

SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN POPULAR CULTURE

POLITICIANS AND
POPULAR CULTURE
CELEBRITIZATION
OF POLITICS

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MEDIATIZATION



- mediation of the media in getting to know the world by their recipients
- media = „window to the world“
- agenda setting
- lack of direct cognition

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

- *purposeful communication about politics*
- *it incorporates . . . communication about these actors and their activities, as contained in news reports, editorials, and other forms of media discussion of politics*

Brain McNair, *An Introduction to Political Communication*



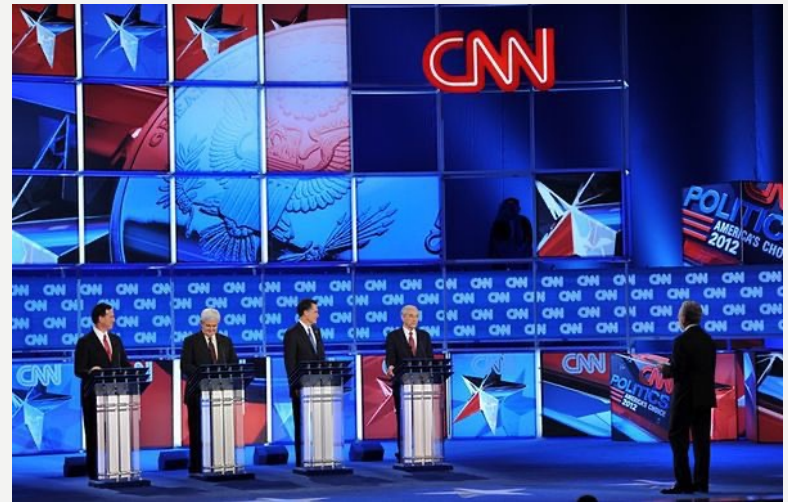
MEDIATIZATION OF POLITICS



*adaptation of mass media logic
by political actors and media-
induced changes in the public
representation of politics*
(Michael Meyen)

INFOTAINMENT

- information + entertainment
- *mixing public and private life, using a sensational style, a sometimes skeptical but always populist tone and blurring the line between documentary and fiction, between news and entertainment (Wiesław Godzic)*



POLITAINMENT



- politics
and entertainment
- blurring the line between
serious and trivial
activities
- *soft* kind of

CELEBRITY

- *Known (Famous) for being Famous*
- celebrity: people who a greater presence and wider scope of activity and agency than are those who make up the rest of the population. They are allowed to move on the public stage while the rest of us watch
- stardom and celebritism



STARDOM AND CELEBRITISM



[gwiazdorstwo a celebrytyzm)

CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS



- ephemeral phenomenon
- John Street: employing of the methods aimed at gaining popularity by politicians

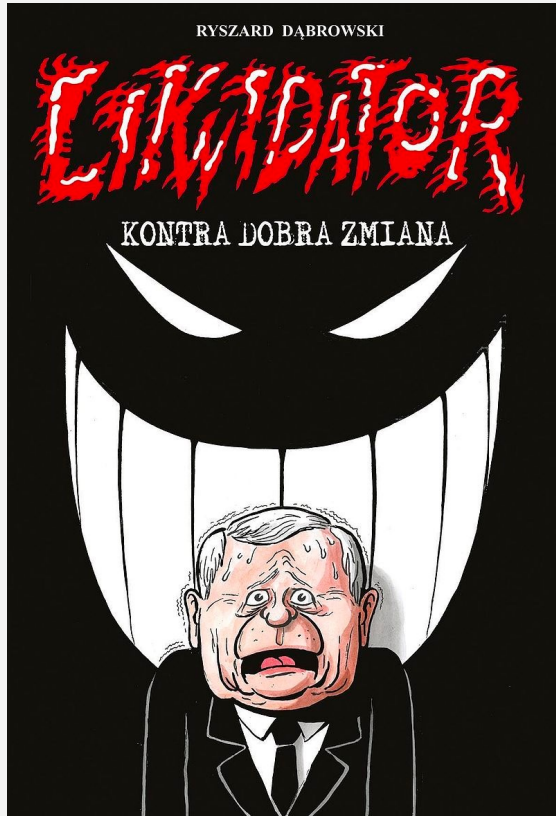
CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS

strategies:

