Developing and Addressing a Concept for Politically Hostile Media

By

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Introduction

Taking into account the important role that the media plays as an investigator of political actors and as an information supplier for citizen’s, but also considering the power the media has in terms of agenda setting and also that media outlets not only supply the ideological demand of its readers, but balances those demands with the ideological preference of its owners (Mullainathan and Shleifer, 2012), it is in my interest to observe how the media, observed through a partisan lenses, behave during political crisis.

In order to do so, I develop a concept for media hostility, more specifically, a concept of Political Hostility or Political Defense concerning the current office holder. After that, I operationalize the concept using two extreme Brazilian cases: the impeachment process of president Collor in 1992 and the impeachment process of president Roussef in 2016. The observation of such cases allow me to expose a brief discussion regarding the collected data, as well as proposing some a future research agenda.

The current work is divided in 6 sections: A brief exposition to the role of the media is importance to accountability and agenda setting, and the effects of a partisan media; the methodology used for the concept creation.; the formulation of the media Political Hostility concept; the methodology used for data collection; the exposure of both cases; a brief discussion and research agenda.

A Brief Exposure of the Media and Partisanship Behavior

According to Weaver (1996), media effects have been a concern of many scholars, citizens, and politicians for most of the twentieth century. This concern over media influence has intensified since the rapid diffusion of television in the 1950s and the rise of huge advertising companies that help sell nearly everything, including political candidates.
According to Prior (2013), there is a strong asymmetry of information between citizens’ and government. Thus, the media has an important function of checking the powers and behaviors of the incumbent, making him accountable for his actions in the eyes of the public. Mass media can play a key role in enabling citizens to monitor the actions of government and to use this information in their voting decisions.

Weaver (1996) points that there is evidence to suggest that political learning from the media occurs among voters. In spite of criticism of election news coverage being superficial and preoccupied with campaign strategy, voters do learn, especially from television news, newspapers, and televised debates. Awareness and concerns over specific campaign issues, candidates, and traits of candidates, are aspects where political learning did occur.

As for the importance of the media concerning government, it is relevant to point out that, as advanced by Carlin, Love & Martínez-Gallardo (2015), in liberal democracies elections are the chief mechanisms of vertical accountability: they compel leaders to take citizens’ preferences seriously and allow citizens to punish or reward leaders accordingly. But accountability does not vanish between elections. Instead, incumbents use the public’s evaluations of their performance as a window into citizens’ evolving views and, thus, as a guide to adjusting their policy program. Governmental policy should be legitimate in order to succeed. Legitimacy demands that the public (at least by a majority) perceive political action as favorable and as consistent with the country’s laws and principles. Whenever the legitimacy of economic policy is questioned, media coverage can be a precondition for gaining legitimacy by communicating political actors’ justification to the public and placing an independent stamp of approval on the actors’ policy (Quiring & Weber, 2012).

Beyond that, for a policy issue to have a significant influence on the evaluation of the incumbent, it must be salient to people. Edwards III, Mitchel & Welch (1995) found that such “important issues” vary over time in their salience to the public and in their impact on presidential approval. The media can set an agenda increasing the salience of certain issues over others. For example, Goidel & Langley (1995) found that although news coverage of the economy reflects economic conditions, economic conditions could not explain a great deal of the variance in economic news coverage. As such, the media exercise plenty of latitude in deciding what economic news are important. As described by Hetherington (1996) in his example of the Bush administration, the economy was
made an “issue” by the media during most of the campaign time. This issue was viewed through a negative eye, even though the economy of the United States was recovering. If the news have chosen to highlight other subjects, the results of those elections might have been different. According to Larcinesse et al. (2011), this is called agenda setting, the idea that editors and journalists have a large degree of freedom in deciding what is newsworthy and what is not, and these choices influence the perception of citizens about which issues are relevant and to what extent.

