

# Manipulated News : Electoral Competition and Mass Media

Shintaro Miura \*

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## Abstract

This paper studies a Downsian voting model including one agent that is mass medium. The medium can observe the proposed policies of the two candidates, but the (median) voter cannot. The medium sends news about the proposed policies before voting occurs. We assume that information regarding the proposed policies is verifiable; that is, the communication between the medium and the voter is represented by a persuasion game. We show that the medium can conceal a part of unfavorable information in equilibrium when the media bias is not small. Then, policy divergences or policy convergences can be supported in equilibrium because appealing to the voter becomes more difficult due to the medium manipulation of information. Moreover, the candidates additionally have incentives to control the medium's behavior by changing policies. As the result, the median voter theorem could fail.

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Key Words: voting, mass media, persuasion games, media bias, median voter theorem

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\*Department of Economics, Washington University in St. Louis, Campus Box 1208, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130-4899 USA. E-mail: smiura@wustl.edu