Unit 1.4 Voting Behaviour and the Media

4.1 Case Studies of Three elections

Social/Demographic factors:
Class

Class type	Description
AB	Higher Managerial (Director, Lawyer, Doctor, Senior Executive)
C1	Professional occupations (Teachers, Managers, Social Workers)
C2	Skilled Manual (Plumber, Train Driver, Mechanic)
DE	Unskilled or Unemployed (Labourer, Call Centre)

Trend: Seen to be very important pre-1970s, but gradually become less important. DE and C1 more likely to vote Labour and ABC1 more likely to vote Tory

Year	%AB Voting Conservative
1964	78
1987	57
1997	59
2010	40
2015	45
2017	43
2019	45

Year	%DE Voting Labour
1964	64
1987	53
1997	59
2010	40
2015	41
2017	59
2019	39

Key terms:
- Partisan Dealignment- As class has become less important so too has the attachment to Labour and Tory as seen in decline in voting.
- Deviant voting- Voters who vote against their class- Working Class Tories or Middle Class Labourites.

Age

Trend: Seen to gradually becoming much more important with 2017 seeing a huge difference in age voting 18-40 more likely to vote Labour, 40+ more likely to vote Tory.

Age Range	1979	1997	2010	2015	2017	2019
18-24	Con +1	Lab +12	Lab +1	Lab +16	Lab +49	Lab +35
25-34	Con +5	Lab +11	Con +1	Lab +3	Lab +36	Lab +31
35-44	Con+11	Lab +10	Con +5	Draw	Lab +20	Lab +16
45-54	/	Lab +10	Con +2	Con +3	Con +1	Con +6
55-64	Con +9	Lab +3	Con +5	Con +6	Con +14	Con +21
65+	/	Lab +5	Con +13	Con +24	Con +36	Con +35
Overall (in Election)	Con +7	Lab +12	Con +7	Con +7	Con +2	Con+11

Gender

Trend: Does not seem to affect voting too much with most elections being very similar between men and women except with Thatcher in 1979 and 1983, Women voted Conservative much more. See below for more evidence

Year	Men	Women	Difference
1992	Con +4	Con +10	6
1997	Lab +14	Lab +12	2
2001	Lab +10	Lab +9	1
2005	Draw	Lab +4	4
2010	Con +10	Con +5	5
2015	Con +8	Con +4	4
2017	Con +3	Lab +2	5
2019	Con +15	Con +9	6

Region

Trends:
- Scotland was solidly Labour but has been mainly SNP for 2015 and 2017 (37% in 2017, 50% in 2015)
- Wales, North and London all dominated by Labour (48.9% in Wales, 53% in North, 54% in Greater London)
- South East and South West dominated by Tories and Midlands less so (51.4 in SW and 53.8% in SE)

Ethnicity

Trends:
- BME Voters likely to side with Labour for historical laws against discrimination as well as fact BME tend to be lower on social class scale.
- However, some immigrant communities such as Indians and Jewish peoples are more likely to vote Tory.
- David Cameron did best to attract BME voters in 2010 and 2015.

Year	BME voting Labour	BME voting Tory	BME voting Lib Dems
1997	70	18	9
2010	60	16	20
2015	65	23	4
2017	65	21	6
2019	64	20	12

Short term Voting trends/theories:

Floating voters: Voters not influenced by social factors but rather other factors and therefore change their vote each election

Valence
Valence is essentially how far you like/trust the vibe of the party, and this is based on a number of factors:
- **Governing Competence:** Does the party appear to make good decisions? Are they decisive and do they/did they govern well? Tories were bad at this in 1997 and Labour were bad in 2010.
- **Economic Competence:** Can the party be trusted to look after the economy? Tories were seen as not being able to after Black Wednesday in 1992 and Labour weren't after crash of 2008 (Both lost elections)
- **Party Unity**: If the party aren't united they can't be trusted to run the country- Labour in the 1980s suffered from this and so did Tories in 2000s

- **Party leaders:** Can they be trusted and are they respected? Clegg was respected in 2010, but not in 2015 hence massive loss in votes. Miliband seen as less strong than Cameron in 2015

Rational Choice
When voters make their decision based on what policies are most important to them (Salient issues) and who has the best ones.
- In 2015 Economy and Immigration were seen as two most salient points so Tories won
- In 1997 NHS and Education were seen as two most salient points so Labour won
- In 2017 while Brexit was most salient it was closely followed by NHS and Cuts, hence surprising gains for Labour.
- In 2019 Brexit was most salient, with Economy second, hence Tory win.

