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MEDIUM-SAME VERSUS MEDIUM-DIFFERENT INOCULATION AGAINST CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL STEALTH GROUP SPONSORED POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING

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MEDIUM-SAME VERSUS MEDIUM-DIFFERENT INOCULATION AGAINST CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL STEALTH GROUP SPONSORED POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

The 2008 presidential campaign contextualized this study of soft-money sponsored political spot negative advertising, its content, its influence, inoculation's blanket of protection against it and print versus video media effects. The functional theory of campaign discourse (Benoit, 2006) guided a content analysis of over 300 televised presidential advertisements. Chi-square analyses showed that political stealth groups (PSGs, like 527 and 501c) were more negative and more personal than FEC-compliant groups, like candidates, political parties and PACs. Students ($N = 354$) at a small mid-western university participated in a three-phase experimental study examining the influence of extreme attack advertising (control, candidate sponsor, political stealth group sponsor), inoculation against negative advertising (control, generic, and candidate specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on campaign-related attitudinal, emotional and behavioral outcomes. The inoculation process and the relative processes of video versus print-mediated influence were also examined. Various data analytic strategies (e.g., factorial ANOVA's, *t*-tests, regressions and mediation analyses) answered 20 multi-part hypotheses and 8 multi-part research questions. Results showed that video-mediated political attacks exercised influence through source factors; video-mediated generic inoculations worked against all political attacks; and print inoculation worked better against print attacks than video attacks. Results are discussed within the context of political campaigns, inoculation theory (McGuire, 1970; Pfau, 1997) and medium theory's (Meyrowitz, 1994) claim that media are epistemic (McLuhan, 1967).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: POLITICAL STEALTH GROUPS

Until recently, American political communication was dominated by two clearly identifiable and relatively stable political parties (Patterson, 2002). Now, the Democratic and the Republican voices are frequently overwhelmed by independent partisans on both the left and the right. Either directly or indirectly, they purport to speak for or against the *all too human* candidates who can affect their interests. In short, American political communication is multi-vocal, multi-mediated, loud, and sometimes, it is even rude. It emanates from radio personalities, television talk show hosts, editorialists, bloggers, producers of You Tube videos, political action committees, non-profit corporations (501c), labor unions, shadowy campaign organizations (527), political parties and now, a controversial Supreme Court decision (i.e., *FEC v Citizens United*) has constitutionally empowered for-profit corporations and labor unions to bet their entire treasuries on campaign communication (Waldman, 2010). Candidates and their surrogates must compete in this unpredictable and cacophonous communication environment. Not only must they defend against unforeseen attacks, they must be prepared to accept responsibility for erroneous or uncivil attacks launched on their behalf. The 2008 presidential election provided a vivid illustration of America's bifurcated political communication milieu.

This study described and compared the functional content of the 2008 televised presidential adverting, which emanated from three categories of sponsor: the candidates' campaigns, Federal Election Commission (FEC) approved organizations and political stealth groups (PSG). PSGs were the principal reference point of this investigation. In

contrast to FEC-approved organizations, PSGs are front-groups and are not subject to federal campaign finance laws. There are two types of PSGs. The first are political action committees (527 PACs or 527s) that register with the IRS but do not submit to FEC regulation. The second are non-profit corporations (501c) that use their tax-exempt status and ostensible political mission to engage in substantial federal electioneering.

Using actual PSG-sponsored ads from the 2008 presidential general election, this dissertation experimentally tested their influence on perceptions of the targeted candidate, sponsor and implied beneficiary. This effort further evaluated the capacity of an inoculation message strategy to obviate the influence of those attacks (McGuire, 1970; Pfau, 1988). Finally, this investigation approximated the multi-mediated nature of contemporary political communication by testing both print and video-mediated attack advertisements. To enhance mundane realism, the ads were embedded within entertaining content, and they were presented to participants during the height of the 2008 presidential general election campaign.

Contemporary presidential campaigns are inherently dynamic and complicated. PSGs intensify this complexity. This dissertation appealed to both extant findings and theoretical logic to describe, explain and predict the influence of extreme PSG-initiated political attack ads aired during the 2008 presidential contest. The first chapter introduces and describes the groups at the center of this effort – political stealth groups or PSGs.

Political Stealth Groups

Researchers have not paid sufficient attention to the growing influence of uncoordinated 527 and 501c political interest groups. They collect soft money, conceal their contributor's identity and hide their highly partisan intentions behind non-partisan

sounding names, like Advancing Wisconsin Incorporated (D-501c), Let Freedom Ring (R-501c), America Votes (D-527) and American Solutions for Winning the Future (R-527). Some have called 527 and 501c groups the stealth front groups of political campaigns (Public Citizen, 2004b, p. 4). Their principal purpose is to influence elections by circumventing the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act's (BCRA) stated intention to banish soft money from federal electioneering (Public Citizen, 2002). The BCRA was passed in 2002, and by the 2004 mid-term elections, 527 groups increased their spending by more than 150%, from $151 million in 2000 (Malcomb, Malbin, Weissman & Russell, 2005) to about $400 million in 2004 (Weissman, 2009). Groups like MoveOn.org and *Swift Boat Veterans and POW's for Truth* (*SBVT*) played an influential role and even changed the vernacular of America's presidential politics (Morain, 2007). For example, the term "swift boating" has earned entry into Wikipedia.com (2008), where it is defined as, "a strong pejorative description of some kind of attack that the speaker considers unfair or untrue—for example, an *ad hominem* attack or a smear campaign" (¶ 1). The new reality in federal elections includes these shadowy and unaccountable groups (Schouten, 2007). Charles Lewis, of the Center for Public Integrity, lamented that, "hit-and-run 527 committees have been operating on the fringes of American politics….but now, they have clearly arrived as a significant force in our electoral process" (in Janofsky, 2004, p. 31).

Experts predicted that, in the 2008 presidential contest, PSGs would be more pervasive and influential than they were in 2004 (Morain, 2007; Public Citizen, 2007). In fact, the candidates stated opposition to 527 groups and regulatory changes limited their presence, but PSG's did not go away (Weissman, 2009). Whereas the PSG *de jour* in

2004 was the 527 group, the PSG of 2008 was the 501c. Weissman (2009) reported that 527's reduced their spending from $426 million in 2004 to $200 million in 2008. Non-profit 501c groups made up for the difference. They increased their spending from $60 million in 2004 to about $200 million in 2008. Although it was spread across the entire spectrum of federal elections, political stealth groups spent more than $400 million in 2008. Considering that presidential candidates who accept public financing cannot legally spend more than $134.2 on their entire general election campaign, the $400 million spent by shadowy independent groups is astounding. In other words, the total general election spending by PSG groups in 2008 was almost twice as much as the two publically financed presidential campaigns. In light of these numbers, Democratic candidate Obama's decision to opt of public financing spending limits was prescient. He explained the unprecedented move by "citing the specter of attacks from independent groups on the right" (Luo & Zelany, 2008, p. A1). It is simply imprudent for the academic community to ignore the growing role of political stealth groups, and it behooves political communication researchers to investigate their unique influence on presidential politics and democratic attitudes.

The 527 and 501c groups that constitute America's political stealth groups are governed and defined by those sections of the IRS tax code for which they are named. Under federal tax law, the political activities of such groups are limited to legislative lobbying and issue advocacy. In reality, 527 and 501c groups circumvent their legal mandate by indirectly advocating for the election or defeat of federal election candidates. Their indirect and uncoordinated activities distinguish them from formal political action committees (PAC's), candidates and other agents of federal campaign influence, which

are both governed by federal campaign finance law and legally permitted to electioneer with and for federal election candidates.

Groups organized under section 527 of the IRS tax code are tax-exempt organizations that "actively influence elections and policy debates at all levels of government" (Center for Public Integrity, 2007b, ¶ 1). Two kinds of groups use the 527 designation: political action committees (PACs) and issue advocacy groups. PACs are legally empowered to engage in electioneering communications, which was defined by the Supreme Court (i.e., *Buckley v. Valeo*, 1976) as any campaign material that includes one or more of eight phrases: "vote for", "elect", "support", "cast your ballot for", "Smith for Congress", "vote against", "defeat" and/or "reject" (in Public Citizen, 2004a). Issue advocacy groups, on the other hand, are legally prohibited from engaging in electioneering communications. Unlike candidate committees and PACs, who campaign for candidates in federal elections, 527 issue advocacy groups are not required to register with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). Because PACs adhere to similar financial disclosure and contribution restrictions as federal candidates, they are permitted to coordinate their activities with federal election campaigns. For this reason, PACs are also referred to as coordinated interest groups (see Franz, Freedman, Goldstein, & Ridout, 2008). In contrast, 527 issue advocacy groups are legally prohibited from coordinating their efforts with any candidate or nominee for federal office. Thus, they are referred to as uncoordinated groups. As long as 527 issue advocacy groups avoid electioneering communications, they are neither required to register with the FEC nor must they abide by federal campaign finance laws.

Unlike coordinated and FEC-approved PACs, uncoordinated issue groups legally collect unlimited soft money donations, which are unregulated and can come from corporations, unions, individuals and even foreign governments. The only substantial limitation on 527 contributions is a requirement that such groups file regular financial reports with the IRS. Such reports must include contribution amounts, contributors and expenditures, but 527 groups are not required to identify those issues, individuals or the organizations for which they advocate.

Groups organized under section 501c of the IRS tax code are similar but not identical to 527's. They too can legally collect unlimited amounts of soft money. Unlike 527's, 501c groups must qualify for their status by demonstrating a dedication to one of five broadly defined constituencies: 501c 4 (social welfare groups); 501c 5 (labor organizations); 501c 6 (business leagues); 501c 7 (social clubs); and 501c 8 (fraternal organizations). Perhaps the most unique feature of 501c groups is their freedom from any disclosure requirements, which makes 501c groups the "last 'black hole' in public disclosure of political financial activity" (Public Citizen, n.d., ¶ 27).

As long as their political activities are manifestly relevant to their organizational mission, 501c groups can legally engage in unlimited legislative lobbying and substantial electioneering activities. However, the IRS does not tax-exempt their electioneering activities and those efforts cannot be the primary purpose of a 501c's organizational activities. In other words, 501c sponsored electioneering activity must directly contribute to the tax-defined mission of the organization. Like 527's, 501c's are legally prohibited from coordinating their activities with federal candidates or political parties, but they can advocate for candidates within the context of their defined issue focus.

The need to circumvent the BCRA's soft money ban, substantially contributed to the rise of uncoordinated 527 and 501c groups (Andres, 2006). During the pre-BCRA era, soft money flowed freely into elections through the political parties. Although that money was legally dedicated for "party building" activities, it often financed "issue" ads that clearly benefited individual candidates. Before the BRCA, "more than half of the money raised in 2000 came from 800 donors, each contributing a minimum of $120,000" (Rosen, 2007, p. 11). The presence of soft money fostered the perception of corruption by federal politicians. The BCRA's soft money ban sought to correct that perception. For individuals, the law limited contributions: "$2,000 to a federal candidate per election, $5,000 to a political action committee per year, and up to $25,000 to a national political party per year" (Public Citizen, 2004b). By requiring political parties and candidates to collect money from individual donors, the BCRA facilitated stronger connections between citizens and the political process (Rosen, 2007). As of the 2004 presidential election, the law's benefits had not been fully realized. IRS designated 501c and 527 groups became the new means of injecting soft money into federal election (Potter, 2006). When employed for their legitimate purpose of advocating on behalf of their own special interests, 501c and 527 groups serve a legally defined function. However, 501c and 527 that inject the anonymous voices of their donors into political campaigns are political stealth groups (PSGs).

