.” Under review.
- Johnson, Tyler. 2007. “Media Framing and its Effect on Assessments of Members of Congress.” Experimental research grant proposal under review.

Other Publications

- Johnson, Tyler. (forthcoming) “Analyzing Content: A Review of Wordstat, Simstat, and QDA Miner.” *The Political Methodologist*.

Working Papers/Current Research Projects

- Johnson, Tyler, and David O. Rossbach. 2007. “Differentiating Eurosceptics in Central and Eastern Europe.”
- Johnson, Tyler. 2007. “Under Siege: How Incumbents Encourage and Discourage Primary Challenges.”
- Johnson, Tyler, and Alisa K. Hicklin. 2007. “Substantive Minority Representation and the Policy Process.”
- Johnson, Tyler, and Erica Socker. 2007. “Media Coverage and Public Opinion of the Judiciary.”

Academic Positions

- Graduate Assistant Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Texas A&M University, 2007-
 - Teaching POLS 327 (Congressional Politics), Fall 2007.
 - Fully responsible for lectures, assignments, and grading for 25 undergrad students.

Research Interests

- Public Opinion; Media and Politics; Policy Mood; Voting Behavior; Political Campaigning and Elections; Congress; Representation

Teaching Interests

- Public Opinion; Political Behavior; Congressional Politics; Voting Behavior; Campaigns and Elections; Media and Politics; Presidency; Introduction to American Politics; Undergraduate Research Methods

Conference Papers

- Johnson, Tyler, and Johanna Dunaway. 2007. "Consider the Source: Variations in the Effects of Attack Advertising." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.
- Johnson, Tyler. 2007. "Covering Congress: Media Effects on Evaluations of the Legislative Branch." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.
- Johnson, Tyler. 2007. "Rethinking Partisan Representation: The Prospect of Primary Challenges." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, January.
- Hicklin, Alisa K., and Tyler Johnson. 2006. "Substantive Minority Representation and the Policy Process." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.
- Johnson, Tyler. 2006. "Accentuate The Negative: Direct and Delayed Effects of Attack Advertising on Public Opinion." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, January.
- Johnson, Tyler, and Paul M. Kellstedt. 2005. "Media Usage and the Dynamics of Policy Mood." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., September.
- Rossbach, David O., and Tyler Johnson. 2005. "Are Parties Listening? Public Policy Mood and Party Ideology as Determinants of Party Issue Emphasis." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April.

Professional Service and Activity

- Member, American Political Science Association
- Member, Midwest Political Science Association
- Member, Southern Political Science Association

Departmental Service

- Member, American Politics Search Committee, Texas A&M University, 2006.
- Member, Political Science Graduate Committee, Texas A&M University, 2005-2006.
- President, Political Science Graduate Student Organization, Texas A&M University, 2005-2006.

Research Experience

- Research Assistant, Political Science Department, Texas A&M University, 2003-2007. Worked for Paul Kellstedt, David A.M. Peterson, Harvey Tucker, Judy Baer, and Charles Johnson.
 - collected and analyzed original data
 - designed and executed experiments
 - assisted in research gathering for articles and book projects
- Participant, Texas A&M University Workshop on NSF Grants

Honors, Awards, and Prizes

- Prestage-Cook Award, travel grant presented by the Southern Political Science Association.

References

- Paul Kellstedt, Associate Professor and Director of the American Politics Program, Texas A&M University
 - kellstedt@politics.tamu.edu
 - 2086 Allen Building, 4348 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4348
 - (979) 845-3082
- David A.M. Peterson, Associate Professor, Texas A&M University
 - dave@politics.tamu.edu
 - 2037 Allen Building, 4348 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4348
 - (979) 845-6783
- Alexander Pacek, Associate Professor, Texas A&M University
 - e339ap@politics.tamu.edu
 - 2055 Allen Building, 4348 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4348
 - (979) 845-3229

Description of Dissertation

The dissertation project takes an in-depth look at the role that media coverage of both individual members of Congress and Congress as a whole plays in shaping evaluations (job approval and trust) of legislators and the legislative branch. I argue that by examining what the media choose to cover and how the media cover it, we can learn more about the standards by which judgments of political performance take place. As such, I also contend that differences between the tone and substance in which the media cover *individual legislators* compared to how they cover the *legislative branch* go a long way to explaining why Americans cast favor upon those they send to Congress and cast doubt on Congress itself.

The primary argument of the overall project is that several different dichotomies of media framing and priming are keys in driving approval and trust evaluations of Congress and its members. The key dichotomy examined in the project, based on Thomas Patterson's (1993) assessment of the changing nature of how the mass media covers campaigning, splits political reporting into *governing* coverage and *game* coverage. Governing coverage deals more with substantive issues, policy problems, and the display of leadership traits. Game coverage, on the other hand, is more concerned with the parliamentary struggles between actors and parties to pass legislation and accrue power; it treats politicians as strategic actors always competing for advantages. Game coverage also focuses heavily on winning and losing.

I argue that a story's focus on either game or governing aspects of legislating and representing will drive assessments of members of Congress and Congress itself. More specifically, I analyze how game frame coverage is likely to spur negative job approval and distrust, while governing frame coverage drives positive assessments of job performance and high levels of trust. The dissertation tests the relationship between media coverage and evaluations of Congress and its members in three different ways. First, I utilize time series analysis to link content analysis of national newspaper reporting (capturing how the national media covers Congress itself) to several macro measures of congressional approval; this allows me to assess the question surrounding why Americans dislike the legislative branch. Then, to empirically tackle the question of why Americans love the politicians they send to Washington, I employ a two-pronged research strategy. I examine, using content analysis of local and national newspaper reporting of individual senators, how local and national game and governing frames drive assessments of senatorial job approval. I then execute an original experiment that presents individuals with media coverage geared heavily toward game and governing aspects of representation, allowing me to analyze the effects of specific types of stories at the individual level. This multi-method research strategy, I argue, allows me to fully and critically discuss the relationship between media coverage and assessments of legislators and the legislative branch.