Issue Voting:
Two types- based purely on one issue/policy→ Instrumental is when you vote out of self interest. Expressive is when you vote for the benefit of others.
- Students voting for Labour in 2017 due to tuition fees pledge
- Middle classes voting for Labour in 1997 due to New Labour policies of low taxes.

Economic influences
Linking to Valence, if the economic situation of a country is good the Government tends to win, if it is bad they tend to lose.
- Labour's 1978-79 Winter of Discontent made sure they lost in May 1979 Election.
- Tories Black Wednesday and recession of 1990s ensured Labour won in 1997.
- Financial crisis of 2008 ensured Labour lost in 2010.

Party leaders
Linking to media, the party leader has become much more important when it comes down to motivating voters.
- Margaret Thatcher was seen as strong and decisive and had a good record in her wins of 1983 and 1987.
- Tony Blair has excellent communication skills and was very good on Tv and other media in 1997, 2001 and 2005.
- John Major was seen as weak and unable to control his party when losing in 1997
- Gordon Brown was seen as weak and poor at communicating in 2010
- Ed Miliband was seen as weak and nerdy in 2015 loss.
- Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn had role reversals in 2017 which helped to change result.
- 2019, BoJo seen as much better than Jeremy Corbyn

Media
Media comes in three forms:

Broadcasting: Broadcasters by law have to remain neutral, but due to the live interviews and debates they can still be decisive in swaying voters:
- Ed Miliband was seen to have performed poorly in 2015- 'Hell Yes I'm Tough Enough'
- Theresa May lost much of her authority in poor media appearances after social care u-turn and refusing to turn up to debates.
- Nick Clegg did very well in 2010 debates to help Lib Dem Polls (but Lib Dems still lost seats that election)
- Debates were seen as quite dull in 2019, so no big change to anything.

Press: Our newspapers do not need to be impartial can be seen to be very biased in their reporting, however 2017 suggests their influence is reducing.
- Newspapers previouslt helped to se the agenda and ensured we remembered events- 1979 'Crisis what Crisis?'
- Newspapers such as the Sun have previously launched successful campaigns against Labour leaders- Neil Kinnock in 1992 and Ed Miliband in 2015 (Both lost elections).
- Newspapers help to influence valence
- Look at 1997 and 2017 case studies for stats.
- In 2017 Corbyn managed to overcome bad press to improve (Remember front page- Cor-Bin)

Social Media: Relatively new on the scene, adverts on Facebook, Twitter and Snapchat are becoming much more important.
- In 2015 Tories outspent Labour on Social Media in key marginals.
- 2017 saw massive social media campaign from Labour and groups such as Momentum:
  - *39% of 18-24 said Facebook and Twitter are their main forms of information in 2017 election. 50% said Social Media was most important factor on vote.*
  - *This Momentum video was watched 5.4 million times on Facebook in just two days!*
- 2019 Social Media dominated by Labour with higher spending, follows, retweets etc. Yet… Tories still win the election!

CASE STUDIES:

1979

Context:
- Labour limped into the election, as they lost a vote of confidence (More than half the House of Commons said they had no confidence in the Government)
- This meant they had to have a vote!

- Occurred less than 6 months after the winter of discontent:
  - *Bins*
  - *Electricity*
  - *Can't bury the dead!*

Result:

Party	Seats won	Change	% of Votes won	Change
Conservative	339	+63	43.9	+8.1
Labour	269	-50	36.9	-2.3
Liberal	11	+1	13.8	-4.5
Others	16	+5	5.4	-1.4

Turnout 76%

Gender:

Party	Men	Women
Conservative	43	47
Labour	40	35
Liberal	13	15

Age:

Party	18-24	25-34	35-54	55+
Conservative	42	43	46	47
Labour	41	38	35	38
Liberal	12	15	15	13

Class:

Party	ABC1	C2	DE
Conservative	59	41	34
Labour	24	41	49
Liberal	15	15	13

C2 is a massive change! Was 26% Tory and 49% Labour in 1974- Partisan Dealignment had begun.

Other Factors:

Valence	• Labour were seen to not be able to control trade unions, had ruined economy, were chaotic (had lost vote of no confidence) and were anti aspiration
	• Tories were seen to be the party of aspiration and James Callaghan said there ahd been a 'sea change' for Mrs. Thatcher

	• Winter of Discontet was the winter before the election.
Economic	• Economy was stagnating- Inflation was up to 28%. • Labour had to go to the IMF for a loan in 1976- embarrassing. • 'Crisis what Crisis?'
Media	• Sun came out very strongly Anti-Labour with headlines of 'Crisis what Crisis?' • Saatchi and Saatchi made the adverts/posters for Tories. The advert Labour Isn't Working was seen to win the election.
Policies	• Labour said it would impose a pay freeze, but they had already failed to do this. • Tories said they would cut tax to help economy.
Party Leaders	• James Callaghan was seen as much more popular being 20% ahead of Thatcher→ BUT still lost election.