501c and 527 groups collect and use soft money to influence federal elections. They do this by adhering to the letter of campaign finance law, but not to its spirit. In other words, they use unregulated funds to air "issue ads" that directly or indirectly impugn the character or policy positions of active federal candidates (Mooney, 2008).;

however, when these groups clearly step outside their legally sanctioned mandate, the FEC is empowered to classify them as formal PAC, which means they must adhere to the strict contribution, expenditure and disclosure requirements under the Federal Elections Campaign Act of 1971 (FECA), as amended by the BCRA of 2002. The FECA is the official antecedent of modern campaign finance law. Although initially mandated by Congress, much of the campaign finance law has been substantially defined by legal jurisprudence. This is especially true for interest groups and their activities.

In *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), the Supreme Court ruled that PACs, under the FECA, include "organizations 'that are under the control of a candidate for the major purpose of which is the nomination or election of a candidate" (Public Citizen, 2004, p. 4). By avoiding the appearance of coordinating with a federal candidate's campaign, 501c's and 527s successfully avoid FEC oversight and campaign finance restrictions. In other words, uncoordinated interest groups "gain political committee status under tax law, while avoiding regulation under federal election law" (Public Citizen, 2005, ¶ 11).

501c and 527's as Political Stealth Groups

Although uncoordinated 527 and 501c interest groups are prohibited from advocating for or against federal candidates, they are "quite free to portray federal candidates in such a way that there is little doubt as to the message" (¶ 6). The largest single expenditure of most 527 groups and for some 501c groups is for broadcast issue advocacy advertising (Claybrook, 2002), which is to say that the primary function of many uncoordinated interest groups is to air "political issue-related criticisms of public officials" (Public Citizen, 2004b, p. 10). Uncoordinated groups are free to attack, defend or otherwise depict federal candidates, so long as those depictions avoid the narrowly

defined definition of "electioneering expenditures", which is defined, in *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), as "funds used for communications that expressly advocate the election or defeat of a federal candidate" (in Federal Election Commission, 2004). *Buckley* illustrated its definition of express advocacy with what has become known as the eight "magic words" or definitive signs of express advocacy: "vote for", "elect", "support", "cast your ballot for", "Smith for Congress", "vote against", "defeat" and/or "reject" (Public Citizen, 2004a). As long as 501c and 527 advertisements avoid the superficial (e.g., the "magic word") language of candidate advocacy, they also avoid the legal mandates that otherwise govern "express advocacy" and electioneering activities. Issue advertising is the unique hallmark of 501c and 527 electoral advocates. These ads "may not instruct you to vote for or against a specific candidate, but often…will try to shape your opinion of a political candidate or party in the context of a specific issue" (opensecrets.org, 2007, ¶ 1).

Uncoordinated 501c and 527 interest groups aptly conceal the details of their contributors and expenditures. Specifically, 501c groups use legal cover to maintain an almost total silence about their financial activities, and the IRS financial disclosure system, which governs 527 interest groups, is hopelessly complex, inefficient and incomplete (Public Citizen, n.d.). Even if one were able to access a total accounting for any single 527 interest group, the report(s) would not reveal the beneficiaries of the group's partisan activities. When combined with their ability to collect unlimited funds, the ability of 501c and 527s to conceal their donors empowers them to conceal their intentions.

Innocuous and even noble sounding names further empower 501c and 527 political stealth groups to obscure their true agendas. The iconic illustration of these new PSGs was the 527-designted group known as the *Swift Boat Veterans and POW's for Truth* (*SBVT*). The *SBVT* donors were Republican partisans from Texas who were also large contributors to the Bush campaign. Despite the group's stated intention to pursue *truth*, their actual function was to convey a partisan history of Democrat John Kerry as unfit to be commander in chief (see Factcheck.org, 2004). Their claim was based on a re-reading of Kerry's military decorations and political opposition to the Vietnam War. Clearly, the *SBVT*'s broadly defined goal of advancing truth was disingenuous, especially since they avoided any commentary on the Republican presidential candidate Vietnam-era military service, which was equally controversial. At the very least, they should have investigated and cleared President Bush's record. Despite their innocuous moniker, the *SBVT* and groups like them have executed some of the most effective and partisan campaigns in recent American presidential elections (Center for Public Integrity, 2007a; West, 2004).

Armed with the unique power to collect and spend soft money, PSG spending exploded in the 2004 presidential election (Center for Public Integrity, 2007a; Public Citizen, 2005). From 2002 to 2004, the number of 527 groups increased by 63% (Public Citizen, 2005). Democratic-oriented 527 organizations increased their spending by $220 million, while Republican-oriented 527 organizations increased spending by $40 million (Public Citizen, 2005). The Center for Public Integrity (2007) reported that, "election 2004 was the first time they [527's] played a major role, perhaps a decisive role, in determining the outcome of a presidential election" (¶ 2). In 2004, 527's raised $434

million; over half (i.e., $246 million) was spent on behalf of presidential candidates. In fact, during the final month of the 2004 presidential campaign, 527 groups spent more than $40 million on broadcast "issue" advertising alone (Public Citizen, 2005). Some of the most memorable and effective political advertisements of 2004 were ostensible "issue" ads paid for by 527 PSGs.

The *SBVT*'s series of attacks on John Kerry's Vietnam narrative began with a seemingly innocuous press release. On May 4, 2004, a group of Vietnam-era veterans staged a press conference in which they "went thermonuclear on the candidate…calling him a vain, indecisive, cowardly 'loose cannon' who didn't deserve his medal and went to Vietnam so he could run for office" (Kennedy, 2004, ¶ 1). On July 1, 2004, the *SBVT* issued a press release announcing their status as a "special purpose" or 527 political action committee. Their release charged that John Kerry lacked "judgment, truthfulness, reliability, loyalty and trust – all absolute tenets of command" (Swift Vets and POW's for Truth, 2004, ¶ 4). In short, the *SBVT* accused John Kerry of being *Unfit for Command*, which was the title of a book written by John O'Neill – a prominent member of the group. Throughout the spring and early summer of 2004, the *SBVT* and their charges were mostly ignored; however, after the Democratic convention, the *SBVT* captured the nation's attention with the first of a series of televised attack advertisements that questioned the honor of John Kerry's military service in the Vietnam War.

The *SBVT*'s attack ads were devastatingly effective. West (2004) reported the first *SBVT* advertisement ran a mere 739 times in seven markets, meaning only 2.1% of Americans could have seen it; however, by mid-September, 66% of voters had heard of the *SBVT*, and 33% believed their central claim that Kerry was lying about his record in

Vietnam. Edsall and Grimaldi (2004) observed that the *SBVT* initial ad, which cost a mere $546,000, "was exceptionally cost-effective: most voters learned about it through free media coverage in mainstream media and talk radio" (p. A01). After the Democratic convention, which was held from July 26 to July 29, it would have been typical for John Kerry's approval ratings to improve. Instead, they declined and continued to decline through August. Zogby (in PollingReport.com, 2005) observed that, at the time of the Democratic convention, Kerry led Bush by 4% on vote preference. Thirty days later, that lead was reversed. Bush overcame Kerry and was ahead by 3% on voter preference. Many attributed the reversal to the *SBVT*'s effective advertising and Kerry's mishandling of their charges (Freedman, Frantz, & Goldstein, 2004).

Even if the attack ads did not directly affect Kerry's public approval ratings, the group's dominance of the political agenda kept the Democratic candidate off message and on the defensive for over six weeks of the post-convention campaign (Wilgoren, 2004). One post-election poll found that nearly 75% of respondents recalled the *SBVT* attack advertisements; another poll found that, among crucial swing state voters, the attacks were the second most memorable political spots of 2004 (in Birnbaum & Edsall, 2004). West (2004) called the *SBVT* campaign against John Kerry one of the most effective efforts in presidential electoral history, but others claimed that another PSG-sponsored ad was the most important of 2004.

Progress for America Voter Fund (*PAVF*) produced *Ashley's Story*, which was an emotional spot featuring an exchange between President George W. Bush and 14-year-old Ashley Faulknerm, whose mother was murdered in the 911 attacks on the World Trade Center. The ad showed a still photo of Bush embracing Ashley. Following the still

was an audiovisual close up of the girl, who gratefully observed that, President Bush "is the most powerful man in the world and all he wants to do is make sure I'm safe…that I'm OK". The ad concluded with Ashley's father testifying that, "what I saw is what I want to see…in the heart and in the soul of the man who sits in the highest elected office in our country". *Ashley's Story* represented the largest single ad buy of the 2004 presidential campaign. At a cost of $14.2 million, it aired throughout October in nine battleground states, including Florida and Ohio (Keen & Memmot, 2004). Bob Shrum credited *Ashley's Story* with Bush's victory in Ohio (Green, 2005). A poll conducted by Public Opinion Strategies in (2004) found that, in Florida and Ohio, "Bush won voters who saw the *Ashley's Story* ad by 10-point and 7-point margins respectively. Kerry won voters in these crucial states who did not see this ad" (¶ 4).

Although the *PAVF* and the *SBVT* were among the most visible 527's of 2004, they represented only a fraction the overall PSG activity. PSGs deluged the presidential race with partisan images, messages and attacks. In terms of revenue collected and spent, *America Coming Together* (*ACT*) was the largest 527 PSG (Janofsky, 2004). The pro-Democrat group spent $78 million in support of Democratic candidates and causes (opensecrets.org, 2008a). *ACT*'s efforts on behalf of John Kerry included a massive voter mobilization effort, which even included audiovisual issue advertisements delivered directly to voters via personal digital assistants (Federal Election Commission, 2007a). Those issue spots attacked George W. Bush's record on health care, jobs and the Iraq War. The other major Democratic 527 PSG was the *Media Fund*, which spent $58 million to defeat George W. Bush (opensecrets.org, 2008b). The *Media Fund* attacked Bush or promoted Kerry in 34 television commercials, 20 radio spots and 26 print

advertisements (Federal Election Commission, 2007b). Most of its advertisements were targeted to regions where Bush was campaigning. The attacks on Bush included the entire spectrum of 2004 campaign issues, including corruption, the economy, health care and the environment to name only a few (opensecrets.org, 2008b).