- hiring of popular persons (from the world of popular culture or celebrities)
- utilization of advertising methods from the world of popular culture



CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS



complicated relations between
politics and popular culture:

- opposition (critique of government)
- coexistence (symbiosis)

CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS

- personnel interpenetration
- popular culture's traditional role: critical evaluation of political power

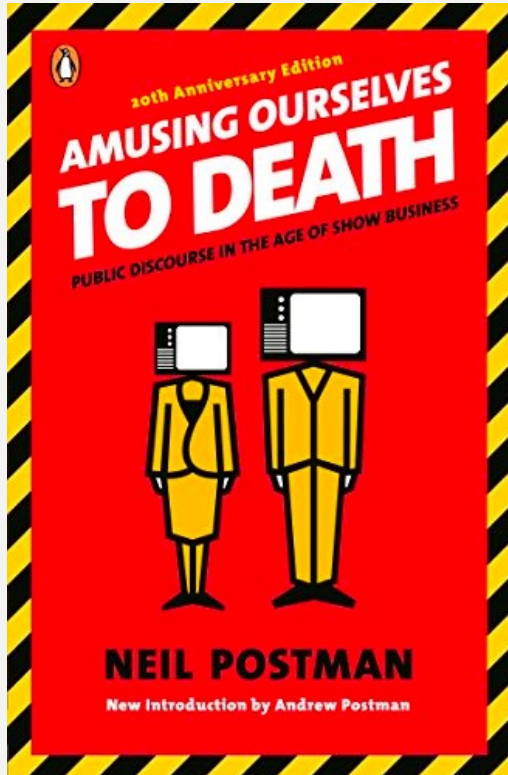


CELEBRITY POLITICIANS



CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS

CRITICISM



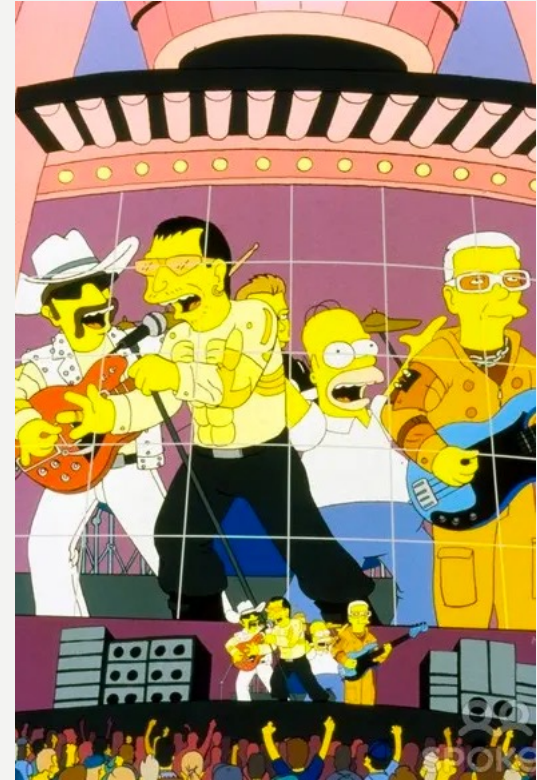
- blurring of the difference between the important and the trivial
- lack of competence / knowledge among the celebrities

CELEBRITIZATION OF POLITICS

CRITICISM

distinct categories:

- politician (elected)
- celebrities (without legitimacy)



TONY BLAIR

- Anthony Charles Lynton Blair
- 6 May 1953
- UK (PM) Prime Minister (1997-2007)
- Labour Party Leader (1994-2007)

