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The Year in C-SPAN Archives Research: Volume 4

Robert X. Browning

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THE YEAR IN
G-SPAN
ARCHIVES RESEARCH
Volume 4

OTHER BOOKS IN THE YEAR IN C-SPAN ARCHIVES RESEARCH SERIES

The C-SPAN Archives: An Interdisciplinary Resource for Discovery, Learning, and Engagement

Exploring the C-SPAN Archives: Advancing the Research Agenda

Advances in Research Using the C-SPAN Archives

“Robert Browning’s annual C-SPAN research series has become a veritable scholarly institution. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the C-SPAN Video Library, and this volume’s incredible array of research projects drawn from it demonstrates its importance for our understanding of public life. In the chapters collected here, scholars analyze everything from congressional debates over mental health and law enforcement to speeches from the campaign trail in 2016. In doing so, the scholarship in this volume sheds light on elite rhetoric and the claims that ground policymaking and the search for public legitimacy. As importantly, this volume sets a research agenda for the future in demonstrating the varied methodological approaches and substantive objects of interest that this invaluable archive supports. As this volume makes clear, research using the C-SPAN Archives is particularly important at a time marked by declining trust in political institutions and elected representatives.”

—*Daniel Kreiss, School of Media and Journalism, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

“This volume clearly demonstrates the value and versatility of the C-SPAN Video Library. From comparisons of Trump’s speeches and tweets to analyses of congressional debates on law enforcement, the chapters in this volume highlight the array of methodological and theoretical approaches that can leverage the Archives to answer our most pressing research questions. In addition to answering the valuable questions posed, the studies in this volume serve as excellent models for future research by demonstrating numerous innovative research designs that can be built around the Archives’ content. The volume brings together work from several disciplines to provide key insights into what we can learn from careful analyses of elite rhetoric, narrative, and debate.”

—*Johanna Dunaway, Department of Communication, Texas A&M University*

THE YEAR IN
C-SPAN
ARCHIVES RESEARCH
Volume 4

edited by
Robert X. Browning

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For
Timothy E. Cook
Gary King
Lyn Ragsdale

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF THE C-SPAN ARCHIVES' ONLINE VIDEO RESOURCES: A FOREWORD

It is quite an honor to help introduce the fourth volume of research that utilizes the C-SPAN Archives as its primary source material. My relationship with C-SPAN began quite early in my career as an educator. In fact, I recall as a college student being one of those political junkies often glued to C-SPAN for the pageantry, power, and drama of our national civic conversation. Whether to enjoy a State of the Union Address, or perhaps my marathon-viewing of the daylong events of a presidential inauguration; to partake in the confirmation hearings of a Supreme Court nominee; to catch a daily press briefing from the White House; or just to listen in on the House and Senate floor proceedings, I found the broadcasts of our national political processes to be an essential part of my media diet, and still do. Even before I had formally taken up the study of media effects, including such notions as news framing and media bias, I understood the value of “hearing it straight from the horse’s mouth,” which allowed me to be a bit less dependent on media interpreters who themselves may be influenced by corporate or partisan and ideological interests. Indeed, I understood that the more unvarnished account of our daily politics could be found on C-SPAN.

Very early in my career as an assistant professor of communication at the University of Oklahoma, I had the great pleasure of attending a workshop for educators at the C-SPAN studios in Washington, DC. Later, C-SPAN founder

Brian Lamb was a keynote speaker at a conference on civic engagement hosted by OU's Political Communication Center and the National Communication Association just before the 2000 presidential election. Then several years after that, when I was teaching an undergraduate political communication course at the University of Missouri, my students enjoyed a visit to our campus by the C-SPAN bus. I know my story is not unique—that countless educators and students since C-SPAN's founding in 1979 have utilized its many resources, especially the C-SPAN Archives housed in the Purdue Research Park and available online now for the past 30 years. As a scholar of political communication, and one who studies presidential campaigns and campaign communication, including political advertising and televised presidential debates, I can think of no other resource that I have used more often in the classroom and in my own research than the programming and archival resources of C-SPAN.

The current volume of research demonstrates the creative intellectual juices that the C-SPAN Archives fosters. As in the first three volumes, the featured studies span methodological and intellectual boundaries and represent the broad topic areas that constitute C-SPAN programming. The chapters that follow analyze public policy debates, congressional speeches and proceedings, testimony provided in congressional hearings, presidential campaign communication, citizens' responses as part of the political communication process, C-SPAN resources as civics education, and C-SPAN as a resource for journalists. Both broad and focused, these essays cut a wide and successful path through the Archives' intellectual riches.