Prosecution of PSGs

The FEC finally responded to the upsurge in uncoordinated political interest group activity by prosecuting at least 11 organizations for failing to register as formal PACs (Federal Election Commission, 2007b). Fines were imposed on the most prominent 527 PSGs of the 2004 presidential campaign, including the *Media Fund* for $580,000; the *SBVT* for $630,000; *PAVF* for $750,000; and *Americans Coming Together* for $775,000. In each case, the FEC demonstrated that the groups engaged in federal electioneering and express advocacy, which invalidated their non-profit status and placed them under the rubric of federal campaign finance law. Upon being defined as a federal PACs, the groups were indicted for violations of the BCRA, but in the end, each group settled their cases by paying fines, which were a fraction of their illegal expenditures. The fines were simply too little and too late. Many argued that this lax and late enforcement failed to deter the formation and partisan use of PSGs ("FEC's Reluctant," 2006). Rather than implementing broad regulations, the FEC opted to "rely on a case-by-case adjudication of whether the 527's were so immersed in federal campaigns that they had to comply with campaign finance laws" (p. A22).

The FEC's case-by-case approach fails on two levels. First, the process is too slow. While the 2006 mid-term elections were underway and 527's were already playing an enormous role, the FEC was still hearing cases from the 2004 presidential election. By

the time those cases were resolved (i.e., in late 2007), America was on the threshold of another presidential election in which PSGs were, once again, playing a major role (Helman, 2007; Mayer, 1969). The relatively small fines represented the second failure of the FEC's case-by-case enforcement approach. As a *Newsday* editorial ("527 Loophole," 2007) observed, the minimal fines are easily absorbed into the operating costs of the most well funded 527 groups. For example, *America Coming Together* illegally spent $100 million advocating for federal candidates in 2004, but the group's fine was only $775,000, which is less than 1% of *ACT*'s total expenses. FEC Chairmen Michael Toner opposed the case-by-case approach, but he was outvoted. Toner predicted that, "the stage is set for 527's to once again spend hundreds of millions of dollars in soft money to influence the 2006 midterms and the 2008 presidential election" in Edsall, 2006). Events validated his prediction when 527s spent more than $200 million during the 2006 midterm election cycle (opensecrets.org, 2008c). During the 2008 presidential primaries, candidates were already contending with a strong 527 PSG presence (La Ganga & Mehta, 2007; Solomon & Mosk, 2007). By November 2008, 527 PSGs spent more than $200 million on federal electioneering activities.

PSGs in 2008

With respect to PSG activity in the 2008 presidential election, the distinguishing feature was the greater role played by 501c groups (Wessman, 2009; Morain, 2007). In July 2007, the Supreme Court struck down a provision of the BCRA that forbade non-profit corporations from advertising within 30 days of a primary election and 60 days of a general election. This prohibition had limited the role of 501c non-profits in 2004, but that ruling cleared the way for a more active 501c presence in 2008. Indeed, 501c PSGs

were a logical alternative to 527 PSGs, which had faced greater regulatory and public scrutiny. Moreover, 501c PSGs are almost total immune from disclosure, as defined by the IRS tax code (Rutenberg & Kirkpatrick, 2007; Solomon & Mosk, 2007).

The opacity of 501c groups makes their impact more difficult to estimate, but their presence was already on display during the 2008 Iowa presidential caucuses. *Trust Huckabee*, ran positive "issue" ads and made phone calls on behalf of Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee ("TrustHuckabee Calling," 2007). *Trust Huckabee* was an extension of *Common Sense Issues* – a 501c organization that often blurred the line between issue and candidate advocacy in the 2008 federal election season. Another important 501c group was *The Foundation for a Secure and Prosperous America*. Supporters of John McCain financed the group, which ran televised "issue" ads for him in South Carolina. Rutenberg and Kirkpatrick (2007) reported that *The Foundation for a Secure America* merely represented the "first trickle in a flood of hundreds of millions of dollars that are expected to pour from all sides into groups reminiscent of Swift Boat Veterans for Truth of 2004, built to influence voting outside of campaign finance limitations" (p. A1). Solomon and Mosk (2007) observed that 501c groups were poised to "encroach on turf that has been dominated by political parties, political action committees and, in the past few elections, by independent political groups created under section 527 of the tax code" (p. A01). Using a variety of direct and indirect sources, Weissman (2004) estimated that 501c PSGs spent more than $200 million in 2008. The prognostications of commentators and campaign professionals were validated.

Despite the growing role of 501c groups, 527's resuscitated their shadowy influence in 2008. By November, 2007, 527's raised $76 million, which was $16 million

more than at the same time during 2006 (Morain, 2007). That money made its presence felt as early as the January, 2008 Iowa caucuses. The 527 *Club for Growth* spent hundreds of thousands on ads attacking Huckabee's record on taxes (Solomon & Mosk, 2007, p. A01). *Victim's Voice* – another 527—advocated against Huckabee. In the 2008 South Carolina primary, *Victim's Voice* aired an emotional "issue" ad featuring the mother of a woman who was raped and killed by a prisoner who was paroled while Huckabee was the Republican governor of Arkansas.

Stop Her Now was a 527 formed with the express intention of defeating the "radical ideas of Hillary Clinton". The defining issue of *Stop Here Now* was narrowly tailored to whatever Hillary Clinton was advocating at the moment. On the *Stop Her Now* (n.d.) web page, the 527 group unashamedly flaunted its intention to "finance a massive media blitz and public education campaign….before Hillary and Bill Clinton are able to pull the wool over America's eyes once again" (¶ 9-10). The site's most prominent feature was a regularly updated satirical depiction of Hillary Clinton, entitled *The Hillary Show*. *The Hillary Show* had a double meaning. On the one hand, it was a *show* that featured Senator Hillary Clinton as the moderator. On the other hand, it purported to *show* the American people the real Hillary Clinton. *The Hillary Show* re-presented Senator Clinton as a bored host who regularly insulted her guests and who only got excited when discussing herself or her unfettered ambition to impose a caricatured brand of liberalism on the American people. The most interesting and perhaps most disturbing feature of *The Hillary Show* was the painting of Hillary's teeth as sharp and menacing fangs. The image suggested that Senator Clinton was something other than human and perhaps, even demonic. Most reasonable observers of political discourse would have

agreed that *The Hillary Show's* pseudo-speciation of Hillary Clinton degraded both democratic discourse and the potential for bipartisan cooperation, which is necessary for effective governance. In fact, the extreme and uncivil negativity of the *Stop Hillary Now* Internet site is typical of PSG campaigning. This paper claims and demonstrates that PSG-sponsored negativity is both more common and more extreme than the negativity sponsored by other campaign organizations.

PSGs are simply less accountable for their outrageous levels of negativity. Candidates and FEC-approved organizations are punished for extreme negativity. Incivility is generally unpopular. Furthermore, it carries the risk of being perceived as nasty or negative. Not incidentally, that risk generally checks the most outrageous expressions of incivility. Uncivil candidates may lose public support. Even worse, the public may transfer their support to an opponent. Uncivil political parties and other FEC-approved groups take the same risk as candidates. Under normal circumstances, the public's potential outrage checks the level of negativity in political campaigns, but the financers of PSGs can circumvent that outrage. If a group's reputation becomes tarnished, they can easily dissolve the group and transfer their millions to a fresh and completely new organization. The mobility and secrecy of PSG financers shields both them and their agenda from the consequences of perpetuating extreme one-sided and personal attacks. This power to conceal one's donors means even a highly attentive public is powerless to identify and punish the most corrosive and dirtiest of campaigners. PSGs are the *Ring of Gyges* (i.e., ring of invisibility) for motivated and nefarious political contributors. By granting invisibility to their donors, PSGs can use soft money to corrupt politics and poison the discourse with extreme negativity.

PSGs demonstrably perpetuate greater levels of political negativity than other campaign advocates. Franz and colleague's (2008) content analysis of every political advertisement aired in 2000 and 2004 revealed that uncoordinated interest groups (e.g., 527 and 501c PSGs) sponsored more negativity than the political parties, candidates and coordinated political interest groups. In 2000, uncoordinated interest groups aired 75,304 ads. Seventy percent of those ads were pure attacks, meaning they focused exclusively on disparaging information about the targeted candidate. Another 5% contained some negative information about the targeted candidate, but only 25% of uncoordinated interest group advertisements were purely positive. Uncoordinated interests groups, in the 2000 presidential campaign, aired almost 60,000 purely or partial attack advertisements. In 2004 and after the BCRA, the situation worsened. The total number of uncoordinated interest-group sponsored advertisements increased by more than 100% to 160,743, and the proportion of pure attack advertisements increased by 3%, from 70% to 73%. Between 2000 and 2004, the proportion of partial attack advertisements increased by more than 9%: 5% in 2000 to 14% in 2004. Ultimately, the uncoordinated interest groups of 2004 aired about 120,000 pure attack advertisements, 23,000 partial attack advertisements and only about 20,000 positive advertisements. In other words, they aired more pure attack advertisements in 2004 than all of the spots they aired in 2000. Andres (2006) observed that 527 PSGs, like *MoveOn.org* and the *SBVT*, perpetrated the "most vicious and negative" attacks of 2004 (p. A21). He further warned that the lack of accountability for PSGs means the 2008 presidential race would witness another "flood of nasty ads…that would transform electoral discourse into a tabloid freak show" (Andres, 2007, p. A21). In keeping with this trend, it was reasonable to posit that the

anonymity of ad sponsorship is associated with greater levels of extreme negativity. Therefore, this study posited the following hypotheses regarding 2008 political advertising content.

H1a: PSG-sponsored political advertising is more negative than candidate-sponsored political advertising.

H1b: PSG-sponsored political advertising is more negative than FEC-sanctioned political advertising.

H2a: Candidate-sponsored political attack advertising is more policy focused than character focused.

H2b: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising is more character focused than policy focused.

RQ1: Is FEC-sanctioned political attack advertising more policy focused than character focused?

CHAPTER II

ATTACK ADVERTISING EFFECTS

Any investigation of political attack advertising effects should be guided by theory and the precedents set by previous research. Dubin (1978) reasoned that "theories…satisfy a very human 'need' to order the experienced world" (p. 7). Theory is particularly useful to the extent it empowers the theorist to explain and predict the status of units within specified boundaries. Unfortunately, a unified theoretical framework has not guided the existing political advertising effects literature. Thus, this investigation of PSG-sponsored attack advertising must select a particular perspective with which to guide its efforts and interpret the significance of its results. This chapter articulates that perspective. It relies on a combination of insights gleaned from the media effects and social influence literatures (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Fazio & Zanna, 1978b, 1981; Laswell, 1948; McGuire, 1985; Petty, Priester, & Brinol, 2002; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). Like McGuire's communication matrix model (McGuire, 1985), this dissertation organizes its hypotheses according to Laswell's (1948) expectation that media effects are antecedent in source, message, channel and receiver variables. With respect to both candidate and PSG-sponsored political attack advertising, this study relates those inputs to an attitude construct that consists of four dimensions: cognitive, affective, behavioral (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960) and strength (Fazio & Zanna, 1981).

