

Distinguished Lecture Series

“Expanding the Study of Political Entertainment Media: Moving Beyond the Study of Understanding and Persuasion”

R. Lance Holbert, PhD

School of Communication

The Ohio State University

Friday, Oct. 5

3:00 – 4:00 pm

201 Switzler Hall

There exists a critical mass of scholars who are devoting much effort to provide new understanding of the roles played by entertainment media in various political processes. Now that a sufficient level of scholarly activity has been generated, this area of research is at a pivotal moment in its evolution. This area’s major research threads will be summarized, along with some rationale concerning the purpose served by each type of scholarship. An assessment will be provided of where this area of research stands at the moment, and an argument will be made for the need to advance additional cogent lines of research grounded in theory. A series of ongoing research projects will then be summarized. Various works to be detailed bring existing theory (e.g., Cognitive Dissonance Theory) into the political entertainment media fold, develop new theoretical approaches (e.g., Normative Theory of Political Satire, Functional Theory of Political Satire), break down key concepts (e.g., humor) into more manageable components (e.g., irony, sarcasm, parody, self deprecation), and introduce the use of some analytical procedures (e.g., network analysis) which have been underutilized by scholars working in this area of study. In addition, an argument will be made for the need to study political entertainment media from a wide variety of explanatory principles (e.g., consistency, understanding, hedonism).