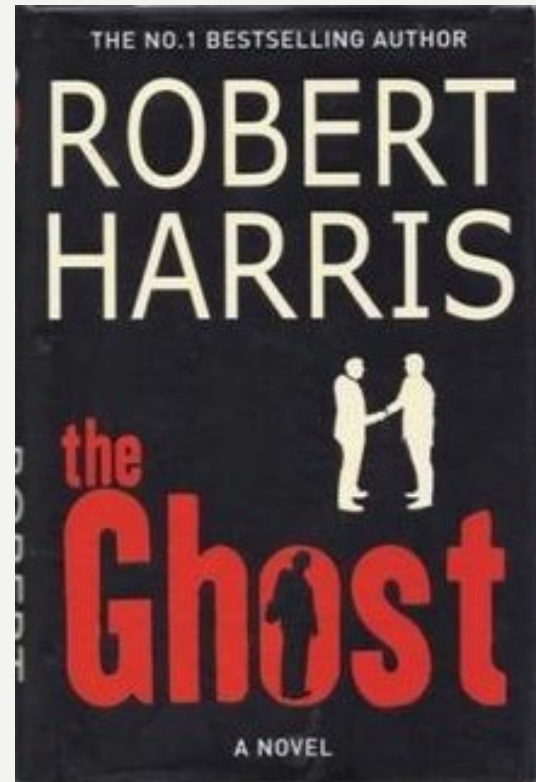


TONY BLAIR IN POPULAR CULTURE

- appears in many popular culture texts, mainly in literature and film
- selected texts:
 - George Michael, *Shoot the Dog* (song and videoclip)
 - *The Ghost* by Robert Harris (novel)
 - *Love Actually* (movie)

THE GHOST

- Robert Harris
- 2007
- 2010 (*Ghostwriter* movie by Roman Polański)
- novel's author = disappointed Blair's supporter
- impetus – war in Iraq



THE GHOST

- Ghost – unknown writing various kinds of books on demand
- Adam Lang – books version of Tony Blair; using Ghost's expertise to write memoirs

THE GHOST

BLAIR/LANG

- PM as political celebrity:
 - young Lang was an actor
 - politics is game
- acting along the United States interests (Rycart)
- PM's wife

SHOOT THE DOG

GEORGE MICHAEL



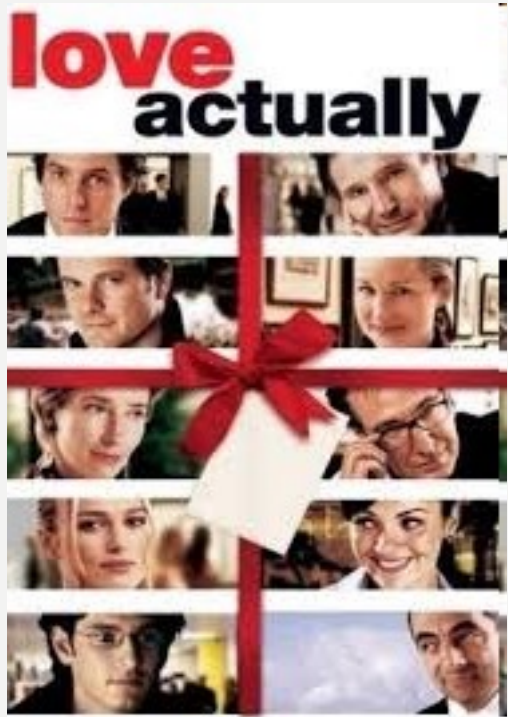
SHOOT THE DOG

GEORGE MICHAEL



- CD: *Patience*, Ægean/Epic, 2004
- *poodle-ism* – a kind of dependence, between the UK and US as well as between their leaders

LOVE ACTUALLY



- 2003
- written and directed by Richard Curtis
- cast:
 - Hugh Grant (David – UK PM)
 - Martine McCutcheon (Natalie)
 - Nina Sosanya (Annie)
 - Billy Bob Thornton (US President)

