Political Science 146 – Public Opinion and Mass Media

Loren Collingwood, Political Science

November 29, 2017
Advertising Strategy

- Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.
Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.

Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.
Advertising Strategy

- Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.
- Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.
  - Geography: Battlegrounds
Advertising Strategy

- Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.
- Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.
  - Geography: Battlegrounds
  - Example: Why no California advertising (or so little) in 2008/2012?
Advertising Strategy

- Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.
- Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.
  - Geography: Battlegrounds
  - Example: Why no California advertising (or so little) in 2008/2012?
- At presidential level, at least recently, about 35 states off the table
Advertising Strategy

- Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.
- Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.
  - Geography: Battlegrounds
  - Example: Why no California advertising (or so little) in 2008/2012?
- At presidential level, at least recently, about 35 states off the table
- Negative advertising has increased over time
Targeting the audience. Unlike brand name appeals, political targeting is much narrower in scope.

Candidates interested in reaching voters whose preferences may be pivotal to outcome of the race.

- Geography: Battlegrounds
- Example: Why no California advertising (or so little) in 2008/2012?

At presidential level, at least recently, about 35 states off the table

Negative advertising has increased over time

American Crossroads: Biden
Negative Advertising Over Time

**Figure 6.1 The Rise of Negative Advertising**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percent of Negativity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Election year*

*Source: Data from Geer, 2010.*
2008 Presidential Campaign Advertising

![Map showing campaign advertising June-November 2008](image)

- Less than 500 airings overall
- 500-999 airings
- 1,000-4,999 airings
- 5,000-14,999 airings
- 15,000 airing or more

- 0-24% Obama ads
- 25-49% Obama ads
- 50-74% Obama ads
- 75-100% Obama ads

Any market where a total of less than 500 ads aired throughout the course of the 2008 campaign was colored as white on the map.

Source: Data from University of Wisconsin Advertising Project, 2010.
Advertising Strategy

Campaigns aim to target voters who actually will vote, so advertising on children’s programs is mostly meaningless.
Advertising Strategy

- Campaigns aim to target voters who actually will vote, so advertising on children’s programs is mostly meaningless.

- Local news provides an ideal audience: people sufficiently motivated to watch news are also likely to vote. First half of local news then prime time political advertising.
Advertising Strategy

- Campaigns aim to target voters who actually will vote, so advertising on children’s programs is mostly meaningless.
- Local news provides an ideal audience: people sufficiently motivated to watch news are also likely to vote. First half of local news then prime time political advertising.
- News adjacencies: time slots just before or after a local newscast.
Advertising Strategy

- Campaigns aim to target voters who actually will vote, so advertising on children’s programs is mostly meaningless.
- Local news provides an ideal audience: people sufficiently motivated to watch news are also likely to vote. First half of local news then prime time political advertising.
- News adjacencies: time slots just before or after a local newscast.
- In some battleground states, local news ad-buys are purchased 90 days in advance.
Advertising Strategy

- State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?
Advertising Strategy

- State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?
- Advertising single largest expenditure for modern-day campaigns
Advertising Strategy

- State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?
- Advertising single largest expenditure for modern-day campaigns
- A single airing of a 30 second commercial during 6:00pm newscast in NYC and LA media markets costs $7,000. Thus, residents of smaller media markets likely to get more advertising simply because it’s cheaper.
Advertising Strategy

▶ State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?

▶ Advertising single largest expenditure for modern-day campaigns

▶ A single airing of a 30 second commercial during 6:00pm newscast in NYC and LA media markets costs $7,000. Thus, residents of smaller media markets likely to get more advertising simply because it’s cheaper.

▶ Gross Rating Point (GRP): Basic unit of advertising exposure, GRPs are scored to reflect the percentage of the media market that is exposed to the ad.
Advertising Strategy

- State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?
- Advertising single largest expenditure for modern-day campaigns
- A single airing of a 30 second commercial during 6:00pm newscast in NYC and LA media markets costs $7,000. Thus, residents of smaller media markets likely to get more advertising simply because it’s cheaper.
- *Gross Rating Point* (GRP): Basic unit of advertising exposure, GRPs are scored to reflect the percentage of the media market that is exposed to the ad.
  - Buying a hundred GRPs would mean one exposure per viewer; 1000 GRPs means 10 exposures.
Advertising Strategy