Attack Advertising Effects

Unfortunately, the existing attack advertising literature offers very little theoretical or empirical coherence across studies. Generally speaking, the findings are

motley collection of often contradictory and incomplete results. After conducting a meta-analysis of 53 studies and 117 findings, Lau and Pomper (2004) concluded that "for every research finding about the effectiveness of negative advertising, there is an equal and opposite research finding" (p. 19). A substantial number of studies show exposure to attack ads predicts less support for the target (Kaid & Boydston, 1987; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998; Tinkham & Weaver-Lariscy, 1990), but another body of findings shows attacks predict reduced support for the sponsor of the message (Basil, Schooler, & Reeves, 1991; Hill, 1989; Matthews & Dietz-Uhler, 1998; Meirick, 2002; Merrittt, 1984; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, Christ, & Caywood, 1991). Still other research shows attacks enhance support for the sponsor (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Hitchon, Chang, & Harris, 1997; K.F. Kahn & Geer, 1994; Kaid, 1997; Kaid, Chanslor, & Hovind, 1992; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Tinkham & Weaver-Lariscy, 1990). Attack advertising's impact on democratic mobilization is also uncertain. The demobilization hypothesis posits attack advertising discourages voters from participating in the political process. Several studies have validated the hypothesis (Allen & Burrell, 2002; Ansolabehere, Iyengar, & Simon, 1999; Ansolabehere, Iyengar, Simon, & Valentino, 1994b; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999), but an approximately equal number of studies have rejected it (Garramone, Atkin, Pinkleton, & Cole, 1990; Goldstein & Freedman, 2002; Matthews & Dietz-Uhler, 1998; Pinkleton, 2002). And, yet another body of research actually validates a *mobilization* hypothesis, which predicts a positive relationship between exposure to attack advertising and political participation (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Finkel & Geer, 1998; Franz, et al., 2008; Pinkleton, 1991; Wattenberg & Brians, 1999). Taken together, these

findings leave both the interested researcher and the ambitious practitioner with more questions than answers.

Incoherence in the political advertising effects literature can be interpreted either pessimistically or optimistically. The pessimistic interpretation is that any effort to explain or predict the general effect of attack advertising effects is impossible. The optimistic conclusion is that general principles exist but remain concealed within an undiscovered constellation of parsimonious moderating and mediating variables. This dissertation presumes the optimistic conclusion. It strives to use mass communication and social influence theory to demonstrate and explain attack advertising's influence (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; Laswell, 1948; McGuire, 1969; McLeod & Reeves, 1980; Petty & Wegener, 1998).

The Social Influence of Political Attack Advertising

More than half a century of social influence theory and mass communication research has produced several useful findings regarding mass media effects. Perhaps the most important is that mass communicated persuasion is highly conditioned by source, message, channel and receiver variables (Laswell, 1948; McGuire, 1985). The earliest investigations of mass communicated influence often labored under the erroneous presumption that effects are direct (McDonald, 2004). Nevertheless, subsequent research had shown hat mass media effects are both highly conditioned (McLeod & Reeves, 1980) and frequently *mediated* by the audience's attitude toward the object featured in the mediated message (Petty & Wegener, 1998). Research has further demonstrated that attitudes consist of cognitive, affective, behavioral (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960) and strength-related dimensions (Eagly & Chaiken,

1998; Krosnick, Boninger, Chuang, Berent, & Carnot, 1993). Political campaign advertising presents information that is designed to influence one's attitude toward political objects, like candidates and policies. When an audience's thoughts, feelings and behaviors are changed or reinforced by an attack advertisement, it is effective. When the changed or reinforced attitude is also strengthened, the effect is deep and lasting (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Krosnick, et al., 1993). By studying attack advertising with the context of source, receiver channel, message and a dimensionalized conception of attitude, this dissertation hopes to provide a valid record of effects that will found a heuristic program of research that edifies PSG-sponsored advertising.

During the early part of the 20th Century, most believed mass communication was direct, uniform and powerful. However, attempts to empirically demonstrate direct effects were frustrated by inconsistent findings. For example, the Payne Fund Studies of movie influence found there is "no simple cause-and-effect relationship….motion picture influence is specific for a given child and a given movie and that the same movie may influence different children in opposite directions" (in McDonald, 2004, p. 186). Despite the Payne Funds nuanced findings, the hypodermic model was reinforced by popular anecdotes. For example, the popular myth of direct effects was reinforced by the perceived widespread panic associated with Orson Well's realistic reading of *The War of the Worlds* (Petty, et al., 2002). Yet, even the "*War of the Worlds* effect" was moderated. Cantril's (in McDonald, 2004) study revealed that, while some of the panic was real, those who were more suggestible panicked at a much greater rate than who were less suggestible.

Eventually, popular myth and wishful thinking accepted that media effects are complicated. Studies of political communication were central to debunking the direct effects model of mass communicated influence (see Kaid, 1981). Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee (1954) demonstrated that mass political communication effects are overwhelmed by one's social situation. Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960) demonstrated that mass political communication effects are highly conditioned by one's psychological predispositions. Both studies (Berelson, et al., 1954; Campbell, et al., 1960) were important illustrations of mass communication's conditional influence.

Mass media effects are the product of a sometimes complicated interaction between at least four inputs: source, message, channel and receiver (Laswell, 1948; McGuire, 1985). In the formulation of his communication matrix model, McGuire (1985) added context; however, this dissertation is not concerned with context. Nevertheless, the other four inputs are particularly useful for organizing and understanding attack advertising effects. Research shows that source (Garramone, 1985; Garramone & Smith, 1984; Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002), message (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005), channel (Andreoli & Worchel, 1978) and receiver (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Franz, et al., 2008) are substantial predictors of attack advertising's influence. In one form or another, these conditioning variables have informed several persuasion models, including the cognitive response model (Greenwald, 1968), the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Wegener, 1998) and of course, the communication matrix model (McGuire, 1985).

McGuire's (1985) communication matrix model posits that the process of persuasion consists of both inputs (i.e., independent variables) and outputs (i.e.,

dependent variables). Outputs include an orderly series of Guttman-like measurable outcomes that eventually culminate in yielding to a persuasive communication. In order, the steps are exposure, attention, interest, comprehension, acquisition, yielding, memory, retrieval, decision, action, reinforcement and consolidation.

Unfortunately, persuasion does not occur in the orderly fashion that McGuire (1985) predicted. For example, persuasion need not be preceded by acquisition. Greenwald (1968) demonstrated that persuasion (i.e., yielding) occurs even when messages are not retained (i.e., not acquired). Hastie and Park (1986) revealed that some attitudes are influenced online. Holders of online attitudes use new information to update their attitudes, but they do not retain the new information. Lodge, McGraw and Stroh (1989) found that political attitudes are formed online. Nisbett and Wilson (1977) concluded that most people do not comprehend their own most profound beliefs. In other words, the process of attitude change and formation is more complicated than presumed by the communication matrix model (Petty, et al., 2002).

The ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty, et al., 2002; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Petty, Wegener, Fabrigar, Priester, & Cacioppo, 1993) offers a useful alternative to McGuire's matrix model. The ELM posits the persuasiveness of a message is mediated by how much the receiver cognitively elaborates on the message. Message elaboration is the ELM's central construct. It consists of both motivation and ability, which independently influence message processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Messages are processed centrally (i.e., high motivation and high ability) or peripherally (low motivation and low ability). High elaboration predicts central processing, which means that issue-relevant persuasive content mediates influence. Low elaboration predicts

peripheral processing, which means issue irrelevant information mediates influence. Issue-relevant content is highly relative to the form and purpose of a persuasive communication. What has become known as the multiple roles hypothesis is derived from the theory's third postulate: "variables can affect the amount and direction of attitude change by: (A) serving as persuasive arguments, (B) serving as peripheral cues, and/or (C) affecting the extent or direction of issue and argument elaboration" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p. 307). Therefore, within one persuasive context, source may constitute issue-relevant argumentation but in another, message content might constitute the issue-relevant argumentation.

Communication media are distinct channels that may foreground the same content as either peripheral or issue relevant (Chesebro, 1984; McLuhan, 1967; Meyrowitz, 1985). For example, a video-mediated message may foreground source as issue relevant (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, Holbert, Zubric, Pasha, & Lin, 2000; Worchel, Andreoli, & Eason, 1975); whereas a print message may foreground the message as issue relevant. Petty and Wegener (1998) suggested that video's external pacing undermines processing ability, which leads to the processing of source as a peripheral cue; however, video-mediated persuasion can strengthen attitudes against counter-persuasion (Pfau, et al., 2000), which is a typical sign of central message processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Petty, et al., 1993). Therefore, this dissertation posits that, within the context of televised or video-mediated political attack advertising, source factors constitute an issue-relevant mediator of persuasion.

The ELM relies on the common definition of an attitude as, "a person's overall evaluation of persons (including oneself), objects, and issue" (Petty & Wegener, 1998, p. 323). In this context, "overall evaluation" consists of all the associations one has with a particular attitude object (Petty, et al., 1993); therefore, a non-attitude is comprised of no associations with an object, whereas a strong attitude is comprised of a large number of *strong* and, therefore, easily accessible associations with an object (see Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio, 1997). Attitude strength is evidenced by dimensions, like attitude certainty and confidence (Fazio & Zanna, 1981). Strong attitudes are more consistent with behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1978c), and they are more resistant to counterpersuasion (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Krosnick & Abelson, 1991; Krosnick, et al., 1993). However, to say an attitude is merely strong or weak ignores the quality of the associations that can be fused to an attitude object.

The ELM acknowledges a multi-dimensional attitude construct that is comprised of affective, behavioral and cognitive associations with an attitude object (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Petty & Wegener, 1998).

> In the present view, affect refers to an emotional response, a gut reaction, or sympathetic nervous activity. One can measure it by monitoring physiological responses (e.g., heart rate, galvanic skin response) or by collecting verbal reports of feelings or mood. Behavior includes overt actions, behavioral intentions and verbal statements regarding behavior. Beliefs, knowledge structures, perceptual responses, and thoughts constitute the cognitive component. (Breckler, 1984, p. 1191)

Behavior is an external activity, but as internal activities, emotion or cognition can constitute either central or peripheral processes (Petty, et al., 1993). Each dimension

expresses distinct and even contradictory evaluations of an attitude object (Breckler, 1984; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960); however, the dimensions are more likely to align, even if they are not of the same magnitude (Petty & Wegener, 1998). In other words, some attitudes might be more affectively driven than others (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). It is even conceivable that some dimensions of an attitude are formed centrally, while others are formed peripherally. The influence of attack advertising provides a useful laboratory with which to view the joint role of cognitive and affective persuasion.

Several studies illustrate attack advertising's cognitive influence. Using actual television advertisements, Pfau, Park, Holbert and Cho (2001) found that attack advertising influenced voter evaluations of candidate's character and competence. Kaid and Boydston (1987) demonstrated that exposure to newspaper and television attack ads influenced evaluations of the targeted candidate in terms of his qualifications, honesty, seriousness, sincerity and success. K.H. Kahn and Greer (1994) revealed that exposure to political attack advertising influenced evaluations of the sponsor's issue competence, trustworthiness, viability and leadership capacity. Pfau and Burgoon (1989) showed that, compared to character attack messages, issue attacks were associated with more positive global evaluations of the sponsored candidate and the position advocated in the message. Issue attacks also influenced behavioral intentions in terms of voting behavior.