Little did I know when C-SPAN first sustained my political junkie habit, even before I had decided on a college major and a career path as a teacher and scholar of political communication, that my need for it would be a life-long addiction. My daily C-SPAN fix, even then, was most likely influential in the selection of my life's work. As we've now entered a troubling era of "fake news" and "alternative facts" most dangerous to our democracy, we must have a resource such as C-SPAN that provides us with the primary source and official record of our national political dialogue. As we lament the lack of civics knowledge among our citizenry, especially our youngest citizens, C-SPAN provides educators and classrooms at all levels access to the greatest resources available for civics education. Truly, we are fortunate to have

this national treasure, and fortunate to enjoy yet another collection of outstanding studies that have mined the vast resources of the C-SPAN Archives.

Mitchell S. McKinney
Professor of Communication
Director, Political Communication Institute
University of Missouri

PREFACE

In this fourth volume of the C-SPAN annual research series, we see some new approaches to the study of political and social phenomena. With each volume, the research has developed in terms of the range and depth of studies. We find an analysis of President Trump's tweets and speeches as well as audience reactions to the Trump and Clinton debates. There are also multiple analyses of speeches, but each takes a different approach and emphasis.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the creation of the C-SPAN Archives' online Video Library. The goal was to assist educators in using the vast programming for teaching and research. Now, with the fourth volume in the C-SPAN annual research collection we continue to demonstrate the value of this primary source archive for academic research.

There is one chapter in this edition that focuses on teaching. Pavla Hlozkova's chapter demonstrates C-SPAN's value in an online master's MBA program. She discusses what works and does not work to illustrate concepts and lessons in this academic program. Her chapter could encourage others to consider using C-SPAN videos as examples and to select the type of videos that would work.

Other chapters are focused on research and a number rely on textual analysis in the communication tradition. Wulbrecht analyzes how mental health is framed in congressional debates. Wildrick and Novak look at the rhetorical use of crises and scandals, also in congressional debates. Law enforcement as a concept in debate is the subject of the Wilson and Scacco chapter. Lam and Ganchoudhuri examine health care policy. Uncertainty management in the testimony of the Federal Reserve chairman provides the basis for Hearit and Buzzanell's chapter.

Finally, four chapters take a different approach. Harness and Scacco take an innovative approach in looking at the relationship between President Trump's tweets in his first 30 days and his speeches during the same period. Eubanks and colleagues analyze the audience reactions to Trump and Clinton during the 2016 presidential debates. Nancy Brown, a historian, studies the history of the characterization of the AIDS/HIV phenomenon. Buozis and colleagues contribute a thoughtful essay on a new area of research for the Video Library. They examine the research possibilities for journalism, drawing upon a variety of organizations covered by C-SPAN. Each chapter in this volume is distinctive in the research methods that it employs.

All these chapters base their research on the C-SPAN Video Library content. They offer advances in the research questions asked, the research methods applied, and in the research conclusions reached. Together they advance our understanding of politics, communication, and history.

Wulbrecht examines mental illness and gun violence. She examines congressional discourse during a time period when mass shootings became prevalent. She finds that the issue is framed as treating the mentally ill or the dangerousness of this population. To further refine this study, she looks at whether there is a difference when adults, children, veterans, or mass shootings are debated. Her study consists of 254 coded cases from 2013 to 2015 to which she applied logistic regression.

In another study of congressional rhetoric, Wildrick and Novak examine the use of scandals and crises in debates. They use a longer time period, the 24 years from 1992 to 2016, and examine 631 cases. Three types of congressional discourse are analyzed. These are building support or opposition, enhancing relationships, and fostering media and public attention. They report percentages and examples of each discourse.

Another analysis of congressional rhetoric is undertaken by Wilson and Scacco. They look at law enforcement from 2013 to 2015 and in a vein similar to Wulbrecht's, they examine how the discourse changes in the midst of a changing view of law enforcement. Here the shift is from the hero orientation following 9/11 to police actions in community shootings. They use Hart's DIRECTION program to look at three discursive tones: narrative force, transcendence, and tradition. They give examples as well as conduct a regression analysis.

We shift to presidential rhetoric with the Lam and Ganchoudhuri health portrayal study. They study 102 videos from April 2015 to November 2016 in which health issues were discussed in the presidential campaign. They report on the frequency of specific health issues within these videos, comparing Trump's and Clinton's emphases on health.

Another executive department analysis is that of Hearit and Buzzanell, who examined 2,934 sentences of Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan's congressional testimony drawn from 20 of his appearances. There were 241 total appearances in the Video Library, but they sampled from the beginning, middle, and end of his tenure. After establishing the reliability of their content analysis, they ran chi-square tests with positive and negative sentiments of how the economy would perform.

As mentioned, four other studies differed from these textual analyses. The Harness and Scacco chapter does analyze the text of President Trump's speeches, but it is the addition of his tweets in the same 30-day period that sets off this method. They collected a total of 192 tweets and 49 speech transcripts for the first 30 days of the Trump presidency. They then were able to do a network analysis of terms referenced in each of these separate collections.