1997
Context:

- 18 years of Conservative rule- Tories were now led by John Major who possessed a very small majority. He was seen as weak with Tory MPs trying to dictate the laws and the problem of Europe was splitting the Party. "Weak, Weak, Weak"

- Tory Party was seen as incompetent (Black Wednesday in 1992) and sleaze riddled (sex scandals and cash for questions)
- Labour had been transformed by Tony Blair into New Labour. They were the new Centrist Party and looked set to win- with polls having them ahead for a long time (ahead since 1993)

1997 Results- All are % percentages

Party	Vote	Change
Labour	44	+9
Conservative	31	-12
Lib Dem	17	-1
Other	7	+3.4

It was a landslide! Labour won 418 seats compared to 165 Tory seats!

Gender

Party	Men	Women
Labour	45	44
Conservative	31	32
Lib Dem	17	28

Age

Age	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
18-24	49	27	16
25-34	49	28	16
35-44	48	28	17
45-54	41	31	20
55-64	39	36	17
65+	41	36	17

Class

Class	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem

AB	31	41	6
C1	37	37	8
C2	50	27	7
DE	59	21	7

Region

Region	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
Scotland	45	18	13
North	61	22	13
Yorks and Humb	52	28	16
North West	54	27	14
Wales	55	20	12
West Midlands	48	34	14
East Midlands	48	35	13
East Anglia	38	39	18
South West	26	37	31
South East	32	41	21
Greater London	49	31	15

Newspaper

Paper	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
The Express (Tory)	29	49	16
Daily Mail (Tory)	29	49	14
Daily Mirror (Labour)	72	14	11
Daily Telegraph (Tory)	20	57	17
FT (Labour)	29	48	19
Guardian (Labour)	67	8	22
Independent (Labour)	47	16	30
Daily Star (Labour)	66	17	12
The Sun (Labour)	52	30	12
The Times (Neutral)	28	42	25

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
White	43	32	18
All Non-White	70	18	9
Asian	66	22	9
Black	82	12	5

Other Factors:

Valence	- Tories had been in power for 18 years - Tories were seen as party of sleaze (Sex scandals, Cash for Questions. The party of economic incompetence (Black Wednesday) and divided over Europe - Labour had been transformed into the new and exciting New Labour - They were seen as the option for change, united by a modern vision and trustworthy (Pledge card) and having overcome problems of 1970s. - Labour had been ahead in polls since 1993
Economic	- Tories had seen the demise of the economy, after Black Wendesday in 1992. - The country was in recession - Taxes had been raised.

Media	• Look at how nearly all papers supported Labour- even the Sun!
	• But traditional Tory papers did not manage to convince their voters.
	• Massive broadcasting campaign 'Things Can Only Get Better'
Policies	• Most important policy areas were NHS and Education- Labour were seen to be best on these.
	• Tories focused on defence, but no voters were that interested.
	• Labour had pledge cards of how they would: Cut class sizes, not raise tax, cut NHS waiting times, stopping youth crime and funds to get under 25 Year Olds off benefits.
Party Leaders	• Blair was seen as a young dynamic leader who had a rating of +45
	• John Major was seen as weak, and unable to command the country had a rating of -20

2017
Context:
- ■ There was not supposed to be a general election until 2020.
- ■ Theresa May announces the election as a massive surprise on 18th of April (Just after Easter Weekend)
- ■ She has a poll lead of +20 over Labour who were seen as divided and led by the hopeless Jeremy Corbyn
- ■ She said the election was for ensuring Brexit had a strong mandate and to strengthen her hand in negotiating.
- ■ Everyone thought this was an open goal for Theresa May- Like 1997 for Labour- everyone believed that campaigns change nothing.

Results-

Party	Vote	Change
Labour	40	+5.5
Conservative	42.4	+9.6
Lib Dem	7.4	-0.5
Other	10.2	/

Hung Parliament!!! Theresa May loses her majority! SHOCK!

