

Ashley Murchison

EDUCATION

PhD, Politics

University of Otago, 2016.

- Thesis: Aim for the Heart? A Study of New Zealand Voters' Responses to Emotional Appeals in Televised Political Advertising.
- This thesis was formally recognised by the Division of Humanities as being of exceptional quality.

BA, first class honours, Politics

University of Otago, 2009.

- Thesis: Political Communication in New Zealand: A Study of Political Party Advertising in the 2008 General Election.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research specialisation is in the field of New Zealand political communication, with a focus on how political parties use unmediated media to inform, engage, and persuade voters. While my PhD thesis concentrated on televised election advertising, I have also researched the effectiveness of online media in communicating with voters. I have experience in a range of research methods, including content analysis, focus groups, log diaries, and experiments.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral thesis

Department of Politics, University of Otago,
2010-2015.

- Conducted a series of experiments to investigate the influence of enthusiasm- and anxiety-inducing images and music in televised election advertisements on voters' political behaviour.
- Designed and produced the advertisements used in these experiments.
- Conducted focus groups to explore voters' emotional responses to election advertisements.
- Analysed and interpreted both qualitative and quantitative data.

Co-founder and curator

New Zealand Election Ads (electionads.org.nz),
2013-present.

- Online archive of New Zealand print, broadcast and online election advertising.
- Responsible for obtaining copies of campaign material, and uploading content to website.
- Role includes basic website maintenance, social media marketing, and media commentary.

Policy, research and communications assistant

Office of Joanne Hayes MP
September-December 2015.

- Produced a report profiling the history of the New Brighton area in Christchurch East.
- Synthesised relevant literature and analysed demographic data.
- Conducted semi-structured interviews with a selection of community stakeholders.

Research assistant (to Chris Rudd)
Department of Politics, University of Otago,
November-December 2011.

- Used online log diaries to track the use of traditional and online media by young voters during the 2011 New Zealand general election.
- Developed question framework, organised, and moderated focus groups.
- Coded all diary data into categories/themes for analysis.
- Co-authored and presented conference paper entitled 'Participant Observation in Cyberspace'.

Focus group moderator (for Masters Student)
Department of Politics, University of Otago,
2011.

- Moderated a series of focus groups on youth voter turnout in local body elections for a colleague's Masters thesis.

Research assistant (to Chris Rudd)
Department of Politics, University of Otago,
December 2008-January 2009

- Used content analysis to investigate the role of interest groups and experts in televised news coverage of the 2008 New Zealand general election.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching fellow, Digital Politics (200 level)

Department of Politics, University of Otago,

February-May 2015.

- Digital Politics was a new undergraduate paper offered at the University of Otago in Semester One, 2015. It focused on the use of online technology in political campaigning, communication and activism, and the effects of this technology on the behaviour of political actors and citizens. The course also taught students the core research methods used to study the content and effects of online media.
- Developed course syllabus, lecture/seminar content, and assessments for paper.
- Delivered weekly lectures and seminars. This involved three 50-minute lectures per week.
- Supervised and graded student assessments.
- Provided ongoing guidance to students who were undertaking their first large practical research project involving either content analysis or surveys.

Tutor, News Media and International Crises (300 level)

Department of Politics, University of Otago,

July-November 2013.

- Worked with course coordinator to run weekly tutorials for 50 students.
- Supervised and graded in-class group discussions.
- Established and maintained a Facebook group for the paper. Responsible for uploading course content, and answering student queries in this group.

Tutor, Mass Media and Modern Politics (200 level)

Department of Politics, University of Otago,

July-November 2013.

- Worked with course coordinator to run weekly tutorials for 63 students.
- Helped develop final examination content and assessment options.
- Adopted new approach of allowing students to choose their assessment (all internal or a combination of internal/external assessments).
- Worked with course coordinator and Student IT Services to implement computer-based examinations.

- Provided ongoing guidance to students who were undertaking their first large practical research project.
- Established and maintained a Facebook group for the paper.