LOVE ACTUALLY

DAVID

- no clear political affiliation
- bachelor (*It should be a lot easier with me than with the last lot. No nappies, no teenagers, no scary wife*)
- Blair's successor



LOVE ACTUALLY

DAVID

has a distance to himself:

Annie: *Would you like to
meet your household staff?*

David: *Yes, I would like that
very much, indeed.*

*Anything to put off actually
running the country.*



LOVE ACTUALLY

USA

minister: *We mustn't allow ourselves to be bullied from pillar to post like the last government. This is our first really important test. Let's take a stand*

David: *Right. Right. I understand that, but I have decided not to. Not this time. We will, of course, try to be clever. But let's not forget that America is the most powerful country in the world. I'm not going to act like a petulant child*



I'll give you anything you ask for - as long as it's not something I don't want to give

LOVE ACTUALLY

USA

US President: *Very satisfactory indeed. We got what we came for, and our special relationship is still very special.*



LOVE ACTUALLY

USA

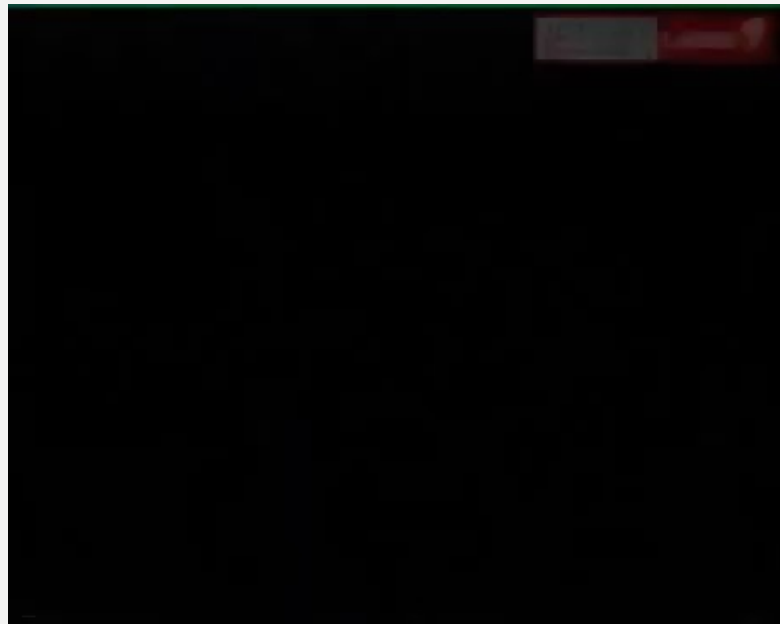


LOVE ACTUALLY

USA

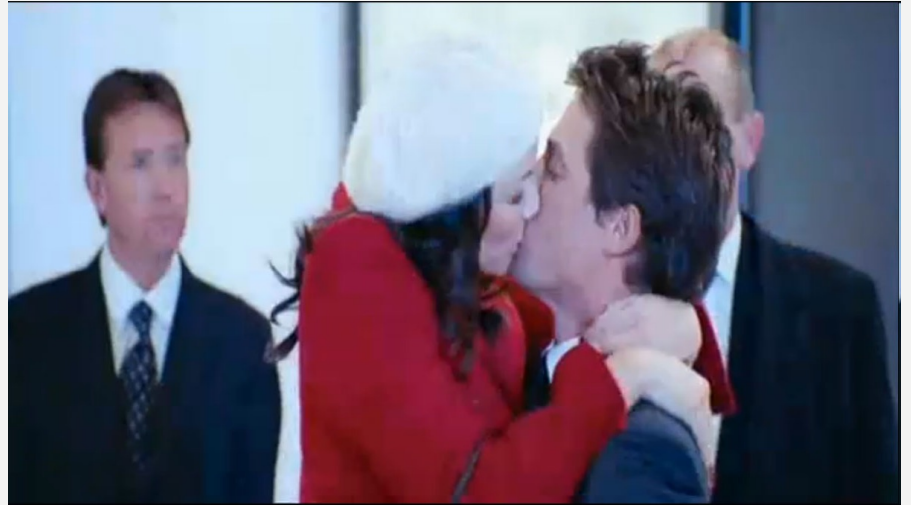
David: *I love that word "relationship." Covers all manner of sins, doesn't it? I fear that this has become a bad relationship; a relationship based on the President taking exactly what he wants and casually ignoring all those things that really matter to, erm... Britain. We may be a small country, but we're a great one, too. The country of Shakespeare, Churchill, the Beatles, Sean Connery, Harry Potter. David Beckham's right foot. David Beckham's left foot, come to that. And a friend who bullies us is no longer a friend. And since bullies only respond to strength, from now onward I will be prepared to be much stronger. And the President should be prepared for that.*

