

Simona Kragh

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Lexington, SC 29073

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Research and Teaching Interests

Presidential Politics, Presidential Rhetoric, President and Media, National Security Policy of the United States, United States Foreign Policy, International Relations.

Education

Ph.D. - Political Science

University of South Carolina

Major: American Politics; Minor: International Relations

Columbia, SC

August 2008

Dissertation: *The President, the Press, and Public Approval: Interactions and Media Management from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush*

Dissertation Committee: Dr. John Hsieh (chair), Dr. David Darmofal, Dr. Donald Songer, Dr. Harvey Starr, and Dr. John McAdams (Marquette University)

The “rally-round-the-flag” effect is a widely accepted phenomenon in Political Science. Prior studies have demonstrated how crises usually generate the ideal conditions for the president to effectively communicate his side of the events to the public without significant competition from opposing views and how, at least for a time, a crisis environment is necessary *and* sufficient to generate favorable media coverage of the president’s position. I argue that the president needs to choose appropriate ways to communicate his views if he wants to prevent opposite stances from being presented in the media in a point-counterpoint fashion. If he does, situations presented to the constituency as crises could bring him an increase in approval ratings.

In this study, I analyze the relationship between presidential public “crisis claiming” statements, their coverage by *The New York Times*, and changes in presidential approval ratings between January 1, 1950 and December 31, 2005. The conclusion based on the analysis of the data is that, if the president needs to gain ground with the public, selecting any potentially salient and urgent situation and engaging in crisis claiming is not a strategy that can offer consistent advantages. It is intuitive that some situations are more likely to catch the attention of the press anyway, possibly because of their magnitude, their humanitarian appeal, or their real or perceived threat to the United States. The president will have to be always prepared to anticipate the moves of the media, to avoid finding himself publicly on the defensive when it comes to the handling of the crisis. The kind of forecasting required in this condition, however, is extremely challenging, demands constant monitoring by staff in the administration specialized in media relations, and might yield a very low rate of success. Nevertheless, this effort appears to be an undeniable necessity and an essential component of the power of modern presidents.

Simona Kragh

M.A. – Journalism

Marquette University

Major: Journalism

Thesis: “Treatment by *Corriere della Sera* of JFK: An Analysis of an Italian News Media Perspective on the Kennedy Presidency.”

Milwaukee, WI

May 2001

M.A. - Political Science

Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Major: American Politics; Minor: International Relations.

May 1999

B.A. - Political Science

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, Italy.

Major: International Politics.

Thesis: “Negotiating Conventional Disarmament in Europe.”

Total credit hours: comparable approximately to 136 credit hours in an American institution.

April 1994

Teaching Experience

Midlands Technical College

Social and Behavioral Sciences Department

Adjunct Instructor

Columbia, SC

Fall 2008

- Organized lectures on Politics and Government and International Relations.
- In charge of instructing students on major political theories, analysis of political issues through the application of the same theories, identification of inter-branch governmental dynamics, fundamental concepts pertaining to US foreign policy and international relations, and collection of appropriate sources.

University of South Carolina

Political Science Department

Instructor

Columbia, SC

August 2005-

May 2008

- Conducted extensive, independent literature research.
- Compiled syllabus for upper level undergraduate courses in U.S. National Security and International Relations.
- Organized and delivered lectures to approximately 300 students (40-45 students per section).
- Honed the ability to use technological tools (Power Point, Blackboard) to better support the students’ learning experience.
- Counseled approximately 50% of students on a one-to-one basis regarding research methods (among others: selection of appropriate sources, formulation of hypotheses, acquisition of basic concepts on scientific testing).
- Coached approximately 20% students on a one-to-one basis regarding studying Methods and public speaking strategies.
- Compiled multiple choice and essay exams.
- Reviewed and graded research papers.

Simona Kragh

Midlands Technical College
Social and Behavioral Sciences Department
Adjunct Instructor

Columbia, SC
Fall 2006

- Organized and delivered lectures on American Government – 200-level college course (16 high-school students).
- Instructed the class on basic analysis of political issues, identification of inter-branch governmental dynamics, and collection of appropriate sources.
- Compiled multiple choice exams and pop-quizzes.
- Reviewed and graded research papers and tests.

Marquette University
Foreign Languages and Literatures Department
Adjunct Instructor

Milwaukee, WI
Spring 2002

- Organized and delivered lectures on Italian grammar.
- Reviewed and graded multiple choice and essay exams.