Actual and intended behaviors are a common outcome in evaluations of political attack advertising effects. The most common behavioral measure is intention to vote for or against a particular candidate (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Hitcheon & Chang, 1995; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Tinkham & Weaver-Lariscy, 1990). With aggregated survey data from several congressional races, Tinkham and

Weaver-Lariscy (1990) demonstrated that an attack strategy significantly predicted electoral success, which implies that negative campaigning influences actual voting behavior. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) found that, among those of the same political party as the sponsor, exposure to attack advertisements significantly increased intention to vote for the sponsor. Shapiro and Rieger (1992) revealed that attack advertising reduced intentions to vote for the sponsor. Brader (2005, 2006) found that incidental exposure to emotional political attack television ads elicited greater intention to vote for the sponsor.

Investigations of emotional political messages and emotional outcomes represent the state of the art in political communication research (Brader, 2005, 2006; Gore, 2007; Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen, 2000; Westen, 2008). Garramone (1984) found that recall of attack advertising was associated with valenced feelings about both sponsors and targets of the ads. Meirick (2002) found that one-sided attacks were associated with fewer positive affective responses than comparative attack advertisements. Brader (2005) found that fearful advertisements were associated with greater levels of anxiety. In a separate study, Brader (2006) demonstrated that, compared to neutral attack ads, fearful attacks were associated with greater levels of affective warmth for the sponsor. Brader's (2005, 2006) experiments represent a growing acknowledgement of emotion as an important and consequential component of political attitudes (Brader, 2006; Gore, 2007; Marcus, et al., 2000; Westen, 2007). This dissertation embraces the growing recognition of emotion's role in political communication effects.

This study also employs the attitude-strength construct to better understand attack advertising's influence. Eagly and Chaiken (1998) reasoned that attitude strength "is

'something' over and above the positive versus negative character of an attitude that gives rise to its power to influence attitude-relevant responding" (pp. 286-287). The strength of an attitude reflects the level of conviction with which it is held. Measuring attitude strength as an outcome of political advertising promises to improve the ability to detect subtle differences between classes of attack advertising and various inputs (e.g., channel or sponsorship). The capacity to detect advertising effects beyond mere valence may be an especially helpful method of overcoming ceiling effects. Even if an attack advertisement does not significantly influence attitude valence, it might influence attitude strength. Krosnick and Abelson (1991) observed that "it is rare for a survey to measure the strength of…attitudes. And yet it seems patently obvious to measure the strength of those attitudes" (p. 177). With respect to attack advertising, a few studies have measured attitude extremity (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Garramone, et al., 1990), but extremity is a controversial assessment of attitude strength. Some argue that it is a true indicator of strength (Krosnick, et al., 1993), but others conclude that it is simply another measure of attitude valence (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). This study transcends that particular debate by investigating the effectiveness of PSG and candidate-sponsored attack advertising with respect to their influence on attitude confidence (Fazio & Zanna, 1981). Attitude confidence reflects attitude strength, and it is an important corollary of attitude-behavior consistency (Fazio & Zanna, 1978b, 1978c).

CHAPTER III

SPONSORSHIP'S INFLUENCE ON POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING EFFECTS

In presidential elections, the electorate increasingly bases its voting decisions on a candidate's character, as opposed to his/her policy positions or political ideology. Bishin, Stevens and Wilson (2006) showed that intention to vote for George W. Bush was driven more by character attributions than a shift in political affiliation from independent to Republican. Using American National Election Studies (ANES) data from 1960 to 1984, Glass (1985) found that, in five out of seven presidential elections, voter assessments of the candidate's traits significantly predicted vote choice. Benoit and McHale (2003) posited that the character of presidential candidates is an important determinate of public support. Keeter (1987) observed that, "television has supplanted the political parties as a central source of campaign information for voters" (p. 355), and others have noted that television highlights the source-related dimensions of mediated social influence (Meyrowitz, 1982; Pfau, 1990). Given that campaigns are television centered (Hart, 1999; Jamieson, 1988, 1992; Keeter, 1987; Patterson, 2002; Postman, 1985; Wattenberg, 1986), Barber's (1992) normative model of character-based voter decision making is an appropriate lens through which to view them.

Source credibility is an ancient construct. Aristotle (1954) defined it as one of the most important forms of rhetorical proof. He reasoned that, "we believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is…absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided" (¶ 3). Aristotle posited that credibility consists of three dimensions: intelligence, good will and character. Contemporary empirical

investigations of the credibility construct validated those dimensions (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; McCroskey & Young, 1981; Ohanian, 1990; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

Over 50 years ago, Hovland, Janis and Kelly (1953) pioneered the contemporary and social scientific investigation of source credibility. They reasoned that credibility emanates from the source, and it consists of at least two dimensions: expertise and trustworthiness. They defined expertise as a source's ability to formulate and deliver valid assertions, and trustworthiness as a source's willingness to deliver valid assertions. Expert sources tend to be older, recognized leaders, and they hold a position relevant to their supposed expertise. Trustworthy sources are perceived as more objective and more similar to their audience. Hovland and Weiss (1951) experimentally demonstrated that credible sources are more persuasive than incredible sources. Their post-test-only experimental design manipulated the credibility of four speakers on two dimensions: trustworthiness and expertise. Subjects perceived expert and trustworthy sources as more persuasive than inexpert and untrustworthy sources. This finding was typical expression of Hovland and colleagues' (1953) conception of credibility as source oriented. In other words, they conceived of credibility as a characteristic of the source, as opposed to a characteristic of the receiver's perception of the source.

In contrast, McCroskey (1966) offered a receiver-oriented measure of credibility. Whereas Hovland et al. (1953) manipulated credibility at the level of the source, McCroskey (1966) simply relied on receiver's reports of what they considered credible. Holbert (2000) observed that a receiver perspective is a more complete measure of source influence. Still, McCroskey (1966) agreed with both Aristotle (1954) and Hovland et al.

(1953) on their division of credibility into two primary dimensions: competence (i.e., intelligence/expertise) and character (i.e., trustworthiness/good will). Stiff and Mongeau (2003) recently concluded that, even after 50 years, competence and character remain the most valid representations of "people's judgments about source credibility" (p. 106).

Both competence and character are useful yardsticks for measuring presidential candidates, but candidates are in a *Catch-22* with respect to credibility. They must make a case for their candidacy, but theory and research show that audiences are suspicious of persons who speak on their own behalf. By definition, candidates are self-interested representatives of their own candidacies (Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002). Andreoli and Worchel (1978) found that, when communicator source was made salient, an active political candidate was perceived as less trustworthy and less persuasive than three more objective sources: a newscaster, a retired politician and a current member of Congress. With a trust-oriented measure of credibility, Groenendyk and Valentino (2002) found that issue-group advertisements were perceived as more credible than candidate advertisements, which suggests that the electorate equates advertising sponsorship with the advertisement's source. The principal benefit for PSG advertisers is that the electorate may trust them more than it trusts candidate advertisers.

This chapter compares the influence of candidate-sponsored versus PSG-sponsored political attack advertising. From a receiver-oriented perspective (McCroskey, 1966), it posits that PSG-sponsored advertising is perceived as more trustworthy and competent than candidate-sponsored advertising. Furthermore, this chapter posits that the enhanced credibility of PSGs enhances the persuasiveness of their advertising.

Perceived Credibility of PSG-Sponsored Advertising

PSGs employ apparently non-partisan names to conceal their partisan intentions. The *Swift Boat Veterans and POW's for Truth* (*SBVT*) used the very language and symbols of trust to enhance their credibility. Indeed, the word "truth" is in the organization's name. Similarly, the *Progress for America Voter Fund* (*PAVF*) concealed their partisan intention to support Bush in the 2004 presidential campaign. By using the terms "America" and "progress", the group gave the impression of inclusiveness, which is an implicit denial of its partisan intentions. The group also claimed the mantle of "progress", which is a value closely tied to the Enlightenment assumptions on which America is founded (see Ellul, 1965). *America Coming Together* (*ACT*) was a liberal pro-Kerry group, but it also concealed its partisan intentions behind a non-partisan moniker. *ACT*'s mission to bring Americans together resonates with the universal human need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Research and experience strongly suggest that candidate-sponsored political ads inspire less trust and are less persuasive than third-party-sponsored advertising. Groenendyk and Valentino (2002) reasoned that issue-group advertising is perceived as more trustworthy than individual sponsored advertising "because there is no single individual who would benefit" (p. 299). S. An, Jin and Pfau (2006) posited that, "issue advocacy ads, without phrases like 'vote for me,' or 'vote against them,' make ulterior motives less apparent and less accessible" (p. 10). Pfau, Holbert, Szabo and Kaminski (2002) found that third-party-sponsored ads bestowed more credibility on the implied source (i.e., the candidate who benefited from the ad) than candidate-sponsored ads. Research has not examined the relative influence of PSG versus candidate-sponsored

advertising, but Pfau, Haigh, Sims, and Wigley (2006) found that corporate front groups were perceived as highly credible. In fact, the preponderance of empirical evidence strongly supports the position that third-party-sponsored political advertising is perceived as more trustworthy than candidate-sponsored advertising (S. An, Jin, & Pfau, 2006; Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002; Pfau, Haigh, Sims, & Wigley, 2006; Pfau, Holbert, Szabo, & Kaminski, 2002). Because PSGs are essentially third parties, they might also be perceived as more trustworthy than candidate advertisers.

Furthermore, PSG-sponsored political attacks might be perceived as more expert than candidate attacks. PSGs contrive names to enhance perceived expertise. Groups with names like the *Economic Freedom Fund* or *Club for Growth* cultivate the impression that they are economic think tanks or, at least, composed of economists. Such an impression would seem to elicit perceptions of their expertise. As Hovland and colleagues (1953) observed, expertise is enhanced when the source advocates an issue-relevant position. Compared to candidates, PSGs with relevant-sounding names may be perceived as relatively more credible. Groenendyk & Valentino (2002) reported that candidates "are usually forced to be 'experts' on a wide variety of issues. By contrast, interest groups attempt to foster a strong reputation on a narrower range of social concerns" (pp. 298-299). Unfortunately, very little research has empirically investigated the influence of third-party sponsorship on the competence or expertise dimension of advertising, but what little exists is encouraging. Pfau and colleague's (2002) found that soft-money-sponsored advertising was perceived as more competent than candidate-sponsored advertising. If PSG advertisers are a species of third-party advertisers, they might be perceived as more competent than candidate advertisers.

H3: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the sponsor's credibility than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

PSG Credibility and Persuasion

Credibility translates into persuasion. Early empirical investigations of the source credibility construct concluded that highly credible sources are more persuasive than low credibility sources (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Patterson, 1966). Under the rubric of the ELM's multiple roles hypothesis (Petty & Wegener, 1998), source credibility can operate as persuasive cue under either peripheral or central processing conditions. Chaiken and Eagly (1983) found that likeability was persuasive under heuristic condition. By contrast, Chaiken and Maheswaren (1994) revealed that credibility was operative under both systematic and heuristic processing.

