



They did it!

The pervasiveness and persuasiveness of populist communication

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A populist zeitgeist?



Michael Meijer heeft een link gedeeld.
2 uur · 🌐

Extreme inkomensdaling: In 2020 zullen Nederlanders voor belachelijk lage lonen moeten werken vanwege de onstuitbare instroom van migranten. Terwijl de migranten in ons land zich verrijken, worden onze eigen mensen in Nederland alleen maar armer!!

A populist zeitgeist in the media?



- (1) What are the core ideas of populism?
- (2) Who communicates these ideas and how?
- (3) What are the effects of populist communication?
- (4) Why are populist ideas so persuasive and for whom are they persuasive?

- Core idea: causal and moral opposition between in-group and out-groups
- In-group: the pure blameless people (i.e., our “own” people, the “ordinary” citizens)
- Opposed out-groups: *vertically* (i.e., the government) and *horizontally* in right-wing populism (i.e., immigrants)
- Populist blame attribution
- By different actors

- Wilders on Twitter:

“Our money should no longer go to foreign people. It should be invested in our own people!”

“Weak EU-leaders are politically responsible for terror attacks as they deny Islam as a central cause and more”

“Muslim terrorists at our airport. All thanks to the open borders of the VVD [the governmental party].”

Theory

- Populist actors circumvent elitist institutions
- Populist actors aim to speak to the people
- Populist actors engage in direct communication

Evidence

- Populist actors rely heavily on social media
- They actively blame traditional media and other elites
- Social media channels allow for direct populist communication

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Theory

- Passive versus active role of the media
- Passive: Media provide a favourable stage
- Active: Media can be populist themselves

Evidence

- Media populism most likely when interpretative style of journalism is used
- Most likely present in tabloid outlets

- “F*ck off with austerity measures in this country. No more foreigners can enter. It only fills the pockets of these governments”
- “The Dutch men can go to hell and these poor asylum seeker gets everything for free. And still, they have demands.”

Why is populism persuasive?

- It simplifies complex issues
- Populist messages activate negative stereotypes out-group
- In-group is absolved of blame
- Schema theory: activation in-group favouritism and out-group hostility
- The people are innocent and out-group is culpable

- Populist messages directly affect blame perceptions and populist attitudes
- Effects strongest for people who do not feel attached to actors attributed blame
- Effects strongest for citizens that perceive the message as congruent

- Lower educated – weaker role
- Working class – no clear role
- Lower income – no clear role
- Male – no clear role
- Younger – no clear role
- Angry – The elites, the media, immigrants (they did it)
- Distrusting – The elites, the media (they did it)

- Perceptions of relative deprivation
- “We” are worse off than “they” are
- They profit without giving anything in return
- They get everything for free!
- The elites reside with the enemy
- Fear
- Anger

- Populist ideas of political actors
- Populism by traditional media
- Populism among the public
- Populism on social media
- Populist messages are persuasive
- Attitudinal congruence plays a key role



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