Considering the importance of agenda setting, the preoccupation with partisan media has been on the rise. According to Prior (2013), since its beginning in the 1970s, the growth of cable television and later the Internet created an escape for the nonideological audience segment. With greater media choice, individual content preference became increasingly important in determining who would watch the news and who would abandon it. In this scenario, the rise of partisan media segments to appeal to multiple tastes became a reality. Technological change has made it economically viable to cater to smaller audience segments. As a result, citizens can now match their news consumption to fit with their ideological preferences (Levendusky, 2013b).

Levendusky (2013a) points that the recent increase in partisan media has generated interest in whether such outlets polarize viewers. His results show that partisan media do contribute to the difficulty of consensus in American politics. While partisan media only reach a small segment of the public, because that segment tends to be more engaged, they have an outsized political role. By affecting a more engaged and influential segment of the mass public, partisan media impact American politics quite broadly. In another research, the author (Levendusky, 2013b) demonstrates that like-minded media have a significant effect on how viewers see the opposition: watching like-minded media makes viewers feel more negatively toward the other party, rate them less positively along a number of dimensions, have less support for bipartisanship, and less trust in the other side to do what is right for the country. Stroud (2008) pointed her preoccupations regarding partisan media after observing strong evidence for media selection between liberals and conservatives in America. She found that people in those groups tended to favor media vehicles of their ideological view. Different patterns of news exposure may lead people to develop different impressions of what is happening in the world around them. Yet, authors such as Arceneaux et al. (2012) and Conroy-Krutz and Devra (2015)
have showed some bright aspects of polarization, such as exposing citizen’s to different ways of thinking, and thus increasing national instead of local thinking.

What is a Concept?

Considering the importance that media sources have on political accountability, one might consider important to understand the biases behind certain media outlets. Does a certain newspaper is reporting the news on an objective way, or is it afflicted by a partisan bias? Especially during political crisis, does the media take sides or does it tries to keep a neutral position? In order to tackle those questions I develop and analyze a concept for political hostility, a first step in observing the existence of partisan behavior among media sources. In this section, I introduce Goertz’s (2006) analysis of concepts, which will serve as a guide to my efforts.

Goertz (2006) argues that concepts are constitutive and causal, multilevel and multidimensional. In his view, concepts needs to have at least three levels. The first is a basic level that defines the phenomenon to be explored. It is the constituent level, the name on which adjectives will be aggregated, such as democracy, corporatism or bureaucracy. It is also the level utilized for theoretical propositions.

The secondary level provides for the constitutive elements or dimensions of the concept, a fundamental part of causal analysis. The third level is the level that specifies its indicators, enabling the collection of data in order to create categories and to frame certain cases to the concept. The analysis of a concept begins by determining how many levels of depth are present, how many dimensions are addressed, and what is the empirical content that can be linked to the concept (Goertz, 2006).

Goertz (2006) utilizes different methods for concept formulation. The first one uses the notion of Sufficiency and Necessity, and it is utilized to understand the formulation of the level of the concepts: in other words, which conditions on an inferior level are sufficient or necessary for the condition of the superior level to be present. The second formulation uses the idea of Family Resemblance. It differs from the previous categories since it does not present necessary conditions. In this kind of formulation, it is
only necessary that there be a minimum degree of similarity between elements for them to be delineated to a given category”.

In order to operationalize these concept formulation processes, Goertz (2006) relies on set theory, and sometimes on fuzzy logic, applying the logical operators OR (for sufficiency) and AND (for necessity). As such, this process is deterministic.

**Formulating a Concept for Political Hostility**

When dealing with the idea of a partisan or ideological media, especially in the case of a fragmented political scenario like Brazil, it is difficult to find an objective ideological framing. As it is possible to observe in the Brazilian scenario, often a media outlet of (apparent) compatible ideology with current incumbent (in this case, the president) may expose points in which it disagrees or even criticizes that same government. Thus, my concept for political hostility does not rely on an outlet self-ideological-positioning, but on its tangible actions concerning the incumbent. As such, my concept does not address if a certain media outlet is liberal, socialist or conservative, but if it is hostile our defensive in regard to the government under a certain period of time. As such, I call my concept Media Political Hostility.

