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The Status Quo Bias in the Coverage of Election 2000

The biggest source of bias in the news ^{is} ~~was~~ the status quo bias. The news coverage focused ^{s/} almost exclusively on the two major party candidates, and ^{we} gave little or no coverage to the other candidates. Even the checklist that we received for the exercise was biased towards the status quo. Bush and Gore are each mentioned several times, while Nader is only mentioned once, and that is as an issue for Gore, not even as a candidate.

Nader is only mentioned in stories regarding the contest between states as an issue. He gets token mention in the polls, but only usually in states where he is potentially going to take enough votes away from Gore to give Bush states that would otherwise be in the Gore column. His candidacy is often questioned by the pundits who have felt that the only significance that his candidacy has had has been in hurting Gore. By taking and putting Nader in this light, it serves to discredit his campaign, and continues to perpetuate the status quo bias.

Education was pushed as a popular issue for George Bush. He was portrayed in a very positive light on this issue for the work that he has done in Texas to improve the education system. They also showed that he was able to maintain the success that the previous administration had on this issue. This is very good for Bush as one of the main issues against him has been that Gore has maintained a strong economy, and that if he is elected, that he will continue the success of the Clinton administration.

Shouldn't it be in present tense

How is this status quo coverage?

The issue of Gore in Tennessee was a big issue because it threatens the status quo that is expected that each candidate would carry his own state. If Gore were not from Tennessee, then there would be no issue on this matter. However it looks very bad for Gore in the national sense when ^ehis is accused of forgetting where he came from and the people who gave him his start. Bush comes off much stronger than Gore in this case because he is having no problems in his home state. The amount of states that Gore is struggling in that are traditionally Democratic is also a case of Gore looking bad because he cannot maintain the status quo. Bush however is having trouble in the state of Florida where his brother is governor. This should have been a safe state for Bush, but due to campaign tactics by Gore and the prevalence of the Social Security issue, he is struggling. States such as Oregon and Washington are the same type of situation for Gore.

The choice of issues to cover also shows the status quo bias in the media. Education, Social Security, candidate credibility, and taxes remain the "Hot" issues throughout the campaign. These issues have become such a status quo that candidates rarely get coverage on other issues, thus the candidates rarely speak on other issues.

The status quo is very prevalent in the media coverage of election politics. The major party candidates are the ones who receive all of the media coverage. Ralph Nader is treated as an issue not as a viable candidate for president. Also candidates are criticized and questioned when the status quo is questioned, challenged, or changed. And finally, the issues that are covered are the status quo issues. We do not typically hear about the issues that are not considered the major hot-button issues.

Such as?

Good way to put it

I see Nader as an example of status quo coverage but the rest of your analysis, except your point about issues, needs to be elaborated. I might have helped if you identified some of these other issues.

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