Credibility is a particularly relevant persuasive cue for candidates and issue advocates (Garramone, 1985; Garramone & Smith, 1984; Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002). Garramone and Smith (1984) demonstrated that, for respondents who are highly dependent on political commercials, both sponsor trustworthiness and commercial evaluation mediated persuasiveness. In their comparison of third-party sponsored versus candidate-sponsored advertisements, Pfau and colleagues (2002) showed that, for unaffiliated voters, third-party ads elicited more favorable evaluations of the implied beneficiary in terms of global attitude, competence and character. Groenendyk and Valentino (2002) found that an anti-Bush ad was more credible when sponsored by the Sierra *Club* than when it was sponsored by Bush's 2000 opponent Al Gore. Garramone (1985) also compared third-party and candidate sponsored political ads. She did not find

differences between the sponsors on trust, but she did find that the third-party advertising was more persuasive than the candidate advertising on four indices of influence: attitude toward the target, attitude toward the sponsor, intention to vote for the target and intention to vote for the sponsor. No study has heretofore addressed the influence of PSG advertising, but extant investigations of third-party ads and the logic of credibility suggest that PSG attacks may wield considerable more influence than candidate-sponsored political attacks.

H4a: PSG-sponsored attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of its implied beneficiary than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

H4b: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

H4c: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

H4d: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

CHAPTER IV

MESSAGE INFLUENCES

For candidates, political attacks are risky (Allen & Burrell, 2002; Hill, 1989; Merritt, 1984). Their outcomes are unpredictable. Specifically, attacks might enhance support for the sponsoring candidate (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995), diminish it (Hill, 1989; Merritt, 1984; Mutz & Reeves, 2005) or have no effect at all (Lau & Pomper, 2004). For candidate campaigns, these indeterminacies must be troubling. Candidates strive to know when and under what conditions political attack advertising can enhance their support, and when it can degrade it. In other words, candidates need to know which attack strategies work. More importantly, they need to know how attacks can backfire. This dissertation attempts to locate an empirically supported expectation for advertising influence, like boomerang effects. This section argues that the content of attack advertising matters. Content can operate as intended. It can be ignored. It can even backfire against the sponsor and its argument (Kaid, 1981; Laswell, 1948). If the electorate must tolerate political attacks, they prefer attacks that are issue-based, two-sided and civil. They do not appreciate attacks that are image-based (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, et al., 1991), one-sided (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998) or uncivil (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). One-sided, image-based and uncivil attacks are the most extreme form of political attacks. This section discusses the deleterious influence of candidate-sponsored extreme political attacks on support for the attacker, target and democratic political process (Hill, 1989; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999; Mutz & Reeves, 2005).

The most extreme and most unrepentant sponsors of extreme negativity are the uncoordinated and unaccountable PSGs that have permeated recent presidential campaigns (Andres, 2006; Franz, et al., 2008). In 2004, about 75% of the ads sponsored by uncoordinated interest groups were purely negative, whereas only about 20% of the candidate ads were purely negative. Andres (2006) observed that 527 groups, like *MoveOn.org* and the *SBVT*, perpetrated the most vicious attacks of 2004. The extreme nature of this new brand of attack advertising deserves further study. This research posits that candidates are punished for extreme negativity, but PSGs may use such tactics with relative impunity.

Candidate-Sponsored Extreme Attack Advertising

The most extreme political attacks are one-sided, image-based and uncivil. A one-sided attack is entirely negative and exclusively focused on the target. In contrast, a two-sided attack conveys a combination of negative information about the target and positive information about the sponsor. Image attacks relate information about the target's character, credibility or personal traits. Issue attacks communicate information about the target's positions, record or policy promises. Uncivil attacks violate the norms and mores of face-to-face interaction. Civil attacks adhere to the standards of mutual respect and propriety.

For good reason, candidates rarely employ the tactics of extreme negativity. Candidate-sponsored one-sided attacks are demonstrably less effective than two-sided attacks (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998). Meirick (2002) found that one-sided attacks were less effective. They elicited more source derogations, less cognitive engagement and a less favorable perception of the advertisement. Two-sided attacks were

more effective. They elicited more favorable perceptions of both the sponsor and the ad; moreover, they were associated with more positive affective evaluations of the advertisement. In a similar series of investigations, Pinkleton (1997, 1998) manipulated the amount of negative information in two-sided attack messages. The most negative message consisted of six positive claims and six attacks. The moderately negative message consisted of the same six positive claims, but the number of attacks was reduced to four. The "least negative" message was actually a positive message. It consisted of six positive claims. Pinkleton (1997) revealed that greater levels of negativity were associated with more unfavorable assessments of the sponsor and more favorable assessments of the target. In another study, Pinkleton (1998) found that greater levels of negativity were associated with assessments of the sponsor as mean spirited.

Image attacks are also less effective than issue ads (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, et al., 1991). Pfau and Burgoon (1989) investigated candidate-sponsored issue and image attacks. They found that image attacks elicited a less favorable attitude toward the candidate supported in the attack and a less favorable assessment of the message itself. Alternatively, issue attacks were more likely to stimulate turnout for the supported candidate. Thorson, Christ and Caywood (1991) found that image attacks elicited less favorable evaluations of ad, a less favorable evaluation of the ad's sponsor and less willingness to behavioral support the sponsored candidate. In a similar investigation, Shapiro and Rieger (1992) showed that image attacks predicted less favorable evaluations of the sponsor and a greater intention to vote for the target, which is a backlash effect. The danger of the image-attack is its potential to promote sympathy for target, whom audiences may feel is treated unfairly. A prototypical illustration of this

backlash effect occurred in the 1993 Canadian federal election when the Progressive party ridiculed an opposition candidate for his facial paralysis. After seeing the ad, university students increased their support for the opposition candidate and reduced their support for the Progressive ad's implied beneficiary (Haddock & Zanna, 1997).

Voters reject uncivil candidates (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). Funk (2001) argued that political incivility consists of negative norm violations. Mutz and Reeves (2005) defined uncivil political discourse as consisting of gratuitous asides, a lack of respect, a frustration with the opposition and nonverbal cues, like raised voices and eye rolls. Brooks and Geer (2007) operationally defined political incivility as "inflammatory and superfluous" (p. 5) language. They found that exposure to uncivil image-based attack messages elicited less favorable evaluations of the message's importance and informational value, as well as, less favorable evaluations of the sponsor's tactics. Funk (2001) manipulated the level of civility in the transcript of a congressional debate. She found that exposure to the uncivil script was associated with more anger and disgust with politics. Mutz (2007) revealed that intimate camera shots enhanced the polarizing impact of incivility. In a similar study, Mutz and Reeves (2005) demonstrated that incivility in a televised political debate induced perceptions of the both candidates as more impolite, hostile, emotional, quarrelsome and agitated. Incivility in political debates also induced greater levels of experienced affect, as measured by skin conductivity.

The electorate despises extreme tactics and will punish candidates who sponsor them. One-sided attacks elicit derogation of both message and source (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998). Image-based attacks trigger a backlash against the candidate

supported in the message (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, et al., 1991). More generally, political incivility produces a general disgust with both politics and politicians (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). For candidates, extreme attacks almost guarantee a backlash. The combination of all three forms of extreme attack into a single political advertisement is certain to elicit unfavorable responses.

> **H5a**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising backfires against the sponsoring candidate by eliciting a less favorable evaluation of the attack's implied beneficiary.
>
> **H5b**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising backfires against the sponsoring candidate by eliciting a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.
>
> **H5c**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising also harms the targeted candidate by eliciting a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
>
> **H5d**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising also harms the targeted candidate by eliciting a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

PSG-Sponsored Extreme Attack Advertising

Political attacks are risky for candidates, but they may work for PSGs. In fact, PSGs are the most consistent sponsors of the worst forms of extreme negativity (Andres, 2006; Franz, et al., 2008). PSGs are the super surrogates of the political campaigns. Their legally-required independence might shield their implied beneficiaries from backlashes

against attacks, while the potency of those same attacks might corrupt perceptions of the opposition.

Like all communication, the influence of political attacks is somewhat irreversible. Moreover, television amplifies the irreversibility of political attacks. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) observed that, "the breadth of television's reach makes it difficult to dispel rumors or counteract the effects of negative information" (p. 90). Jamieson (1996) observed that, even if a candidate responds quickly, strategically, appropriately and with the cooperation of the press, any "counterattack may simply legitimize false claims and magnify their impact" (p. xxii).

PSG-sponsored negativity is particularly harmful for the target. Whereas candidate-sponsors of extreme negativity share some of the blame for extreme negativity, the targets of PSG-sponsored advertising suffer directly from both the attack and indirectly from their opponent's impunity. Benoit, Pier and Blaney (1997) theorized that campaigns are comparative: one candidate attempts to appear better than other competing candidates. According to that model, the potency of PSG attacks lies in their capacity to raise the negatives of the targeted candidate, while the implied beneficiary's negatives remain static.

The 2004 *SBVT* campaign against John Kerry illustrated how the credibility and elusiveness of a PSG attack can sully the target's image, without doing harm to its implied beneficiary. In early August 2003, the *SBVT* launched a series of extreme attack advertisements against John Kerry. The one-sided attack messages did not identify George W. Bush but, as the only viable alternative to Kerry, he was the clear beneficiary. The ad campaign accused Kerry of treason, dishonesty, torture by proxy and incompetent

leadership (see ads in *Swift Boat Veterans and POW's for Truth*, 2008). The extreme nature of the ads was evident in their one-sidedness, focus on image and incivility. George W. Bush's refused to specifically reject the *SBVT*, although he did condemn the electoral role of PSGs, like 527 organizations (Borger, 2004). Officials from the Kerry campaign complained that, "the president's remarks treated the veterans' claims as no worse than other attack ads by supposedly independent groups, questioning the group's source of finance rather than the substance of the ads" (in Borger, 2004).

The *SBVT* campaign was demonstrably effective. The National Annenberg Election Study (2004, August 20) reported that 44% of independent voters believed the *SBVT's* claims. Bolick (in Jones, 2006) used an intricately designed naturalistic experimental to show that, after the first *SBVT* ad aired, independent voters reduced their "enthusiastic support" for Kerry by 13%, from 42% to 29%. Furthermore, those "most likely" to support Kerry reduced their support from 37% to 10%, and the percentage of those who were "not sure" about Kerry rose from 0% to 28%. After the first *SBVT* ad, Kerry never regained his losses among independent voters. During the same period (i.e., from August 1, 2004 to August, 25, 2004), a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll revealed that Bush widened his lead over Kerry on several issue and image competencies: Iraq, terrorism, leadership, and capacity to be commander in chief (in Lawrence, 2004). Lawrence (2004) speculated that, "the encouraging signs for Bush came as Kerry's Vietnam War record was under attack by Swift Boat Veterans for Truth (SBVT). The attacks appear to have contributed to the slippage in Kerry's status on national security issues" (p. 6A). Not since the Willie Horton attack advertisements of the 1988 presidential campaign has an independently sponsored advertisement been so influential (Farhi, 2004).

Even when they violate normative standard of political discourse, PSG attacks have the potential to be uniquely effective. Given the anecdotal, logical and empirical evidence, it seems reasonable to posit that PSG extreme attack advertising works.