The primary level of this concept, Political Hostility, can be defined by an alignment (being positive or negative) with the government. To enable clear and concise concepts, Goertz (2006) propose the establishment of a positive pole (what a concept is) and a negative pole (what a concept is not) for the concept. Following this procedure (2006), I can establish that the positive pole of such concept, what the concept is, is a fully hostile (in case of an anti-government outlet) or a fully defensive (in case of a pro-government outlet) media source, a media source dedicated to the attack (or defense) of the current government. At the other end of the spectrum, the negative pole of this

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1 As presented by Goertz and Mahoney (2006), the idea of sufficiency and necessity are more easily explained when observed through the lenses of Set Theory. When we say that X is necessary for Y, we are saying that every Y is contained in X. There will be no point within the set Y that is not part of the set X. Similarly, when we say that X is a sufficient condition for Y, we are saying that the entire X is a subset of Y, so that there is no point in the set X that will not be a point in Y.

2 A clear example is Carta Capital, which although ideologically closer to the workers party than to the opposition, often attacked the workers party from the left.
concept, what the concept is not, would be a media source that maintains itself neutral concerning the current government. Obviously, this is not a dichotomous scale, with a grey area existing between those two poles. As such I allow for seven levels of Political Hostility, being Strongly Hostile (3), Hostile (2), Weakly Hostile (1), Neutral (0), Weakly Defensive (-1), Defensive (-2) and Strongly Defensive (-3).

Following the framework proposed by Goertz (2006), I advance to the secondary level of the concept, where I discuss its constitutive elements. For the concept of Political Hostility I adopt a Family Resemblance approach, marked by the use of the logical indicator OR. This means that the existence of a single constitutive element would mean a media outlet is actively hostile (or defensive). Through this, I also derive the dosimetry of the concept: as Goertz (2006) illuminates, it is possible to add or take the mean of second level indicators in order to derive a measure of strength of the concept when using Family Resemblance. As such, I employed the method of addition, with each secondary element weighting 1 or -1 if active, depending on valence, and 0 otherwise. The summation of those elements supply the strength of the concept, such as if only one of the secondary concepts is active, a media outlet would be considered weakly hostile (or defensive). If two were to be active, a media outlet would be considered hostile (or defensive), and so it goes.

For my second level indicator I took three patterns that are indicative of an outlet political positioning. The first one is a Hostile (or Defensive) Cover, the second one is a Hostile (or Defensive) Editorial, and the third one is a Hostile (or Defensive) Declaration. Any of those characteristics are sufficient to consider a media outlet as Hostile or Defensive. I attribute the same value to all those elements (1 or -1), as they can exist by itself, but the existence of more than one at the same time may indicate a stronger hostile (or defensive) behavior of the source (for example, a magazine might expose partisan covers against the current government, but keep a neutral editorial. A magazine may also declare itself partisan, keep a partisan editorial, but keep its covers non-partisans in order to address other relevant issues that are not related to government, and so it goes).

3 In reality, a “neutral” position can be partisan. A pro-government newspaper existing on a time of great lack of credibility for the incumbent may simple chose to not publish anything that endangers the incumbent. As such, this media outlet would appear neutral, since it is not defending or attacking the incumbent, while remaining partisan. It is important to notice that my concept address an active political hostility, which would be only a part of a broader partisanship concept.
I chose those three elements and attributed an equal value for each of them for the following reasons: the cover of a news piece is important because it is the first impression that a reader (and a nonreader) will have of the media source. A Hostile Cover would imply that most of the time that media source has been using its cover in a way to attack the current government. At the same time, an editorial normally corresponds to the opinion of the media source per se, mostly exposing the position of the editor itself. If most of the editorial pieces are attacking or endorsing the government, it is reasonable to consider that the media source is taking a hostile or defensive position. At last, a clear partisan declaration in an editorial board, such as directly endorsing the government or the opposition, asking for the incumbent to step down, or positioning the media source, in clear words, against the government, is a sufficient condition for this media source to be partisan. In this last case, the media source is not simply criticizing or endorsing government officials or the government itself, but taking a clear side.