Research Experience

Conferences

Midwest Political Science Association

Chicago, IL
April 2007

“Presidential Media Management and the Rally-‘Round-the-Flag Phenomenon.”

Assistantships

University of South Carolina
Political Science Department
Research and Teaching Assistant

Columbia, SC
Fall 2002-
Spring 2006

- Assisted faculty members in the collection of data and literature for publishable scholarly books and articles.
- Compiled literature reviews.
- Entered data in Excel spreadsheets.
- Edited written material for publication.
- Delivered lectures on judicial policies, voting behavior, and U.S. foreign policy.

Max Holland
Research Fellow, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia
Research Assistant

online/phone
January 2000–
October 2000

- Independently organized and carried out Italian-language research (newspaper articles and books).
- Conducted interviews in Italian.
- Provided summaries and assessments based on the material collected.
- Translated (Italian to English) primary and secondary sources for forthcoming book on Warren Commission and associated articles.

Simona Kragh

Dr. John McAdams
Marquette University, Political Science Department
Research Assistant

Milwaukee, WI
July 1999-
August 1999

- Researched Italian press coverage regarding Jim Garrison's investigation of President Kennedy's homicide.
- Translated (Italian to English) the material collected.
- Provided assessments based on research results.

Additional Experience

Castello Editore
Translator

Milan, Italy
1996 to 1997

- Translated four 400-page books on Osteopathy (English-Italian) for publication.

Office of the Prefect of Milan
Planner for Sheltering the Homeless

Milan, Italy
December 1991-
January 1992

- Independently conducted extensive search for suitable shelter for homeless individuals.
- Contacted numerous institutions and real estate owners throughout the province of Milan.
- Provided the Office of the Prefect with extensive oral and written reports on options and feasible solutions based on a minimal budget.

Red Cross

Milan, Italy
1987-1997

- Nurse (volunteer). Emergency Surgery, Elective Surgery, Internal Medicine, and Ob/Gyn Divisions; civilian and military first aid stations.
- Second Lieutenant (Ret.), Auxiliary of Italian Armed Forces.
- Specialized in Search and Rescue (AB 212 and HH3F helicopters).
- First aid instructor (1990-1997). Theoretical and practical lectures to students (K-12), professionals, and law enforcement.
- Consecutive interpreter (English-Italian-English) for medical and combat officers, British-Italian military exercises (Münster, Germany, September 1989); NATO exercise "Folding Beds" (Central and Southern Italy, May, 1990).
- Provided Army Command with medical and technical support to organize evacuation and wound simulation procedures for NATO exercise "Folding Beds" (Central and Southern Italy, May 1990).

Awards

University of South Carolina
Political Science Department

Columbia, SC
April 2007

- Outstanding Classroom Teaching Award.

Simona Kragh

Scholarships

**University of South Carolina
Political Science Department**

Columbia, SC
Fall 2002-
Present

- Research and teaching assistantship, Fall 2002 to Spring 2006.
- Sigma Iota Rho, National Honor Society for International Studies (April 15, 2004).

**Marquette University
Political Science Department**

Milwaukee, WI
Spring 1998-
Spring 1999

- Tuition Scholarships for second, third and fourth semesters of Master's Degree program and overload course at the United Nations (New York, May-June 1999).

**Marquette University
Communication Department**

Milwaukee, WI
Fall 1999-
Spring 2001

O'Sullivan Fellowship for Journalism in Public Affairs (full tuition and monthly stipend).

Skills

- Spoken and written proficiency in English and Italian.
- Basic knowledge of Russian.
- Advanced knowledge of Latin and V century B.C. Greek.
- Basic knowledge of STATA.
- Experience with Word for Windows and Excel.

Simona Kragh

References

Dr. John Hsieh
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University of South Carolina
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Phone: (803) 777-3109
E-mail: JFHsieh0@mailbox.sc.edu

Dr. Harvey Starr
Department of Political Science
University of South Carolina
Gambrell Hall
Columbia, SC 29208
Phone: (803) 777-3109
E-mail: starr-harvey@sc.edu

Dr. Donald Songer
Department of Political Science
University of South Carolina
Gambrell Hall
Columbia, SC 29208
Phone: (803) 777-3109
E-mail: dsonger@sc.edu

Dr. John McAdams
Department of Political Science
Marquette University
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Milwaukee, WI 53201-1881
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