LOVE ACTUALLY



*So here's one for our ass-kicking prime minister.
A golden oldie for a golden oldie*

LOVE ACTUALLY



CELEBRITIZATION OF POLISH POLITICS



- inspired by American experience
- part of political marketing
- gradually adopted by polish politicians

TALK SHOWS



FROM REALITY SHOW TO POLITICS



Janusz
Dzięcioł



Sebastian
Florek



POLSKA PARTIA PRZYJACIÓŁ PIWA

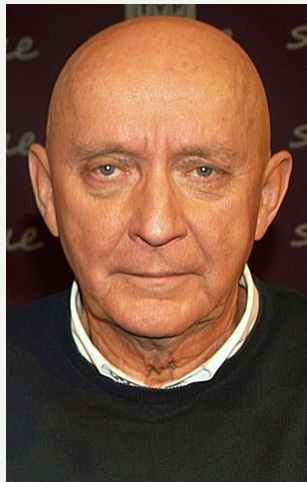
[POLISH BEER-LOVERS' PARTY]

- 1991 election – 16 seat
(out of 460)
- ideology: promotion of British
style beer consumption to
replace vodka



POLSKA PARTIA PRZYJACIÓŁ PIWA

[POLISH BEER-LOVERS' PARTY]



CELEBRITIZATION OF POLISH POLITICS

Table 2. Number of political celebrities in the Lower Chambers of Polish and Czech Parliaments.

Lower Chamber	Poland	Lower Chamber	Czech Republic
1st term of office (1991–93)	1	1st term of office (1996–98)	5
2 nd term of office (1993–97)	2	2 nd term of office (1998–2002)	2
3 rd term of office (1997–2001)	0	3 rd term of office (2002–06)	2
4 th term of office (2001–5)	2	4 th term of office (2006–10)	2
5 th term of office (2005–7)	0	5 th term of office (2010–13)	3
6 th term of office (2007–11)	2	6 th term of office (2013–17)	3
7 th term of office (2011–15)	1	7 th term of office (2017-present)	1
8 th term of office (2015-present)	3		

CELEBRITIZATION OF POLISH POLITICS

Table 4. Number of Polish and Czech political celebrities in the European elections.

European Parliament	Poland	Czech Republic
5th term of office (May1, 2004–July 19, 2004)	0	0
6th term of office (2004–2009)	1	3
7th term of office (2009–2014)	1	2
8th term of office (2014-present)	0	1

