Who is driving whom
The media, voters and the bandwagon
Stolwijk, S.B.

Creative Commons License (see https://creativecommons.org/use-remix/cc-licenses): Other

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

UvA-DARE is a service provided by the library of the University of Amsterdam (http://dare.uva.nl)
Opinion polls of vote intentions play a prominent role in today’s political campaigns. When positive opinion poll results trigger additional support for a party, this is denoted as a “bandwagon effect”. This dissertation has added a communication science perspective to the study of the bandwagon effect, by evaluating how poll ratings influence party coverage, and how exposure to poll coverage across a campaign influences a voter’s campaign interest, emotions about parties, turnout and vote choice. These questions have been investigated using panel surveys in combination with content analyses of media coverage and poll data relating to the German 2013 general (Bundestag) election campaign and the Dutch 2014 election campaign to the European Parliament. Results show that:

1. Party coverage of a front runner party increases with a decrease in its poll ratings.
2. Exposure to poll coverage increases campaign interest and turnout.
3. Exposure to more favorable poll coverage about a party increases the odds of voting for this party, partly because of the increase in enthusiasm and decrease in anxiety felt about this party.

The effect of polls on election outcomes is found to be a participatory act, resulting from the influence of various actors including pollsters, journalists, and voters themselves. Polls do incite emotions, which in turn influence attitudes towards parties. However, this is more likely an indication that voters are actively responding to campaign information, rather than that they are mindlessly following their herd instinct.
Who is driving whom:
The media, voters and the bandwagon

Sjoerd B. Stolwijk
Who is driving whom: The media, voters and the bandwagon

Cover and layout by Citroenvlinder DTP & Vormgeving, my.thesis.nl and Hidde Stolwijk
Coverphoto: unknown

Printed by GVO drukkers & vormgevers B.V.

© 2017 Sjoerd B. Stolwijk

ISBN: 978-94-6332-141-9

Amsterdam School of Communication Research / ASCOR
Department of Communication, University of Amsterdam
Nieuwe Achtergracht 166
1018 WV Amsterdam
The Netherlands
sjoerdstolwijk@gmail.com
Who is driving whom:
The media, voters and the bandwagon
Promotiecommissie:

Promotor: Prof. dr. C.H. de Vreese Universiteit van Amsterdam
Copromotor: Dr. A.R.T. Schuck Universiteit van Amsterdam

Overige leden: Dr. J.E. Möller Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. P. Moy University of Washington
Prof. dr. C. Reinemann Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Prof. dr. T.W.G. van der Meer Universiteit van Amsterdam
Prof. dr. R. Vliegenthart Universiteit van Amsterdam

Faculteit der Maatschappij- en Gedragswetenschappen
# Table of contents

Introduction  
page 7

Chapter 1:  
page 31
All in the Game:  
Effects of Opinion Polls on Party Coverage in the  
2013 German Election Campaign

Chapter 2:  
page 63
More Interest in Interest:  
Does Poll Coverage Help or Hurt Efforts to Get Young Voters into the Ballot Box?

Chapter 3:  
page 87
How Anxiety and Enthusiasm Help Explain the Bandwagon Effect

Discussion and Conclusion  
page 111

References  
page 134

Appendix A  
page 146
Appendix B  
page 148
Appendix C  
page 149
Appendix D  
page 156
Appendix E  
page 160
Appendix F  
page 167
Appendix G  
page 168
Appendix H  
page 169
Appendix I  
page 170

English summary  
page 175

Nederlandse samenvatting  
page 179

Acknowledgement/Dankwoord  
page 183

Acknowledgements on authorship  
page 187