- State of campaign budget has huge impact on advertising strategy. Does campaign have lots of money in the bank? Are they struggling?
- Advertising single largest expenditure for modern-day campaigns
- A single airing of a 30 second commercial during 6:00pm newscast in NYC and LA media markets costs $7,000. Thus, residents of smaller media markets likely to get more advertising simply because it’s cheaper.
- *Gross Rating Point* (GRP): Basic unit of advertising exposure, GRPs are scored to reflect the percentage of the media market that is exposed to the ad.
  - Buying a hundred GRPs would mean one exposure per viewer; 1000 GRPs means 10 exposures.
- Almost all of the advertising is handled by outside consulting firms that the campaigns hire.
Early Advertising. While advertising ratchets up later in the campaign cycle, campaigns still advertise early in the cycle to introduce the candidate.
Early Advertising. While advertising ratchets up later in the campaign cycle, campaigns still advertise early in the cycle to introduce the candidate.

Biographical spots: candidates personal background, record of public service, family values, military service, humble beginnings, overcome adversity, adherence to core set of principals (farmer)
Advertising Strategy

- Early Advertising. While advertising ratchets up later in the campaign cycle, campaigns still advertise early in the cycle to introduce the candidate.

- Biographical spots: candidates personal background, record of public service, family values, military service, humble beginnings, overcome adversity, adherence to core set of principals (farmer)
  - Obama - Country I love
Early Advertising. While advertising ratchets up later in the campaign cycle, campaigns still advertise early in the cycle to introduce the candidate.

Biographical spots: candidates personal background, record of public service, family values, military service, humble beginnings, overcome adversity, adherence to core set of principals (farmer)
  - Obama - Country I love

By focusing on personal virtues, campaigns instill confidence in candidate’s suitability for public office.
Advertising Strategy

- Early Advertising. While advertising ratchets up later in the campaign cycle, campaigns still advertise early in the cycle to introduce the candidate.

- Biographical spots: candidates personal background, record of public service, family values, military service, humble beginnings, overcome adversity, adherence to core set of principals (farmer)
  - Obama - Country I love

- By focusing on personal virtues, campaigns instill confidence in candidate’s suitability for public office.

- First goal is to boast name recognition
Advertising Strategy

Once candidates have given voters a snapshot into their lives, they move into credential ads.
Advertising Strategy

- Once candidates have given voters a snapshot into their lives, they move into credential ads.
- *Image Ads* maintain thematic continuity with biographical message by presenting candidate as likable with strong sense of public service.
Advertising Strategy

- Once candidates have given voters a snapshot into their lives, they move into credential ads.
- *Image Ads* maintain thematic continuity with biographical message by presenting candidate as likable with strong sense of public service.
  - Heidi Heitkamp Ad 2012
Advertising Strategy

- Once candidates have given voters a snapshot into their lives, they move into credential ads.

- *Image Ads* maintain thematic continuity with biographical message by presenting candidate as likable with strong sense of public service.
  - Heidi Heitkamp Ad 2012

- *Issue Ads* are more substantive and focus on candidate’s experience/record in public life, or outline policy positions on major issues.
Once candidates have given voters a snapshot into their lives, they move into credential ads.

*Image Ads* maintain thematic continuity with biographical message by presenting candidate as likable with strong sense of public service.

- Heidi Heitkamp Ad 2012

*Issue Ads* are more substantive and focus on candidate’s experience/record in public life, or outline policy positions on major issues.

- John McCain Colombia Free Trade 2008
Advertising Strategy

- Issue Ownership: Policy advertising follows a simple formula: highlight candidate’s positions but focus on issues where your candidate is favored.
Advertising Strategy

- Issue Ownership: Policy advertising follows a simple formula: highlight candidate’s positions but focus on issues where your candidate is favored.
  - 1. Do not publicize your support for unpopular positions, unless you’re Ron Paul: Ron Paul Iraq War
Advertising Strategy

- Issue Ownership: Policy advertising follows a simple formula: highlight candidate’s positions but focus on issues where your candidate is favored.
  - 1. Do not publicize your support for unpopular positions, unless you’re Ron Paul: Ron Paul Iraq War
  - 2. Single out issues on which you, and more important your party are seen as more likely to provide relief.
Advertising Strategy

- Issue Ownership: Policy advertising follows a simple formula: highlight candidate’s positions but focus on issues where your candidate is favored.
  - 1. Do not publicize your support for unpopular positions, unless you’re Ron Paul: Ron Paul Iraq War
  - 2. Single out issues on which you, and more important your party are seen as more likely to provide relief.

