JPM717: Presentation Handout

Presenting Student’s Name: Jan Jína

Reading’s Title: Masculinity as Political Strategy: George W. Bush, the “War on Terrorism, “and an Echoing Press

**1. Summary of the Reading**

*What is the reading about? What is the author’s main thesis and conclusions?*

Generally, the article introduces a concept of masculinity while referring to it as a tool used by political leaders to gain strategic advantage and how media organizations can be encouraged to adopt such themes in news coverage.

Specifically, authors of the article focus on analysing President George W. Bush’s public communications prior to and immediately following the attacks of 9/11 and on analysing media coverage (specifically NBC network television news, New York Times, and Washington Post) during the latter dates to elucidate the nature of masculinity as a political strategy.

The main thesis of the article is to demonstrate that after the events of 9/11, the President George W. Bush used masculinity as a political strategy within the framework of addressing the nation and the media to maintain strong position, presidential reputation and to remain unchallenged by the media.

The conclusion of the reading supports the authors thesis through various quantitative research methods, which focused on discursive control, strength masculinity and dominance masculinity firstly of President Bush’s public communications towards the Congress and the nation from August 29 to September 22, 2001, and secondly on the content of mentioned mainstream media between September 11 and September 22, 2001.The hypothesis was confirmed by a detected substantial increase of masculine language both in presidential discursive themes and in news media discourse.

**2. Critical Analysis**

*What are the strong and weak points of the argument?*

In my opinion, the reading provides a good picture of an apt representation of masculinity in high politics which is based on relevant data and large amount of analysis. The comparison of president’s public bearing before and after the 9/11 attacks shows, in the latter case, several times higher rate of aggressive and resolute attitude when addressing the terrorists.

On weak points, the argument cannot ensure the President’s masculine behaviour was designed to secure a strong leadership in times of the crisis and was not merely the result of natural American nationalism.

**3. Relation to the Main Reading**

*How does the argument relate to, and/or expand the argument of the main reading to which it is linked in the syllabus?*

Both readings are related in the way of talking about the U.S. masculine approach towards terrorism. However, this reading primarily expends the argument by further elaborating the notion of masculinity mentioned in the main reading into a specific case of George W. Bush’s administration and events of September 11, 2001.