Gender

Party	Men	Women
Labour	40	42
Conservative	44	43
Lib Dem	7	8

Age

Age	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
18-24	62	27	5
25-34	56	27	9
35-44	49	33	10
45-54	40	43	7
55-64	34	51	7
65+	25	61	7

Class

Class	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
AB	37	47	10
C1	40	44	7
C2	41	45	6
DE	47	38	5

Doesn't show it, but massive swings to Labour in AB and C1

Region

Region	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
Scotland	28.6	27.1	6.8 (SNP-36.9)
North East	55.4	34.4	4.6
Yorks and Humb	49	40.5	5.0
North West	54.9	36.2	5.4
Wales	48.9	33.6	4.5 (PC- 10.4)
West Midlands	42.5	49	4.4
East Midlands	40.5	50.7	4.3
East Anglia	54.6	32.7	7.9
South West	29.1	51.4	14.9
South East	28.6	53.8	10.5
Greater London	33.1	54.5	8.8

Newspaper

Paper	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
The Express (Tory)	15	77	/
Daily Mail (Tory)	17	74	3
Daily Mirror (Labour)	68	19	3
Daily Telegraph (Tory)	12	79	6
FT (Tory)	39	40	14
Guardian (Labour)	73	8	12
Independent (Neutral)	66	15	12
Daily Star (Neutral)	49	38	6
The Sun (Tory)	30	59	3
The Times (Tory)	24	58	14

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
White	39	45	8
BME	73	19	6

Other Factors:

Valence	**Before:** - Tory party were seen as: *Strong and Stable* *Would help to put through Brexit* *Were united behind Theresa May* - Labour Party were seen as: *Back to Lefty old ways (the 1970s!)* *Weak leader* *Divided party*	**After:** - Tory party were seen as: - Weak and Wobbly - Indecisive - Not willing to debate - Labour Party were seen as: - Listening to the people - Having a strong leader - Momentum was with them
Events of Campaign	**Theresa May U-Turn on Social Care:** May announced that if you earned over a certain amount you would need to pay for social care- and there would be no cap.This was unpopular and deemed the 'dementia tax' this was then reversed.. **Terror attacks:** Would usually help Tories who were strong on defence, but instead made people focus on cuts to police, which Tories had done. Allowed Labour to make their spending plans look patriotic. (REMEMBER THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO BE THE BREXIT ELECTION!) **Debates/Media**: Theresa May ran away from all one on one debates (had become tradition by that point) Jeremy Corbyn came across very well in appearances and helped to improve his standing.	
Economic	- Wages had begun to decline which influenced many to vote against the tories - Inflation also up	
Media	- Seem to have less of an impact than usual- FT and Sun have many Labour voters despite recommendations. - Social Media election- 39% of 18-24 said Facebook and Twitter are their main forms of information in 2017 election. 50% said Social Media was most important factor on vote	
Policies	- Theresa May wanted the main policy area to be Brexit, nbut NHS and education were also seen as important. - While Tories were seen as better on Brext, Labour were seen as better on NHS and Education. - Labour's manifesto did well with anti-austerity, public spending and tuition fees promise.	
Party Leaders	- Initially May enjoyed a healthy lead, but as campaign wore on Corbyn began to catch up before overtaking her before the election. - Ruth Davidson leader of Scottish Conservatives was very popular and did very well in Scotland	

2019
Context:
- There was not supposed to be a general election until 2024.
- Boris Johnson became Prime Minister in July 2019 after the resignation of T May.
- He inherited her lack of majority and found it very difficult to pass legislation- didn't win a vote for his first 6 weeks
- He renegotiated the Brexit Deal, to get rid of the backstop (rather N.Ireland would stay in the customs union) but wasn't able to get it passed.
- He therefore asked for an election to be held and the opposition parties agreed. Despite Johnson enjoying a lead in the polls (average of 10%)
- Johnson had boosted polling due to dedication to Brexit (prorogue of Parliament etc.)

Results-

Party	Vote	Change	Seats
Labour	32.2	-7.8	202 (-60)
Conservative	43.6	+1.2	365 (+48)
Lib Dem	11.6	+4.2	11 (-1)
Other	12.6	/	

SNP improve and got 48/59 Scottish seats. Brexit Party receive 2% of the vote and Green Party 2.7%

Gender

Party	Men	Women
Labour	31	35
Conservative	46	44
Lib Dem	12	11

Age

Age	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
18-24	56	21	11
25-34	54	23	12
35-44	46	30	14
45-54	35	41	13
55-64	28	49	12
60-69	22	57	11
70+	14	67	11

Crossover point in 2017 was 47, now in 2019 it is 39

Class

Class	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
AB	32	42	16
C1	34	43	12
C2	31 (-10! Huge drop)	49	9
DE	34 (-13! Huge drop)	47 (+9!)	8

Huge changes in C2 and DE! Brexit and new working class Conservatives!