The second level elements are formed by third level indicators, the empirical level, where we can observe if those elements are active. For the Hostile Cover and the Hostile Editorial a condition of necessity exists on this level. For a media source to have a Partisan Cover, it is necessary that most of its covers deal with government issues (more than 60%) AND that those covers portraying the government are mostly negative or positive (more than 60%). At the same time, for a media source to have a Hostile Editorial, it is necessary for most of the editorials to deal with government issues (60%) AND most of those editorials to portray the government in a negative or positive perspective (60%). At least, for a Hostile Declaration, a clear editorial positioning on the case is a sufficient condition for that to happen. A full view of the proposed concept can be observed in Figure 1.

At last, it is important to notice that the concept of Media Political Hostility is temporal. A media outlet will be politically hostile in a determined timeframe, be it a trimester, semester, a year, or a full presidential term. It is important to define the window of time the concept will be capturing.

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4 This proportion is arbitrary. It chose it so more than half the covers are political, and more than half of the political covers take sides.
The methodology that I use to observe the indicators on the third level is Content Analysis. Content analysis deals with the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Berelson, 1952). As put by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique. In conventional content analysis, coding categories are derived directly from the text data. With a directed approach, analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes.

The analysis of the content is not an exercise in itself, but exists in order to code news pieces in a way that is relevant to the concept being formulated. As pointed out by Holsti (1969) texts are empirically coded based on a researcher created coding system in order to make observations about the messages conveyed. Following this instructions, I created a coding system in order to identify if Covers and Editorials are referring to government, and if they are, if they are also doing it in a positive, negative or neutral way. I also create a coding system to identify the occurrence of a Hostile Declaration. This coding system takes into consideration both attacks (or praises) to government and praises (or attacks) to the opposition when deriving the valence of a certain cover or editorial. The coding system that I used for the following exercise can be found in Appendix 1.5

5 It is important to notice that I did the coding process alone. This weakens the reliability of this exercise. For future steps of this research, the data will be double coded.
Applying the Concept to the Brazilian Case

Considering that I am interested in observing media behavior during political crises, I applied the developed framework to the Brazilian context. More specifically, I observed the behavior of four media outlets during the years in which impeachment processes were held, 1992 and 2016. I chose four weakly magazines for this analysis: Veja, IstoÉ, Época and Carta Capital. I chose those four for three reasons. First, these magazines are known to address a diverse subset of subjects, including politics and the economy. As weakly newspaper, they also tend to present and to analyze its content in a more elaborate way. Second, I chose those vehicles because they are important sources of investigative media, having uncovered and exposed corruption scandals across the years. As put by Neto (1994), the investigation work of Veja and IstoÉ were crucial in order to expose the corruption scandal that helped bringing down president Collor. Third, I chose those magazines because they have the highest circulation in the country. In 2014, the circulation of Veja was on average 1.167.928 magazines, 322.518 for IstoÉ and 390.709 for Época. Carta Capital had a circulation of only 29.513 magazines, but I included it in my analysis since it is a well-known leftist media source.

In order to observe the concept, I took copies of all the covers and editorials from those magazines, from October 1991 to December 1992, and also from March 2015 to March 2016. Thus, the analyzed period starts one year before the president has been effectively impeached. Again, it is important to address that the concept of Media Political Hostility is temporal, and must be observed within a given period. With the passage of time incumbents can change, political scandals can increase the proportion of bad news, and political alliances may shift. Also, editorial boards and guidelines for media outlets can change throughout the time. Thus, an outlet is hostile or defensive against the government only within a certain window of time.