Tutor, Introduction to New Zealand Politics (100 level)

Department of Politics, University of Otago,

July-November 2011; 2012; 2013.

- Conducted weekly tutorials with approximately 20 students per class.
- Prepared lessons that used a variety of teaching techniques including quizzes, group discussions, debates, and individual task sheets.
- Graded short-answer tests and essays.
- Provided written and oral feedback on assessments.

BROADCAST PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE

Vote Chat research co-ordinator and producer

Department of Politics, University of Otago,

2011 Election Campaign; 2014 Election Campaign

- Assisted in the production of this weekly political series, which interviewed 2011 and 2014 general election candidates for an on-site and broadcast audience.
- Worked with the University of Otago Media Production Unit, various Members of Parliament and candidates, media organisations, academics, and students.
- Collaborated with students to develop and maintain Twitter, Facebook and YouTube marketing for Vote Chat shows.
- Helped run a four-hour election night programme on the evening of the 2011 election, which provided election updates and academic commentary to the public via live-stream.
- Coordinated research for Vote Chat interviews during first half of 2014 campaign, before moving into website management role.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Reception/Collections administrator

Chasmont Finance Limited

December 2008; December 2009; March 2010

- Involved data entry, running financial reports, and one on one customer contact.
- Worked as part of a small team, with constant communication necessary to ensure the effective operation of the workplace.
- Filled in as Collections Administrator in 2010. Responsible for monitoring and resolving client payment issues, which required sensitivity to peoples' financial information.

Women's representative

Otago University Students' Association (OUSA),

2008.

- Elected, volunteer position representing students at the University of Otago.
- Assisted in fundraising for local community organisations. This included securing the OUSA Capping Charity Funding for Te Whare Pounamu Dunedin Women's Refuge in 2008.
- Local coordinator for the Tertiary Women's Focus Group Thursdays in Black Campaign, with responsibility for promoting campaign and selling merchandise.
- Coordinated campaigns and events with community, student and Government organisations and advocated on behalf of OUSA within these organisations.
- Point-of-contact person for women requiring support and advocacy on a wide variety of often sensitive issues.
- Administrative duties included research and quarterly report writing.
- Provided media commentary on a variety of issues, including sexual and domestic violence in New Zealand.

OTHER SKILLS

- Presenting and selling key concepts
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Excel, Word, and PowerPoint.
- Possess basic SPSS skills.
- Experience developing and maintaining basic websites using Wordpress (see elections.ac.nz, electionads.org.nz and ashleymurchison.co.nz).

PUBLICATIONS

- Murchison, A. (2016). Online Media in New Zealand. In Bahador, B., Kemp, G., McMillan, K., and Rudd, C. (Eds.), *Politics and the Media* (2nd ed.). New Zealand, Auckland University Press.
- Murchison, A. (2015). Changing Communications? Political Parties and Web 2.0 in the 2011 New Zealand General Election. In Lachapelle, G. and Maarek, P. (Eds.), *Political Parties in the Digital Age. The Impact of New Technologies in Politics*. Germany: De Gruyter.
- Murchison, A. (2015). Social Media and Participation. In Hayward, J. (Ed.), *New Zealand Government and Politics, Sixth Edition*. Australia: Oxford University Press.
- Richardson, A. Murchison, A., and Rudd, C. (2015). Media and Elections. In Hayward, J. (Ed.), *New Zealand Government and Politics, Sixth Edition*. Australia: Oxford University Press.
- Murchison, A. (2013). Online Media in New Zealand. In Bahador, B., Kemp, G., McMillan, K., and Rudd, C. (Eds.), *Politics and the Media*. New Zealand: Pearson Education.
- Deos, A. and Murchison, A. (2012). What's on Their Mind? Political Parties and Facebook in the 2011 New Zealand General Election. In Johansson, J. and Levine, S. (Eds.), *Kicking the Tyres: The New Zealand General Election and Electoral Referendum of 2011*. New Zealand: Victoria University Press.