Region

Region	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
Scotland	28.6	27.1	6.8 (SNP-36.9)
North East	42.6 (-12!)	38.3	7.9
Yorks and Humb	38.8 (-10!)	43	8
North West	46.4 (-7.6!)	37.6	7.9
Wales	48.9	33.6	4.5 (PC- 10.4)
West Midlands	33.9 (-8.6)	53.5	7.9

East Midlands	31.8 (-8.6!)	54.9	7.8
East Anglia	24.5% (-8.3!)	57.2	13.4
South West	23.3	52.9	18.1
South East	22.1	54.2	18.3
Greater London	48.1	32	14.9

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Labour	Tory	Lib Dem
White	29	48	12
BME	64	20	12

Other Factors:

Valence	• Tory party were seen as united behind the new enthusiastic leader in Boris Johnson. Seen as getting Brexit done (New Deal, kicking Tories out, proroguing Parliament) • Labour still seen as divided (lots of MPs stepping down instead of supporting Corbyn, even deputy leader Tom Watson stood down!) Seen as un-patriotic due to numerous events since 2017- Salisbury Poisoning, Nuclear deterrenc etc. Labour also seen as anti-semitic and anti-Brexit.
Events of Campaign	• Tories went in expecting a majority and very little occurred to change this! • Debates/Media: Corbyn refused to apologise for anti-semitism on Andrew Neill interview. BoJo didn't even go. Debates were seen as repetitive and poor- Corbyn focusing on NHS and BoJo focusing on Brexit
Media	• Majority of papers backed Boris Johnson and the Conservatives as always. Only Daily Mirror and Guardian back Labour. • Social Media dominated by Labour with higher spending, follows, retweets etc. Yet… Tories still win the election!
Policies	• Labour's manifesto was very similar to 2017, so lacked any real impact…. Second referendum used to please both sides, but seen as un-decisive. Embarrassing moment where Corbyn claimed he would be neutral in the event of a referendum. • Big focus on NHS and Education, but salience of Brexit was higher. • Conservative's manifesto was light on detail, main focus was 'Get Brexit Done'. After chaos of Brexit it became an attractice policy.
Party Leaders	• Jeremy Corbyn was historically unpopular (-50…) Boris Johnson was unpopular but much less so (-10) and was seen as backing Brexit (after leading 2016 campaign)

4.2 The influence of the media

- **See above for influence of Newspapers, TV and Social Media.**

Opinion Polls

Opinion polls are taken throughout to gauge the mood of the public- main companies are YouGov, Survation, and Ipsos-Mori.

Problems:

- Media pay massive attention to them and make them front page news which can influence
- Opinion polls have incorrectly predicted 2015, 2017 and 2016 referendum.
- Voters can change due to polls:
  - The likelihood of a Labour SNP coalition was exaggerated by polls in 2015 and may have caused people to vote Tory.
  - The low polling of Labour may have made Tory voters not vote in 2017 and made Labour voters who didn't like Corbyn not worry about him winning.
  - Can affect turnout
- Parties can change due to polling- May U-turn on social care.

Ban Polls	Keep Polls
- They can influence the way people vote as seen in 2015 election. - They have been inaccurate and misled public. - They affect politicians and campaigns too much. - Allow Media to obsess and claim things without real evidence	- Would infringe on freedom of expression - If banned only private organisations will be able to use them and profit from them (can predict economic changes) - Polls help to guide and inform politicians. - Would still be published abroad

Keywords:

4. Voting behaviour and the media	
Key term	**Definition**
Class dealignment	The process where individuals no longer identify themselves as belonging to a certain class and for political purposes fail to make a class connection with their voting pattern.
Partisan dealignment	The process where individuals no longer identify themselves on a long-term basis by being associated with a certain political party.
Governing competency	The perceived ability of the governing party in office to manage the affairs of the state well and effectively. It can also be a potential view of opposition parties and their perceived governing competency if they were to secure office.
Disillusion and apathy	A process of disengagement with politics and political activity. Having no confident in politics and politicians as being able to solve issues and make a difference. Manifested in low turnout at elections and poor awareness of contemporary events.
Manifesto	In its manifesto, a political party will spell out in detail what actions and programmes it would like to put in place if it is successful in the next election – a set of promises for future action.
Mandate	The successful party following an election claims it has the authority (mandate) to implement its manifesto promises and also a general permission to govern as new issues arise.