H6a: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary.

H6b: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.

H6c: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

H6d: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

The Influence of Extreme Attack Advertising on Democratic Attitudes

Attack advertising's influence on democratic attitudes is hotly debated. Some advance a demobilization hypothesis, which posits that exposure to political attack messages elicits political inefficacy and less democratic participation (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Ansolabehere, et al., 1999; Ansolabehere, et al., 1994b). Others promote a mobilization hypothesis, which posits that attack advertising induces greater issue knowledge, better attitudes toward democracy and more democratic participation (Finkel & Geer, 1998; Franz, et al., 2008; Geer & Lau, 1998; Geer, 2000, 2008; Goldstein &

Freedman, 2002). Representatives from both positions have generated volumes of competing scholarship; however, there is one point on which the two camps agree. The most extreme forms of negativity are demobilizing (Geer, 2008; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999). Even Geer (2008), who is one of the most passionate defenders of negativity, admitted that, "if a candidate gets into such fierce name-calling that the debate degenerates into a pointless exchange, then perhaps negativity does the damage its detractors fear" (p. 17).

Indeed, existing research supports the claims that extreme negativity is demobilizing. With correlation-based data, Wattenberg and Brians (1999) demonstrated that complaints of extreme campaign negativity (i.e., mudslinging) predicted declines in voting behavior. The mean spiritedness of one-sided attack messages infects attitudes about the entire democratic process. Pinkleton (2002) examined the relative influence of three levels of negativity (i.e., pure negative, comparative and no negativity) on democratic attitudes. Exposure to more negative advertisements reduced the perceived utility of advertising, and it increased negativism toward campaigns. K.F. Kahn and Kenny (1999) found that campaigns characterized by mudslinging predicted more unfavorable attitudes towards democracy and lower levels of turnout. Mutz and Reeves (2005) revealed that, compared to a civil televised debate, the combination of verbal and semiotic (i.e., intimate camera angles) incivility predicted less trust in politicians, Congress and the entire democratic system. Using newspaper reports of campaign negativity, Lau and Pomper (2001) found a curvilinear relationship between levels of negativity and voter turnout; meaning moderate to low levels of negativity increased turnout, and high levels reduced it.

The most extreme attacks may be driving the debate concerning negativity's deleterious influence on democratic attitudes (K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999; Lau & Pomper, 2001; Mutz & Reeves, 2005; Wattenberg & Brians, 1999). In other words, some forms of negativity might facilitate democratic engagement, while others depress it. Similarly, some forms of competition may inspire ambition, while others frustrate it. Much of the controversy surrounding the influence of attack advertising on democratic attitudes might be a product of failing to appropriately designate those tactics that mobilize voters versus those tactics that demobilize them (Dardis, Shen, & Edwards, 2008). Candidates who combine video-mediated incivility with one-sided personal attacks sully their own campaign, their target and the entire political system. The electorate looks to politics and politicians to address those problems that inhibit their health, liberty or happiness (Jamieson, 1992; Patterson, 1993), but when politicians use extreme attack advertising to pursue their aims, the electorate loses interest or simply becomes hostile to the entire political process (K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999; Mutz, 2004; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). Based on this reasoning and voluminous research, this dissertation posits that candidate-sponsored negativity demobilizes the electorate.

H7a: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits less democratic political efficacy.

H7b: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits less trust of American government.

The influence of PSG-sponsored is more difficult to predict. The 2004 presidential election witnessed an explosion of PSG activity (Franz, et al., 2008; opensecrets.org), and yet, political engagement did not appear to suffer. American National Election Survey (ANES) data from 2000 and 2004 shows that the percentage of

Americans who voted increased by 3%, from 74% in 2000 to 77% in 2004. The 2008 race witnessed a similar level of both PSG activity and extreme negativity, and again, turnout did not suffer substantially. In fact, it was greater than in 2004 (Richardson, 2006). Nevertheless, it is possible the effects of PSG-sponsored extreme negativity may have been concealed by other factors unique to both the 2004 and 2008 campaigns. One such confound may have been the extensive get-out-the-vote effort by groups like *America Coming Together* in 2004 (Federal Election Commission, 2007a). Another may have been the historic nature of the 2008 race. It offered the first black presidential nominee, the first female Republican vice-presidential candidate and a very dramatic Democratic primary fight.

The extant findings provide equivocal guidance (S. An, et al., 2006; Pfau, et al., 2002). S. An et al. (2006) found that exposure to third-party issue advertisements predicted greater levels of voter knowledge and turnout, but that study did not delineate the effects of negative versus positive issue advertising. Nor did it distinguish the influence of coordinated versus uncoordinated interest groups. In addition, Pfau et al., (2002) did not find a demobilizing effect for pre-BCRA soft-money-sponsored traditional (i.e., not extreme) attack ads. Ultimately, the extant research concerning the normative influence of third-party ads is equivocal. The absence of clear precedent cannot justify a prediction; therefore, this study posits a set of research questions.

RQ2a: Compared to no attack advertising, what is the influence of PSG-sponsored political attack advertising on democratic political efficacy?

RQ2b: Compared to no attack advertising, what is the influence of PSG-sponsored political attack advertising on trust in American government?

CHAPTER V

CHANNEL INFLUENCES

Geer (2008) concluded that political attacks are a staple of American politics. America launched its Revolutionary War with a *Declaration of Independence* that rhetorically indicted the British Parliament and its King. Indeed, the *Declaration* may have been America's first political attack advertisement. More followed. Americans so cherished their right to make political attacks that Federalist sponsorship of the 1798 Sedition Act may have lost John Adams the presidency in 1800. The Sedition Act officially outlawed the "writing, printing, uttering or publishing any false, scandalous and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States" (United States Congress, 1798, ¶ 2), but it did little to deter the vituperative rhetoric of the 1800 presidential campaign. Boller (2004) reported that, "on both sides, handbills, pamphlets, and articles in party newspapers denounced, disparaged, damned, decried, denigrated, and declaimed" (p. 8). By today's standards, those attacks seem apocalyptic. Jefferson was accused of being dead, and Adams was charged with importing the services of prostitutes from England! Jamieson (1992) observed that American politics has always been infused with hyperbolic, misleading and false political attacks. Even one of America's greatest presidents – Abraham Lincoln – was attacked for his alleged pride, covetousness, lust, sloth, lunacy and hypocrisy. American political discourse has always been nasty and brutish. Now, political attack advertising makes it short. To be exact, contemporary political attacks are high-fidelity, 30-second sound-bites. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) observed that, "television makes negativity more pervasive and

pernicious. Television spreads political messages much more quickly and much more widely than was ever possible with pamphlets, newspapers, or speeches" (p. 90).

Television dominates, but it is not the exclusive medium for communicating political attacks. Quinn and Kivijarv (2005) reported that 2004 political media purchases were spread across nine categories of advertising and marketing communications, including broadcast television, cable television, radio, newspapers, the Internet, outdoor, magazines, direct mail and public relations/promotions. In 2004, television remained the primary vehicle for political advertising, but "spending on newspapers more than doubled…to $61.3 million compared to 2000 expenditures" (p. 136). Astonishingly, $2.6 billion was spent on political advertising in 2008 (Seelye, 2008). Like 2004, that spending benefited a potpourri of media sectors (Stilson, 2007), including traditional forms of print advertising. Given this expanding diversification of political media buying, it behooves researchers to investigate the role that medium plays in the process of advertising effects. Kaid (1981) lamented that medium is a too little studied variable in political advertising effects research. This study may be the first to compare the influence of print versus video attack advertising. As such, it bases its predictions on medium theory (Meyrowitz, 1994) and the relatively small body of empirical medium effects literature (Andreoli & Worchel, 1978; Burns & Beier, 1973; Chaiken & Eagly, 1976, 1983; A. A. Cohen, 1976; Keating & Latane, 1976; Pfau, 1990; Wilke, 1934; Worchel, et al., 1975).

Medium theory asks "how do the particular characteristics of a medium make it physically, psychologically, and socially different from other media and from face to face interaction, regardless of the messages that are communicated through it" (Meyrowitz,

1994, p. 50). Medium theory posits that media are epistemic, which is to say that different media foster different ways of knowing (Chesebro, 1984; McLuhan, 1964: Meyrowitz, 1994; Ong, 1982; Postman, 1985). This is what McLuhan (1967) meant when he said that "the medium is the message" (p. 7). Chesebro (1984) proposed that media determine "what can be known and the way in which that knowledge is to be evaluated" (p. 116). In short, media foreground some modes of perception, while they background others. McLuhan (1995) posited that media "transform every sense ratio and thus recondition and restructure all our values and institutions" (p. 248).

The epistemic media hypothesis is partially supported by investigations of transfer appropriate processing (Morris, Bransford, & Franks, 1977). Leshner and Coyle (2000) found conclusive evidence that conceptually-driven processing of television news is associated with implicit memory. They also found that data-driven processing of the news did not produce definitive results for explicit memory. Television appears to privilege conceptually-driven information processing. In other words, audio-visual media foreground conceptual information, as evidence by better performance on tests that measure outcomes associated with that form of processing.

This study also compared the epistemic qualities and consequences of print versus video attack advertising. Because video effectively mimics interpersonal interaction (Caughy, 1984; Hart, 1999; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Meyrowitz, 1982), it has been shown to persuade through source considerations (Andreoli & Worchel, 1978; Beninger, 1987; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, et al., 2000; Worchel, et al., 1975). Video also influences the affective dimension of attitudes through emotionally evocative music (J. I. Alpert & Alpert, 1989; M. I. Alpert, Alpert, & Maltz, 2005; Bruner, 1990; Gorn, 1982; Oakes, 2007) and visuals

(Brader, 2005, 2006; Gross & Levinson, 1995; Elaine Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994; Nabi, 2003). Print, on the other hand, foregrounds semantic information (McLuhan, 1995; Ong, 1982; Schwartz, 1973), which enhances the persuasiveness of message content (Chaiken & Eagly, 1976; Petty & Wegener, 1998; Pfau, 1990). Ultimately, video is multi-modal. Print is uni-modal. Video provides a greater magnitude and variety of information about a depicted attitude object. Compared to print, video is multi-modal, more dynamic and closer to the life-world. In short, is more like real experience.

The realism of video may make it more persuasive than print. Fazio and Zanna (1981) reported that direct experience, "make[s] more information…available to the individual than an indirect experience" (p. 186). As a form of direct experience, therefore, attitudes derived from video-mediated experience may be both stronger and more behaviorally consistent than those antecedent in print-mediated persuasion (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a; K. U. Millar & Tesser, 1989; M. G. Millar & Millar, 1996; Regan & Fazio, 1977). This dissertation posits that video political attack advertisements are source oriented, affective and directly experiential, whereas print political attack advertisements are message oriented, cognitive and indirectly experiential. Most comparisons of video and print-mediated persuasion conclude that the two media are equally persuasive; however their reliance on measures of attitude extremity may conceal real differences. In contrast, this comparison uses a dimensionalized operationalization of attitude, which might detect video political attack advertising's relatively greater influence, in terms of source considerations, affect, attitude strength and attitude-behavior consistency.