After that, following the guidelines established in Appendix 1, I coded each magazine cover as dealing with governmental issues (1) or not (0), and when dealing with governmental issues I coded if they were being positive (-1), neutral (0), or negative (1). I repeated the same process with the editorial of each magazine, also taking note if there was an editorial in which the magazine took clear sides. After that, I took the proportion

6 http://aner.org.br/dados-de-mercado/circulacao/
of governmental to non-governmental issues on covers and editorials, and the proportion of negative, neutral and positive frames on those governmental issues. Cases where the first groups exceeded 50% and the second also exceeded 50% were considered active.

First Case: The Impeachment of President Collor

By 1992, the current president of Brazil, Fernando Collor the Mello, was starting to lose support on congress, as his government was exposed to multiple corruption scandals. The country was undergoing a harsh recession, and as the months passed, the credibility of Collor was undermined by a major corruption scandal involving his brother and a friend of the family. By September 29, impeachment process was approved by congress, and the president was removed from the office while the Senate judged his case. In December 29, Collor resigned the presidency. By that time, of the selected magazines, only Veja and IstoÉ existed.

At the beginning of the year both media outlets were in a quite docile mood in regard to the government. Graph 1 and 3 present the percentage of governmental focus on covers and editorials (from 0% to 100%). Graph 2 and 4 presents the mean valence for governmental issues among covers and editorials (considering 1 as a hostile cover, 0 as a neutral cover, and -1 defensive cover, the graph gives the mean valence only for issues that dealt with government). As it is possible to notice, IstoÉ was slightly more hostile than Veja (in many editorials the magazine accused the competition of being a pro-Collor). Graph 5 show the Political Hostility concept for both outlets.

A simple mean valence, how many covers or editorials are hostile towards government, can be affected both by a change in the exposure of governmental issues (for example, during political scandals is only logical that an outlet will produce more covers regarding the scandal, which can increase the mean valence, at the same time an abundance of international events or curiosities may decrease the political coverage, thus decreasing the mean valence) as by a change in outlet behavior (increasing the proportion of positive or negative coverage, given that the cover or editorial deal with a governmental issue). It is important to remember that the concept of Media Political Hostility take into account both this properties, establishing an arbitrary minimum of exposure and behavior
in order for an outlet to be considered Hostile or Defensive. As observed in Graph 3, both the magazines could not be considered Hostile by the beginning of the year.

As the year progresses, both outlets engaged in investigations, uncovering political scandals linked to the presidency. As the political situation of the country starts to deteriorate (i.e. approaches the third quarter of 92, moment where Collor is removed from office), it is possible to observe both outlets distancing themselves from a neutral point toward a more Hostile position. For the second to the third quarter, there is a steady increase on governmental coverage by both magazines. By the second quarter, IstoÉ increases both its political coverage as well as its hostile valence. Governmental coverage goes from 41% on the first quarter to 61% on the second and to 100% on the third quarter in regard to covers, and 56%, 69% and 100% in regard to editorials. At the same time, the mean valence of political covers depicting the government in a negative way increases as well, from .40 on the first quarter, to .75 on the second and .76 on the third in regard to covers, and .22, .55 and .92 in regard to editorials. This increase makes IstoÉ Weakly Politically Hostile by the second Quarter and Political Hostile on the third quarter.

The increase is even greater in the case of Veja, witch in terms of exposure to governmental issues jumped from 37% in the first quarter, to 61% on the second and 81% on the third in terms of covers, although it keep mildly steady in terms of editorials (50%, 38% and 65%). This increase in governmental issues exposure was also followed by a sudden jump in hostile behavior, although a little behind ISTOÉ, going from .33 in the first quarter to .25 in the second, and then jumping to .84 in the third quarter for covers (.33 to .25 and .78 for editorials). In the third quarter of 92, Veja also presented a full page editorial asking for the resignation of the president. As such, in the third quarter of 1992 Veja was considered Strongly Politically Hostile.