- In sum, parties/candidates often “own” certain issues, and these owned issues are featured in campaign advertising.
Advertising Strategy

- Issue Ownership: Policy advertising follows a simple formula: highlight candidate’s positions but focus on issues where your candidate is favored.
  - 1. Do not publicize your support for unpopular positions, unless you’re Ron Paul: Ron Paul Iraq War
  - 2. Single out issues on which you, and more important your party are seen as more likely to provide relief.

- In sum, parties/candidates often “own” certain issues, and these owned issues are featured in campaign advertising.

- Advertising on Owned Issues: Taxman
**Issue Ownership**

*Figure 6.3 Images of the Parties on Major Issues*

- The terrorist threat at home?
- The size and power of the federal government?
- The environment, including global warming?
- Unemployment?
- Discrimination against minority groups?
- The economy?
- The situations in Iraq and Afghanistan?

Source: Data from Gallup, 2010.
Advertising Strategy

- Wedge Appeals: Us vs. Them
Advertising Strategy

- Wedge Appeals: Us vs. Them
- Designed to pit groups against each other, to appeal to voters’ sense of group identity: Race, sexual identity, immigration, ethnicity, religion.
Advertising Strategy

- Wedge Appeals: Us vs. Them
- Designed to pit groups against each other, to appeal to voters’ sense of group identity: Race, sexual identity, immigration, ethnicity, religion.
- Sharron Angle Ad
Advertising Strategy

- Wedge Appeals: Us vs. Them
- Designed to pit groups against each other, to appeal to voters’ sense of group identity: Race, sexual identity, immigration, ethnicity, religion.
- Sharron Angle Ad
- Ground Zero Mosque Ad
Negative Advertising

- **Negative Ad** in most basic sense is an ad in which a candidate critiques another
Negative Ad in most basic sense is an ad in which a candidate critiques another

Positive Ad is one in which a candidate promotes him/herself
Negative Advertising

- **Negative Ad** in most basic sense is an ad in which a candidate critiques another.
- **Positive Ad** is one in which a candidate promotes him/herself.
- **In-Between/Contrast Ad** includes both a criticism of the opponent and positive information about the sponsor of the ad.

Voters tend to think negative ads about issues are more “fair” than negative ads about personal shortcomings.
Negative Advertising

- **Negative Ad** in most basic sense is an ad in which a candidate critiques another
- **Positive Ad** is one in which a candidate promotes him/herself
- **In-Between/Contrast Ad** Includes both a criticism of the opponent and positive information about the sponsor of the ad
- **All these ads can have different types of content:** issues, personal focus, beliefs, past votes
Negative Advertising

- **Negative Ad** in most basic sense is an ad in which a candidate critiques another
- **Positive Ad** is one in which a candidate promotes him/herself
- **In-Between/Contrast Ad** Includes both a criticism of the opponent and positive information about the sponsor of the ad
- All these ads can have different types of content: issues, personal focus, beliefs, past votes
- Voters tend to think negative ads about issues are more “fair” than negative ads about personal shortcomings
Negative Advertising

- Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent.
Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent

Negative campaigns run the gamut from direct attacks on personal attributes of candidate to ads linking the candidate with unsavory groups or causes.
Negative Advertising

- Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent.
- Negative campaigns run the gamut from direct attacks on personal attributes of candidate to ads linking the candidate with unsavory groups or causes.
  - Character assassination: opponent is immoral.
Negative Advertising

- Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent
- Negative campaigns run the gamut from direct attacks on personal attributes of candidate to ads linking the candidate with unsavory groups or causes.
  - Character assassination: opponent is immoral
  - Performance critiques: bad on the economy, messed up the war, etc.
Negative Advertising

- Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent
- Negative campaigns run the gamut from direct attacks on personal attributes of candidate to ads linking the candidate with unsavory groups or causes.
  - Character assassination: opponent is immoral
  - Performance critiques: bad on the economy, messed up the war, etc.
- Most common genre of political attack is the flip-flop ad (John Kerry)
Negative Advertising

- Candidates dwell on the flaws – either personal or substantive – of their opponent
- Negative campaigns run the gamut from direct attacks on personal attributes of candidate to ads linking the candidate with unsavory groups or causes.
  - Character assassination: opponent is immoral
  - Performance critiques: bad on the economy, messed up the war, etc.
- Most common genre of political attack is the flip-flop ad (John Kerry)
- Attacks provoke counter-attacks. Attacks are effective in attracting press coverage
Effects of Negative Ads

