

Agenda setting theory

Science



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Define and illustrate (i. e. , give examples of) agenda-setting theory. How might a president try to use the media's presumed agenda-setting powers near election time? In other words, might it behoove a president to take (or threaten to take) certain highly dramatic actions-especially concerning foreign affairs- just before an election that will impact strongly on the power of his/her political party? If so, what actions might a president be likely to take and under what circumstances? (For example, would the likelihood of taking such actions depend on how the economy is doing? Explain. Would it matter whether business scandals, the budget deficit, crime patterns or a previously initiated war were detracting from the president's popularity? When would a president tend to refrain from taking such actions at election time?) Support each claim you make with evidence and/or reasoning.

Agenda Setting Theory is creating public awareness by using the news media. It is a powerful influence the media holds, and it's used to persuade people into thinking that a story is important, when in reality it may not be. The functions of agenda-setting are: media agenda, public agenda, policy agenda, and corporate agenda. The media agenda can be discussed through newspapers, television and radios. Public agendas cover issues regarding members of the public. Policy agenda cover issues which policy makers consider to be important, and corporate agenda are issues which big business and corporations consider important. According to Bernard C. Cohen, " the media doesn't tell us what to think; it tells us what to think about". This takes us to the two levels of agenda setting; the first level explains that the media influences people by suggesting what people should think about. The second level is focused on how people should think about

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the issue. This theory is very powerful, because if people are exposed to the same media, they will be persuaded to feel the same way towards it. But this influence can also affect people in a negative way, because the media exaggerates issues resulting in the people not always getting the facts. As for the President Utilizing the media's dramatic emphasis on the economies downward spiral, a President or presidential candidate would likely focus his media use in a positive way. He can use the valence principle, as far as ensuring to discuss the topics being targeted by the media in his favor.

As I mentioned earlier, if the media is negatively discussing an issue, the President can try to turn things around, so that he can get the people on his side. As we all know, there are multiple ways to view the media and see what events are happening in the world around us. Being that we as Americans are in a recession, a President or candidate would probably want to steer away from supporting corporations or businesses that are hoarding taxpayers money over oil spills, environmentally hazardous accidents, or natural resources being wasted away. What I'm trying to say is that, in a presidential speech, or campaign speech, taking the supportive side of something that is worsening our economic state would hurt the chances of a successful presidency. For example, if a President wanted to persuade us to support his new healthcare proposal, he would likely manipulate the media's impact on our views by displaying and airing various commercials and programs which bring light to certain hospitals, or healthcare policies rise in providing wider more sufficient care to certain families without sharing certain details like their social status or insurance coverage. At the same

time one could throw numbers, statistics, and positive increases in this health care plan all over the media to show and beat one side of the story in the American people. When you bring in the view of the relationship between the salience of a story, and the extent to which people think that this story is important, one can easily portray that people will attribute importance of an issue by how often the media exposes it.

Political scandals will probably never stop as long as we have greedy, unfocused leaders. A prime example is Senator Blagojevich, who served as the 40th Governor of Illinois from 2003 to 2009, ended up being arrested on federal corruption charges. He was charged of conspiracy to commit mail, wire fraud, and solicitation bribery. These events surrounded him not long ago, and were all over the media both news and entertainment related.

Would it affect the President in a negative way if he went on air and supported this official? Absolutely; in addition, the President would need to create media coverage in his favor showing that he not only does not condone these actions and behaviors, but is already planning to introduce new leadership which will propose some positive swing to the people. And guess how he could manipulate that negative event into a healthy bit of coverage? By using the media to air this over and over again so we can see the importance of his new leadership proposals. (www.

chicagotribune.com) In Closing, agenda setting in relation to the President and his views or position in any situation is a common and reoccurring thing. With advances in technology being at a constant, we can expect to see the future Presidents and leaders use the media to their advantage. As long as some type of media exists, the people will be manipulated in one way or
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another. This means that political parties should constantly be aware of the things that they do, and continue to remind themselves that any mistake they make can end their careers as we know it.