Following the impeachment vote on the house of commons the effect on both media outlets was nearly instantaneous. The valence mean for both covers and editorials of both magazines dropped drastically, exposing a decrease in governmental exposure (45% for covers and 77% for Editorials in IstoÉ, 25% on covers and 33% on editorials in Veja) as well as in mean valence (0 for covers and editorials of Veja; 0 for covers and -0.12 for editorials of IstoÉ). The year was tranquil until Collor resigned in December, when the impeachment process was to be voted in senate.

Graph 1 to 5

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Second Case: The Impeachment of President Dilma

In a similar fashion to Fernando Collor, by 2015 the Rousseff administration has faced a strong recession, aligned with a huge corruption scandal involving the state-owned company, Petrobras. As the months passed, Dilma started to lose support on congress, and as each corruption scandal was revealed, the voices calling for her impeachment began to grow. In terms of media analysis, differently from the case of 92, while some media outlets started the year in a mostly neutral tone, other were already hostile before the possibility of impeachment was taken seriously. Beyond that, similarly
to 1992, as the removal of the president approached (first quarter of 2016), the behavior of the neutral media outlets began to change.

During the impeachment process of president of Dilma Rousseff it was possible to observe similarities and discrepancies with the case of 92. The mean content of covers and editorials for each of the studied magazines, as well as the Political Hostility of each outlet, can be found in Graphs 6 to 10. Similarly to the two previous cases was Carta Capital, which suffered a small decrease in government exposure in its covers, followed by a steady increase as the crisis went forward (from 91% on the 2 quarter of 15, to 66% on the third, to 85% on the fourth, to a 100% on the 1th quarter of 16). At the same time, as the crises approached, Carta Capital moved from a neutral position, balancing attacks on the opposition with critiques (always from the left) of the government, to a defensive position, with a strong change in behavior, growing from 0 in the third quarter, to .42 in the forth and to .61 in the first quarter of 16, by the end being considered Weakly Politically Defensive.⁷

A steady increase in the mean content is also found in Época, from 61%, to 71%, to 77%, to 68% for covers and from 53%, to 57%, to 72%, to 93% for editorials. The greatest increase is in the behavior of the outlet, going from .25 to .30, to .42, and to .72 in terms of covers, and from .14 to .25, to .61 and to 53 in terms of editorials. By the end this allows the media outlet to be considered Weakly Politically Hostile.

Ironically, it was Veja and IstoÉ that differed mostly from themselves on 92. Both outlets keep a quite constant rhythm in terms of Political Hostility. Veja is subject to more variation, increase its mean valence towards the end of the year, while keeping its exposure of political coverage almost constant. The increase on the content of the covers is explained by a change in behavior (from .60, to .40, to 1.0, to .91), while the exposure remained constant (keeping at 73% on the first three quarters and dropping to 68% on the last). There was more variation in governmental exposure in terms of editorial (from 65%, to 84%, to 76% to 56%), which is expected since Veja (from 2015) usually reserve it editorial to describe international cases or curiosities, being the most sporadic of the magazines in terms of editorial content. The average behavior during the period goes from .54 to .20, to .50 and to .77. Yet, throughout the year the magazine keep its fair share of

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⁷ Carta Capital did not have an Editorial on its printed magazine for the studied period. As such, in dealing with the concept of Political Hostility, I considered it neutral for the whole period, since it abstained from emitting a formal opinion.
hostile editorials and covers, keeping at a constant state of Political Hostility, except between June and August, where the magazine were the political cover ended up being neutral by addressing judicial issues (indication of a supreme court judge) or by criticizing both Eduardo Cunha (opposition) and the government at the same time.