INVITED TALKS

- Murchison, A. (2014). A Commentary on Political Advertising in the 2014 Campaign. Panellist on Outside the Heat of the 2014 Election: The Academic's Perspective Roundtable at the 2014 New Zealand Political Studies Association Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Murchison, A. (2013). Changing Communications? Political Parties and Facebook in the 2011 New Zealand General Election. Presentation at the World Social Science Forum, Montréal, Canada.
- Murchison, A. (2011). The Use of Web 2.0 in the 2011 New Zealand Election. Presentation at the New Zealand Political Studies Association Conference, Dunedin, New Zealand.

CONFERENCES AND LECTURES

- Murchison, A. (2016). Social Media and Participation. Lecture for Introduction to New Zealand Politics (POLS102), University of Otago.
- Murchison, A. (2015). Politics and Online Media in New Zealand. Lecture for Introduction to New Zealand Politics (POLS102), University of Otago.
- Murchison, A. (2014). Political Advertising. Lecture for Political Campaigning (POLS405), University of Otago.
- Murchison, A. and Rudd, C. (2013). Participant Observation in Cyberspace. Paper presented at the 63rd Political Studies Association Annual International Conference, Cardiff, Wales.
- Murchison, A. (2013). Emotional Appeals in Election Advertising: Understanding Their Influence on the Political Behaviour of Voters. Paper presented at the 63rd Political Studies Association Annual International Conference, Cardiff, Wales.
- Murchison, A. (2013). Politics and Online Media in New Zealand. Lecture for Introduction to New Zealand Politics (POLS102), University of Otago.
- Murchison, A. (2012). Using Experiments in Politics Research. Lecture for Research Methods (POLS302), University of Otago.
- Murchison, A. (2011). Emotional Appeals in Election Advertising: A (Revised) Methodology for Measuring Their Influence on the Political Behaviour of

- Voters. Paper presented at the 2011 New Zealand Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Deos, A. and Murchison, A. (2011). Tips for Conference Presenting. Presentation to the 2011 New Zealand Political Studies Association Postgraduate Pre-conference, Dunedin, New Zealand.
- Murchison, A. (2010). Emotional Appeals in Election Advertising: A Methodology for Measuring Their Influence on the Political Behaviour of Voters. Paper presented at the 2010 New Zealand Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Hamilton, New Zealand.
- Murchison, A. (2009). Political Communication in New Zealand: A Study of Political Party Advertising in the 2008 General Election. Paper presented at the 2009 New Zealand Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.
- Murchison, A. (2009). Political Communication in New Zealand: Political Party Advertising in the 2008 General Election. Lecture for Political Communication (POLS212), University of Otago.

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

- Interview about the role of election advertising in New Zealand for Media Take, Series 1 Episode 6, broadcast 5 August 2014.
- Interview entitled 'Political Ads Need What and Why' for the Otago Daily Times, published in print and online 3 August 2014. Available: <http://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/311388/political-ads-need-what-and-why>
- Joint interview entitled 'Otago University Students Break New Ground for Election' for Radio New Zealand's Morning Report, broadcast 1 May 2014. Available: <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/morningreport/audio/2594309/otago-university-students-break-new-ground-for-election>

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

- UK/NZ Political Studies Association award to attend 63rd Political Studies Association Annual International Conference, 2013.
- University of Otago Postgraduate Scholarship, 2010.
- University of Otago Matched Funding Summer Scholarship, 2009.
- New Zealand Political Studies Association Prize for Best Postgraduate Conference Paper (joint recipient), 2009.
- University of Otago Scholarship in Arts, 2008.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Member of New Zealand Political Studies Association, 2009-present.
- Fundraised for the Key to Life Charitable Trust (keytolife.org.nz), 2013-2014.
- Member of Political Studies Association, 2013.
- Assistant organiser for New Zealand Political Studies Association Postgraduate Pre-conference, 2011.
- Founding member/Marketing Consultant, Ignite Consultants, 2010.
- Member of Senate, University of Otago, 2008.