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Political Campaign Debating: A Selected, Annotated Bibliography.

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Noting that television debates have become a regular feature of the media politics by which candidates seek office, this annotated bibliography is particularly intended to assist teachers and researchers on debate, argumentation, and political communication. The 40 citations are limited to the television era of American politics and categorized as follows: (1) scholarly books and monographs; (2) public affairs books and monographs; (3) academic articles and chapters; (4) papers from academic conferences; and (5) debate transcripts and videotapes. (NKA)
POLITICAL CAMPAIGN DEBATING

A Selected, Annotated Bibliography Prepared by

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TV debates have become a regular feature of the media politics by which candidates seek office. This bibliography is limited to the TV era of American politics, and is intended to assist three groups: 1) teachers of debate, argumentation, and political communication; 2) researchers investigating campaign debates; and 3) debate sponsors and participants.

The following studies are drawn from well over 200 books, chapters, articles, and conference papers on this topic. Entries followed by ED numbers are abstracted in Resources in Education (RIE): see page 4 for ordering information.

Part I: Scholarly Books and Monographs


Kraus, Sidney, ed. The Great Debates: Carter vs. Ford, 1976. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1979. Similar to the Kraus anthology on the 1960 debates, but more extensive. Includes 20 academic studies and 7 reports from journalists, politicians, and other individuals involved in public affairs groups concerned with the debates. Primarily concerned with debate effects and secondarily with debate policy.


Part II: Public Affairs Books and Monographs


Part III: Academic Articles and Chapters


Bryski, Bruce G. "An Analysis of Evidence in the First Ford/Carter Debate." Journal of Applied Communication Research, 6 (1978), 19-30. Reports the quantity, accuracy and reliability of evidence used in the 1st 1976 debate; describes Carter's use of evidence as more effective and accurate. Note: An earlier version of this study is available through the ERIC system: ED 137 873.


Chaffee, Steven H. "Approaches of U.S. Scholars to the Study of Televised Political Debates," Political Communication Review, 4 (1979) 19-33. Reviews political debate research (1960-1976) with emphasis upon the types of research questions pursued and the generic approaches employed, particularly the traditional persuasive paradigm versus the journalistic approach.

Chaffee, Steven H. "Presidential Debates-Are They Helpful to Voters?" Communication Monographs, 45 (1978), 333-346. On the basis of a wide variety of studies of the 1960 and 1976 debates, Chaffee concludes that debates have a high value in the political process.

Desmond, Roger Jon and Thomas R. Donahue. "The Role of the 1976 Televised Presidential Debates in the Political Socialization of Adolescents," Communication Quarterly, 29 (1981), 302-308. The social class of parents was the best predictor of how adolescents viewed the importance of the 1st 1976 debate. Interpersonal communication prior to the debate and immediately after the telecast was the factor which best predicted the adolescents' perceptions of who won the debate.

Ellsworth, John H. "Rationality and Campaigning: A Content Analysis of the 1960 presidential Campaign Debates," Western Political Science Quarterly, 18 (1965), 704-802. Compares the discourse in the 1960 debates with other campaign discourse in the 1960 election. Finds that in the debates the candidates devoted more time to making position statements, offering evidence for their positions, and giving reasoned arguments in support of their positions than they did in non-debate discourse.


Kraus, Sidney. "Presidential Debates in 1964," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 50 (1964), 19-23. Considers the participation of an incumbent in presidential debates, the format of such debates, and the relative emphasis upon images versus issues that might occur in such debates.


Lemert, James B., William R. Elliot, Karl J. Nestvold, and Galen R. Rarick. "Effects of Viewing a Presidential Primary Debate," Communication Research, 10 (1983), 155-173. Based upon data from viewers of the 1980 New Hampshire Republican primary TV debate, the authors conclude that watching a TV debate early in the campaign increases voters' interest in the campaign and increases their subsequent efforts to gain information about the campaign.


Pfau, Michael. "Criteria and Format to Optimize Political Debates: An Analysis of South Dakota's 'Election 80' Series," Journal of the American Forensic Association, 19 (1983), 205-214. Describes the format developed for the South Dakota TV debates, illustrates how the format conforms more closely to genuine debate than other TV formats, and provides data from candidates and news media participants evaluating the format.

Tiemens, Robert K. "Television's Portrayal of the 1976 Presidential Debates: An Analysis of Visual Content," Communication Monographs, 45 (1978), 362-370. Provides a visual content analysis of the 3 1976 debates, showing that Carter benefited more than Ford from the visual dimension of TV.


Part IV: Papers from Academic Conferences


Frye, Jerry K. and Bruce G. Bryski. "Accident and Design: Implications of Technical and Functional Factors of Network Television Coverage of the Ford/Carter Presidential Debates." Presented to the Eastern Communication Association, Boston, March 16-18, 1978. ED 158 336. Ford had more camera time, but Carter was shown more often in "reaction" shots while his opponent spoke, and projected a more positive visual image during "reaction" shots than did Ford.


Ritter, Kurt and James W. Gibson. 'The Quality of the 1980 Presidential Forums: A 'Revisionist' Position on Presidential Debates." Presented to the Western Speech Communication Association, San Jose, Calif., Feb. 14-17, 1981. ED 207 096. Argues that academic critics have imposed an unnecessarily narrow definition of "debate" when studying campaign forums. Concludes that the quality of TV debates suffers because of deficiencies in the performance of journalists serving as debate panelists and because of the debating style of incumbent presidents.

Part V: Debate Transcripts and Video-Tapes


Video-Tapes of Televised Political Debates. The Vanderbilt University Television News Archive currently has the most extensive collection of political campaign debates available to scholars and teachers. Its holdings include: portions of the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates, the 3 McGovern-Humphrey debates of the 1972 California Democratic primary campaign, all of the 1976 presidential and vice presidential debates, 3 TV debates from the 1980 presidential campaign (including the two major debates), and 8 out of the 14 TV debates from the 1984 Democratic presidential primary campaign. Vanderbilt undoubtedly will add any 1984 general election presidential debates to its archive. For information on fees and holdings, see Television News Index and Abstracts (published monthly), or write to: Vanderbilt Television News Archive, Vanderbilt University Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37240.

Entries followed by ED numbers are documents abstracted in Resources in Education (RIE), the ERIC monthly abstract journal. The complete documents are available in paper copy or microfiche from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, 3900 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria, VA 22304. For ordering information, see the latest issue of RIE in your library or write to the ERIC Speech Communication Module, 5105 Backlick Road, Suite E, Annandale, VA 22003. Many of the journal articles in this bibliography are also indexed in the ERIC monthly journal, Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE). (ERIC is the acronym for Educational Resources Information Center.)