IstoÉ also keep being hostile thorough the whole year. Both the covering of governmental issues on convers and editorials keep quite constant (83%, 84%, 69% and 69% for covers, 100%, 92%, 92% and 84% for editorials). The mean valence of the editorials also keeps steady, at 1.0, .91, .91 and 1.0. The content of covers keeps steady for most of the year, at .70, .81, .55 and .77. The sudden drop on the fourth quarter of 2015 is related to covers exposing Eduardo Cunha, the Speaker of the House, which by the time was in open opposition to president Rousef, in a negative way because of corruption scandals. In the first quarter of 2016, an Hostile Declaration is made, asking directly for the renounce or the impeachment of president Dilma Rouseff, thus achieving a state of Highly Political Hostility.

Graph 6 to 10
VALENCE - COVER

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COVERAGE - EDITORIAL

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VALENCE - EDITORIAL

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Discussion and Research Agenda

From the exposed data it is possible to observe certain patterns. Although it is too early to make any robust conclusion, during strong political crisis (i.e. impeachment processes) all the observed media outlets ended up being Hostile or Defensive in regard to government as the day in which the president was effectively removed from the political scene approached. Thus, “neutral” media tended to “chose a side”. Although in some cases the exposition of governmental issues increased in both covers and editorials as the removal of the president approached, in some cases this proportion suffered little variance. As the day of the president removal approached, the behavior of the studied media outlets, the variation in exposure of positive and negative news not related to the simple increase in the exposure of governmental issues, tended to increase, being steady only in cases where it was already at a high level (IstoÉ 2016). As such, it is plausible to propose that strong political crisis tilt the behavior of neutral media vehicles in one direction or another.

Beyond that, it is interesting to notice the differences in media behavior between the impeachment of Collor and the impeachment of Rouseff. During the impeachment of Collor, both Veja and IstoÉ behaved in a neutral way before the crises was sparked, while in the impeachment of Rouseff both those outlets were already hostile quite before the serious considerations of an impeachment process. On the other hand, Carta Capital and
Época behaved in a more neutral fashion, although through different strategies (neutral coverage by Época and attacks on both sides by Carta Capital). As the crises increased, both those magazines ended up taking sides. Beyond that, it is interesting to notice that, after the house of commons opened the impeachment process of president Collor, both Veja and IstoÉ returned to a neutral stance. In the case of president Rousseff, higher polarization was found, with an increase in hostility after the opening of the impeachment process and until the vote in the senate.

A last, it is important to notice the endogenous nature of this type of study. If media outlets can be polarized by strong political crisis, they are also creators of such crisis. As exposed by Neto (1994), Veja and Época were essential for the impeachment of Collor. As a media outlet become a government enemy, it should focus on discrediting this government. As such, a new research design would be needed in order to tackle this possible heterogeneous effect, which is not the objective of this research.

References


Appendix 1 – Coding Guidelines

1. A Cover Dealing With Government:
   - Does the cover exposes the president?
   - Does the cover exposes members of the ruling party or the opposition?
   - Does the cover exposes the executive, legislative, or judiciary branch of the country?
   - Does the cover exposes a new about the current economic state of the country?

   If the response to one of those questions is yes, then the cover should be coded as dealing with governmental issues (1)

2. Position of the Cover
   - Does the image of the cover is positive, negative, or neutral, in regard to government or members of the ruling party (or the opposition)?
   - Does the cover links the ruling party (or the opposition) to corruption scandals?
   - Does the cover links the ruling party (or the opposition) to the economic situation of the country in a good or bad way?
   - Does the cover blames the government or praises it for an event?

   If the response of one of those questions is yes, the Cover should be coded as partisan against government (1, for negative information) or partisan for government (-1, for positive information). If none of the responses to those questions is yes, or if the cover deals with the president and the opposition at the same time (both exposed as positive or negative), the cover should be coded as neutral (0).

3. The same questions should be used in order to analyze the Editorials, excluding the analysis of images.
4. A Partisan Declaration

- Does the editorial attest that the media source supports or confronts the incumbent or the government?
- Does the editorial demand action against the incumbent or the government?
- Does the editorial clearly states its partisan position?

If the response of one of those questions is yes, the Editorial should be coded as a Partisan Declaration (1).