

Dr. Dean Alger

Writer, Public Affairs Consultant, Political Scientist, Media Analyst
(651) 646-2256

- Dean Alger is a writer on public affairs & politics, with specializations in media and politics, political ads, and elections and the democratic process in general.
- He serves as a public affairs consultant; he's led election and media reform initiatives, conducted forums on the election process, etc.
- Dr. Alger is trained as a political scientist and continues to do research and some college teaching in political science and media/journalism.
- He has extensive experience serving local news organizations as an analyst of elections and other political and media matters.

Principal Professional Positions & Activities

Public affairs consultant, 1995-present

Adjunct professor, University of Minnesota, teaching Mass Politics in the Media Age, and Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior, Fall semester 2005 and 2004, Spring 1996.

Minnesota Director, Alliance for Better Campaigns, national media and election reform initiative, 2000-2001. (National Co-chairs: Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford, Walter Cronkite. Alger organized unprecedented bi-partisan coalition of political leaders in support of the Minnesota Alliance effort, including Democrats: US Sen. Wellstone, Cong. Sabo, State Sen. Majority Leader Moe, etc., and Republicans: former Governor Carlson, State House Speaker Sviggum and State House Majority Leader Pawlenty.)

Visiting Professor, St. Olaf College, teaching Media and Politics, Spring semester 2000.

Consultant to and member of Steering Committee of Minnesota Compact, election reform initiative 1996-1998 (funded by Pew Trusts in 1998). Principal author of the Compact's Campaign Ad Code.

Director of the Bureau of Governmental Affairs and Professor of Political Science, University of North Dakota (1993-1994). Taught Health Care Policy course, etc.

Fellow, Shorenstein Center on Press & Politics, Kennedy School, Harvard University, Jan.-Aug. 1993. And co-director of major research project, "Democracy '92," which was published as the book, CROSSTALK.

Professor/Associate Professor, Asst. Professor of Political Science, Moorhead State University, Minn., 1982-1992.

Principal Writings

Dean Alger, MEGAMEDIA – How Giant Corporations Dominate Mass Media, Distort Competition and Endanger Democracy, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998 (copyright now back in Alger's hands). (Finalist for Goldsmith Award; see linked endorsements page.) [[endorsement page link here](#)]

Marion Just, Ann Crigler, Dean Alger, Timothy Cook, Montague Kern, Darrell West, CROSSTALK – Citizens, Candidates and Media in a Presidential Campaign, University of Chicago Press, 1996. **Winner of Graber Distinguished Book Award, American Political Science Association.

Dean E. Alger, The Media and Politics, 2nd ed., Harcourt College Publishers (orig. pub by Wadsworth), 1996. First edition published by Prentice Hall, 1989.

Dean Alger, "Constructing Campaign Messages and Public Understanding: The 1990 Wellstone-Boschwitz Senate Race in Minnesota," a chapter in Ann Crigler, ed., The Psychology of Political Communication, University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Darrell West, Montague Kern, Dean Alger, Janice Goggin, "Ad Buys in Presidential Campaigns: The Strategies of Electoral Appeal," in Political Communication journal, Vol. 12, No. 3 (July-Sept. 1995).

Dean Alger, "The Media, the Public and the Development of Candidates' Images in the 1992 Presidential Election," Research Paper R-14, Oct. 1994, Shorenstein Center, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

Dean E. Alger, "The Media, the Right to Privacy and Judicial Policy-Making: Rethinking Conceptual Foundations," in Robert J. Spitzer, ed., Media and Public Policy, Praeger Publishers, 1993.

Selected Other Professional and Public Affairs Activities

Designed, organized and hosted a Forum on Campaign Ads in Election 2004, held in Sept. 2004 at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters, Minnesota.

Co-Director for Public Operations and Communications, MyBallot.net, developing web site/internet voting and public affairs information source and service, affiliated with E-Democracy, 2003-2004.

Two examples of public affairs projects: He served as chief consultant to Lee Lynch and the Growth & Justice public policy public interest group in their big public affairs event and fund-raiser: "The Worst Political Ads in America Awards." This took place in the historic Pantages Theater in Minneapolis in May 2004 and had an audience of over 800. Dean – as "Dr. D" – and young musical partner "Z-man" performed Dean's satire song, "Your Cheatin' Heart in those Campaign Ads" – and got a great response. In Sept. 2004, Dean also designed, organized and hosted a forum on campaign ads, presented at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, and co-sponsored by the Minnesota League of Women Voters.

Candidate for Secretary of State of Minnesota, 2002; endorsed and nominated by Independence Party, 3rd major party in MN. (Ran primarily as an independent for that office that serves as chief election administrator for the state; to their credit, the delegates to the Independence Party congressional district and state conventions understood that the chief state election officer should NOT be an intense partisan).

Extensive experience as analyst of elections and other political matters, as well as media issues, for local commercial and public TV and radio stations in Twin Cities, Minnesota, 1996-present, and Northwest Minnesota and North Dakota, 1986-1994; occasional columnist for The Forum newspaper in the latter area 1988-1992. The public radio work included service as campaign ads critic for Minnesota Public Radio, 1998 and 2000 elections.

With political science colleagues Prof. John Sullivan, University of Minnesota, and Prof. Barbara Allen, Carleton College, did analyses of Twin Cities local TV news coverage of 2000 and 2004 elections. (Article on 2000 work published in [Political Communication](#).)

Occasional writer for [Minnesota Law & Politics](#) magazine, 1999-2003.

Featured panelist in a major forum on "The Impact of Mega-Media Mergers on the Quality of American Journalism," hosted by the Shorenstein Center/Kennedy School of Harvard's Washington D.C. office, Oct. 1999; Marvin Kalb, moderator. Forum included Congressman Ed Markey (D-Mass), former Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Communications and Information, Larry Irving, CNN's Wolf Blitzer, Bill Moyers, NPR's Linda Werthheimer, the Senior Vice President for Global and Strategic Policy for AOL, former Chief Economist for the FCC, etc.

Featured in the much-lauded Bill Moyers-PBS TV documentary “Free Speech for Sale,” which aired June 1999.

Testified before the Federal Communications Commission, Feb, 1999, on trends in media ownership and impacts on media’s First Amendment functions.

Invited lectures on “Politics and the Media” and “Political Ads” for the Summer Institute at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, co-sponsored by the University of Massachusetts, Boston, July 1993.

Editor, Political Communication Report, newsletter of the Political Communication section, American Political Science Association, 1991-1993.