- Decrease in Voter Turnout: Ansolabehere and Iyengar find that people who see negative ads report they are much less likely to turn out to vote than people who see positive ads.
Effects of Negative Ads

- Decrease in Voter Turnout: Ansolabehere and Iyengar find that people who see negative ads reports they are much less likely to turn out to vote than people who see positive ads.
- However, their research is experimental, not observational.
Effects of Negative Ads

- Decrease in Voter Turnout: Ansolabehere and Iyengar find that people who see negative ads reports they are much less likely to turn out to vote than people who see positive ads.
- However, their research is experimental, not observational.
- Negative ads make voters feel less efficacious; feel like they have less power over the political process.
Effects of Negative Ads

- Decrease in Voter Turnout: Ansolabehere and Iyengar find that people who see negative ads report they are much less likely to turn out to vote than people who see positive ads.
- However, their research is experimental, not observational.
- Negative ads make voters feel less efficacious; feel like they have less power over the political process.
- **Boomerang Effect**: Targeted candidate’s favorability declined but so does the sponsor of the ad.
Effects of Negative Ads

- Decrease in Voter Turnout: Ansolabehere and Iyengar find that people who see negative ads reports they are much less likely to turn out to vote than people who see positive ads.
- However, their research is experimental, not observational.
- Negative ads make voters feel less efficacious; feel like they have less power over the political process.
- **Boomerang Effect**: Targeted candidate’s favorability declined but so does the sponsor of the ad.
- Called “plague-on-both-your-houses” effect where voters lose interest in election because they dislike both candidates so much.
Effects of Negative Ads

▶ Increase in Interest and Participation: Freeman and Goldstein find negativity actually increases the chance that individuals will turn out to vote.
Effects of Negative Ads

- Increase in Interest and Participation: Freeman and Goldstein find negativity actually increases the chance that individuals will turn out to vote
- Negative ads more likely to focus on issues; positive ads more on biography and fluff
Effects of Negative Ads

- Increase in Interest and Participation: Freeman and Goldstein find negativity actually increases the chance that individuals will turn out to vote.
- Negative ads more likely to focus on issues; positive ads more on biography and fluff.
- Negative ads are thus more informative; may offer citizens more helpful information.
Effects of Negative Ads

▶ Increase in Interest and Participation: Freeman and Goldstein find negativity actually increases the chance that individuals will turn out to vote

▶ Negative ads more likely to focus on issues; positive ads more on biography and fluff

▶ Negative ads are thus more informative; may offer citizens more helpful information

▶ Negativity is simply more interesting than positivity – people find negativity more helpful in making decisions and more helpful in organizing information – “negativity bias”
Effects of Negative Ads

- Increase in Interest and Participation: Freeman and Goldstein find negativity actually increases the chance that individuals will turn out to vote.
- Negative ads more likely to focus on issues; positive ads more on biography and fluff.
- Negative ads are thus more informative; may offer citizens more helpful information.
- Negativity is simply more interesting than positivity – people find negativity more helpful in making decisions and more helpful in organizing information – “negativity bias”.
- Higher exposure to negative ads leads people to make candidate choices more quickly and to have more certainty in their choice – thus then people are more likely to turn out to vote.
Direct Mail

- Some media markets, like LA and NYC, so expensive, candidates/campaigns use direct mail.
Direct Mail

- Some media markets, like LA and NYC, so expensive, candidates/campaigns use direct mail.
- Most extensive form of advertising in congressional and other localized campaigns.
Some media markets, like LA and NYC, so expensive, candidates/campaigns use direct mail.

Most extensive form of advertising in congressional and other localized campaigns.

Over 1 Billion dollars on direct mail advertising in 2008.
Direct Mail

- Some media markets, like LA and NYC, so expensive, candidates/campaigns use direct mail.
- Most extensive form of advertising in congressional and other localized campaigns.
- Over 1 Billion dollars on direct mail advertising in 2008.
- Mail consultants affiliated with either party.
Direct Mail

- Some media markets, like LA and NYC, so expensive, candidates/campaigns use direct mail.
- Most extensive form of advertising in congressional and other localized campaigns.
- Over 1 Billion dollars on direct mail advertising in 2008.
- Mail consultants affiliated with either party.
- Slate mail: multiple candidates on same advertising piece. Most economical form of advertising.
Herman Cain: What?

► Smoking
Herman Cain: What?

- Smoking
- Yellow Flowers