POLITICAL CELEBRITIES



PAWEŁ KUKIZ

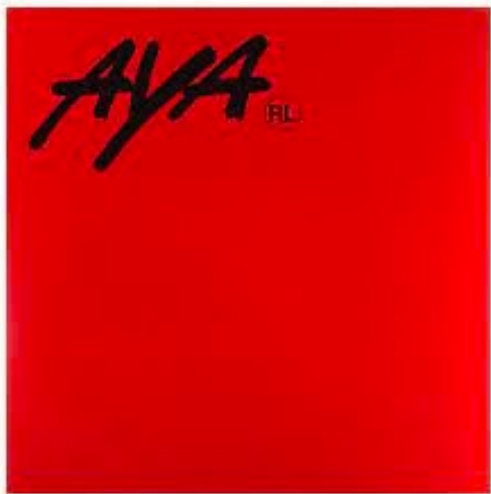
- 24 June 1963
- punk-rock musician (singer)
- recently politician
- leader of bands like Aya RL, Piersi, CDN, Hak
- solo career



PAWEŁ KUKIZ

AYA RL

- initially: Aya Red Love
- 1983-1998
- hit: *Skóra*



PAWEŁ KUKIZ

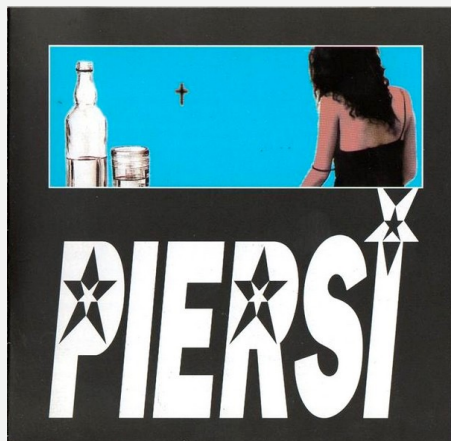
PIERSI



- 1984 (Niemodlin)
- since 1997 – Kukiz i Piersi
- 2013 – Kukiz left the band
- from opposition to political participation

PAWEŁ KUKIZ

PIERSI



- 1992
- *ZChN zbliża się*
[ZChN Close
In]

The parish priest
is fast approaching,
already knocking at my door.
I will run to greet him,
wine in my hand trembles
O inconceivable happiness,
priest he visits me.
Neighbor donate annuity,
I could show up.

In the pantry hold cognac,
two of vodka in the fridge.
I will run the glasses;
Father likes to drink.
O inconceivable happiness,
Father drank two bottles.
I will bring it up the stairs
because he overturn.

The priest picked up the chalk,
I wrote each plus plus be.
At the bottom of the altar
already impatient.
I open the door Toyota,
parish priest praises me.
The police in his car
sympathetic laugh.

The priest started with a squeal of
tires,
he could not escape the cat.
Caught the light of the post
and thumped the side of the fence ...
Oh, cry parishioners,
who saw the incident.
Toyota lot of costs,
Again, you have to give to Mass.

PAWEŁ KUKIZ

SOLO



Samokrytyka (dla Michnika)

PAWEŁ KUKIZ

IDEOLOGY

- critical to the current political and cultural mainstream (particracy)
- electoral reform: majority voting with a single-member district



PAWEŁ KUKIZ

ELECTIONS



- internet
- direct contact with voters
- lack of distancing
- simple messages
- emotions over rationality
- memes & jokes

PAWEŁ KUKIZ

CELEBRITY

	Paweł Kukiz	Bronisław Komorowski (the incumbent president)
Role	a man with a mission	a clerk
Language	Personal	Technocratic
Framing social and political problems	an episodic frame – focused on specific people	a thematic frame – focused on macro processes and abstract social forces
Emotional mode	dynamic intonation, emotional commitment, citing songs and poetry	monotonous intonation, emotional distance
Performativity	forces host of the show to sign declaration supporting his single member districts reform, rich kinesics	lack of performance, figure just sits and talks, limited kinesics

Table 1: Comparison of candidates' *Kuba Wojewódzki Show* appearances

source: Tomasz Olczyk, Jacek Wasilewski, *From Rock Star to Political Star - Curious Case of Pawel Kukiz's Persona Power*

PAWEŁ KUKIZ

- two terms in parliament
- decline in number of MPs - from 42 (2015) to 6 (2019)
- from opposition to government support and back