In a very different type of analysis, Eubanks, Stewart, and Dye used video software to precisely measure and separate clips of speaking time by Trump and Clinton in their presidential debates. In the first debate of 2016, for example, they found that Trump had 80 speaking turns versus 43 for Clinton. There were 31 audience responses: 18 in response to Trump and 13 in response to Clinton. The largest difference was more laughter for Trump.

One chapter in this volume takes a historical approach to study the AIDS/HIV epidemic and how it was characterized by the media. This chapter by Nancy Brown emphasizes the influence of various organizations as they publicized the issue. Historians, such as Brown, are beginning to see the value of the Video Library

The chapter by Buozis and colleagues is more of a review essay. However, it takes in a relatively new area of research for the Video Library. The authors examine the research possibilities for journalistic studies looking at four journalistic organizations: the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Society of Professional Journalists, the National Press Club, and the Freedom Forum, which represent a range of ideology, composition, managerial type,

and elite type. This chapter sets the stage for the next round of empirical work in journalistic studies.

The studies in this volume represent a variety of methodological approaches. Each varies in its focus and approach. They demonstrate the value and depth of the C-SPAN Video Library for a wide variety of scholars and scholarship. All of the primary authors are graduate students who demonstrate what can be done in applying a range of disciplines and approaches to the video content of the C-SPAN Video Library.

This volume, then, is unique in displaying the approaches and methods of various authors. These chapters demonstrate the richness of the C-SPAN Video Library in that researchers from various disciplines can tackle different topics with different approaches. The result is a blueprint for others who follow in their footsteps.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is the fourth volume in the C-SPAN Research Conference proceedings. Each year we hold a conference at Purdue University that focuses on research from the C-SPAN Archives. The authors of the papers presented all use video from the online C-SPAN Video Library to advance our understanding of research in political science, communication, and history. This year's conference was unique in that each paper (and now, chapter in this volume) was authored or coauthored by a graduate student. The topics range from content analysis of speeches of members of Congress to presidential tweets.

Many people helped make this conference possible. Brian Lamb, Susan Swain, and Robert Kennedy, executives of C-SPAN, have encouraged us in this research endeavor. They facilitated funding from the C-SPAN Education Foundation that resulted in the grants to the scholars to complete their work. The C-SPAN Board of Directors, all representatives of the cable television industry that supports C-SPAN, was instrumental in the initiative to digitize the archive and has been enthusiastic about encouraging its use.

Nita Stickrod Granger skillfully managed the planning, interacting with Purdue Conferences staff, Ethan Kingery in particular. She also worked with all participants to pull off a very successful conference. The entire staff of the Archives—Kevin Ingle, Alan Cloutier, Matt Long, Josh Tamlin, Karen Adams, Martin Swoverland, Steve Strother, and Gary Daugherty—helped along the way.

At Purdue University we were assisted by Professors Rosie Clawson and Marifran Mattson, heads of the Department of Political Science and the Lamb School of Communication, respectively. Donna Wireman of Communication assisted with many campus details. Fara Stalker and Paige Pfiefer of the Liberal Arts Business Office helped with financial management for the conference.

Dr. Raymond Smock of the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education at Shepherd University quickly and graciously agreed to keynote the conference. His remarks are printed in this volume.

The Purdue University Press made sure that everything went smoothly, from the initial idea through publication of the book. Rebecca Corbin, Katherine Purple, and Bryan Shaffer helped throughout. Kelley Kimm provided very skillful editing to ensure that every chapter looked and read well.

As we move forward with additional conferences and research activities, I am pleased to announce that Purdue University has created the Center for C-SPAN Scholarship and Engagement in the Brian Lamb School of Communication. Connie Doebele has joined the Center as managing director, bringing 25 years of experience at C-SPAN. The Center will sponsor the future conferences, bring in speakers, and encourage research and teaching using the C-SPAN Video Library. I welcome Connie and look forward to more activities promoting the extensive holdings of the C-SPAN Video Library.

I dedicate this book to three of my graduate school colleagues, who each went on to very successful careers in political science: Timothy E. Cook, Gary King, and Lyn Ragsdale. Unfortunately, Tim Cook's career was cut way too short by his death in 2006. I miss him and the advice he would offer as a leading communication scholar on using the Archives for research. Gary King and Lyn Ragsdale are both prolific scholars who teach at Harvard and Rice Universities, respectively. They each influenced me in untold ways.

The C-SPAN Archives observed its 30th anniversary in 2017. When we started in 1987, we had a vision of how C-SPAN could be used in teaching and research. With each volume in this series, we get closer to realizing that vision. There will be future conferences and future volumes, each showing a diverse range of research in multiple disciplines. I never cease to be impressed by what scholars propose and execute for each of these volumes. It is our hope that professors and graduate students will pick up these volumes and propose new research that will appear in the future volumes. Let the research continue.

Robert X. Browning, Editor
Winter 2018