Source versus Content Considerations in Video versus Print Attack Advertising

Meyrowitz (1985) reasoned that any medium "can be analyzed in relation to those personal characteristics it transmits and those it restricts" (p. 273). When print and video are analyzed according to this principle, television transmits more personal information than video. Horton and Wohl (1956) observed that television, "makes available nuances of appearance and gesture to which ordinary social perception is attentive and to which interaction is cued" (p. 215). Some have argued that television presents an alternative social world, which is governed by many of the same principles of interpersonal influence that have been demonstrated in the orthosocial world of face-to-face communication (Beninger, 1987; Caughy, 1984; Meyrowitz, 1982, 1992; Schwartz, 1973). Indeed, research consistently shows that source factors play an important role in the process of video-mediated influence (Keating & Latane, 1976; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, et al., 2000; Worchel, et al.). In recognition of this reality, the sponsors of political attack advertising often feature attractive or credible spokespersons in their ads (Jamieson, 1992; West, 2004). This dissertation posits that, regardless of sponsor, video attack advertising exercises its influence through source considerations. Print advertisements, on the other hand, exercise their influence through message considerations.

The influence of medium on communication outcomes is one of the oldest issues in communication studies (Allport, 1941; Andreoli & Worchel, 1978; Burns & Beier, 1973; Chaiken & Eagly, 1976, 1983; McGinnies, 1965; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, et al., 2000; Wilke, 1934). Unfortunately, the earliest of these studies produced findings that were mutually contradictory (Allport, 1941; McGinnies, 1965; Wilke, 1934). While holding message factors constant, Wilke (1934) compared the influence of three media: a live

public speaker, a loudspeaker and print. Averaged across four message topics, the most persuasive medium was the live speaker, then the loud speaker, and the least persuasive medium was the disembodied print message. Wilke reasoned that experientially richer media are inherently more persuasive than less experientially rich media; however, other studies contradicted Wilke's conclusion. McGinnies (1965) exposed participants to a print and audio version of Adlai Stevenson's 1962 speech before the United Nations advocating a U.S. naval blockade of Cuba. The printed version proved to be more persuasive than the audio version. Allport (1941) compared the influence of a speech delivered in person versus the same speech delivered via loudspeaker. Astonishingly, results showed that the two versions were equally convincing. That finding contradicted both Wilke (1934) and McGinnies (1965). At first glance, these results seem inconsistent, but a closer look reveals the predictable influence of source factors.

Media interact with source, such that highly credible sources are more persuasive via experientially rich media than experientially poor media (Andreoli & Worchel, 1978; Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Pfau & Burgoon, 1990). Andreoli and Worchel (1978) found that a video message was most effective with a trustworthy source and least effective with an untrustworthy source. Chaiken and Eagly's (1983) compared the influence of likeable and unlikable sources that delivered an identical message by print, radio or video. The video-mediated message was most persuasive with a likeable source and least persuasive with an unlikable source. Pfau (1990) used a receiver perspective to compare the mediating role of source factors across five media: print, audio, video, public address and interpersonal interaction. Although the media variable did not influence message effectiveness, perceptions of source credibility and relational communication mediated

the persuasiveness of interpersonal and video messages, whereas message content mediated the persuasiveness of the radio, print and public address messages. Pfau (1990) concluded that, "television, like interpersonal communication, elevates person variables in the process of influence" (p. 209). In other words, source factors interact with media such that highly attractive or credible sources are more persuasive in experientially rich media, and unattractive or incredible sources are less persuasive.

Given that interaction, the contradictions between Wilke (1934), Allport (1941) and McGinnies' (1965) can be explained by the confounding influence of source factors in studies of medium effects. The source of Wilke's (1934) persuasive messages was himself, and his participants were his own students. Since they probably considered him to be credible, it can be inferred that the live speaker's persuasiveness was driven by his own credibility. McGinnies' (1965) findings also warrant revision. His subjects were Japanese students and the source was a high-ranking American diplomat. If the American was considered unlikeable, it makes sense the audio message was less persuasive than the printed message. Given that WWII was still in recent memory, the American source may have been perceived as less likeable. Interestingly, Allport's (1941) findings may have been the only one among these three that was not confounded by source. His source was introduced as a "public speaker". Because the source was not presented as particularly likeable, expert or trustworthy, it may have had the same effect as holding source constant across the media variables, which again confirms that source drives the influence of video on evaluative outcomes.

Nowhere is the interaction between source and media more evident than in the political domain. The recent emphasis on candidate personality in American presidential

campaigns may be antecedent the rise of televised politics. The Pew Center reported that television is the most popular media for political information (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2006). Hart (1999) blamed television for the recent rise in image-oriented presidential campaigns. Television transports presidential candidates into the electorate's collective living room, which confounds the evaluation of a politician's issue positions with his/her suitability as a house guest (Postman, 1985). Schwartz (1973) observed that, in the television age, voters evaluate politicians by how they make them feel. The electorate is both less able and less inclined to use the standards of reason and logic (Postman, 1985). After extensively studying the rhetoric of Ronald Reagan, Reid-Gold (1988) concluded that television's fidelity to interpersonal interaction empowered the 40th President to mollify his ideological enemies with genuine sincerity, a compelling sense of humor and an honestly felt patriotism. Jamieson (1988) observed that Reagan spoke in television's natural language, meaning that he understood how to manifest abstract ideas in concrete narratives that resonate with the lives of everyday people. Even when Reagan failed to change people's minds, he often changed their hearts, which in many cases was enough to change their votes (Lowi, 1985).

Recent research has confirmed the position that television elevates the electoral relevance of candidate traits. Across six presidential elections (1964 – 1986), Keeter (1987) found that, compared to voters who relied on printed political information, voters who relied on television were more likely to base their vote preferences on a presidential candidate's personality than on his policy positions. Keeter concluded that, "television has played a role in the gradual personalizing of American presidential elections" (p. 354). Cho (2005) used 2000 NES data to draw similar conclusions about the relationship

between television, personality and presidential vote choice. Television changes the way Americans know their presidential candidates, meaning it changes how the public evaluates their competency for the office. In other words, compared to print, television places greater emphasis on source considerations.

Given the overwhelming evidence that television foregrounds source factors, it is reasonable to posit that televised attack advertising foregrounds both the relational and the credibility dimensions of the persona whom it features (Andreoli & Worchel, 1978; Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Pfau, 1990). Television is perceived as an alternative social world (Caughy, 1984; Meyrowitz, 1982). When confronted with televised politicians, audiences respond experientially, as if they were engaged in a live conversation of gestures (Hart, 1999; Jamieson, 1988; Reid-Gold, 1988; Schwartz, 1973). Horton and Wohl (1956) speculated that, on television, "the most remote and illustrious men are met *as if they* were in the circle of one's peers" (p. 215). Nimmo (1974) observed that politicians garner votes by intentionally fostering pseudo-friendships with the viewing electorate. Empirical research also shows that television reinforces a candidate-trait orientation among the electorate (Cho, 2005; Keeter, 1987). Given both theory and research, it is reasonable to posit that televised political attack advertising exercises its influence through source factors and print advertising exercises its influence through content considerations.

> **H8a:** Evaluation of the sponsor's credibility intervenes in the relationship between video- mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H8b: Evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication intervenes in the relationship between video-mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H8c: Argument evaluation intervenes in the relationship between print-mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Affective and Cognitive Factors in Video versus Print Attack Advertising

Video's multi-modality elicits greater affect than print, and it does so more directly. Attitudes are demonstrably composed of cognitive, affective, behavioral (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1998; Rosenburg & Hovland, 1960) and strength related dimensions (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Krosnick & Abelson, 1991; Krosnick, et al., 1993), but existing comparisons of print and video-mediated persuasion have primarily employed measures of attitude extremity or simple valence (Allport, 1941; Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; McGinnies, 1965; Pfau, 1990; Wilke, 1934; Worchel, et al., 1975). This dissertation posits that video and printed political advertising differ on their capacity to elicit emotional responses to the candidates. Video naturally conveys human facial affect, which invokes emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1992; Hsee, Hatfield, & Chemtob, 1991). By sharing the emotions of televised others, one also comes to share their affective responses to various attitude objects. The process of assuming the attitude of the other is the fundamental process out of which mind, self and society arise (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Mead, 1962).

Parasocial interaction is the simulacrum of face-to-face communication with televised persona (Horton & Wohl, 1956). As such, it compels the same active role-

taking behavior one experiences in live interpersonal communication. Horton and Wohl (1956) observed that parasocial interaction invites the audience to "make appropriate responses which are complementary to those of the persona" (p. 219). Berger and Luckmann (1966) observed that face-to-face interaction compels participation in another's subjective attitude toward various attitude objects, including the self. Mead (1962) reasoned that *significant* human communication is an active process of taking the role of another towards one's self. Meyrowitz (2005) speculated that "our sense of self is changed, as we gain new significant others – live or mediated – from whose vantage points we can view our own actions" (p. 11). This process of actively assuming the role of televised others was demonstrated by Caughy (1984), whose respondents reported evaluating their own lives from the perspective of their favorite television "friends". The process of taking the role of the other is further facilitated by television's capacity to entice pre-reflective affective sharing with televised others. Even through the glass of television's window, the evident attitude of others, as expressed in their nonverbal behavior, compels participation in a form of emotional responding (Caughy, 1984; Hatfield, et al., 1992; Hsee, Hatfield, Carlson, & Chemtob, 1990).

It is well established that humans pre-reflectively catch one another's emotions (Hatfield et al., 1992, 1994). Berger and Luckman (1966) proposed that the earliest human communication was mediated by facial expressions and other nonverbal behaviors. This primitive pre-reflective exchange of affective subjectivity remains a vital component of human communication. Hatfield and colleagues (1992) reviewed a body of research demonstrating the persistence of primitive emotional contagion, which is the "tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations,

postures, and movements with those of another person" (pp. 153-154). Emotional contagion is particularly amplified by television, which uses close up camera angles to situate viewers at intimate distances from the emotional displays of actors and media figures (Meyrowitz, 1982). Exposure to video-mediated facial affect is associated with congruent shifts in experienced affect within he audience (Dimberg, Thunberg, & Elmehed, 2000; Hsee, et al., 1990; Hsee, et al., 1991; McHugo, Lanzetta, Sullivan, Masters, & Englis, 1985; Whalen, et al., 1998).

Emotional contagion is associated with video and photographically mediated affect displays. Hsee and colleagues (1990) found that exposure to video-only displays of people telling happy stories elicited subtle signs of happiness, whereas sad stories elicited subtle signs of sadness. Dimberg (1990) used electromyography (EMG) to show that subliminal exposure to happy faces is associated with zygomatic muscle activity (smiling), and subliminal exposure to angry faces is associated with corrugator supercilli muscle activity (frowning). Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Whalen and colleagues (1998) found that subliminal exposure to fearful faces was associated with more amygdala activity than exposure to happy faces.

Emotional contagion has even been demonstrated with mediated political candidates and leaders (Lanzetta, Sullivan, Masters, & McHugo, 1985; McHugo, et al., 1985). McHugo and colleagues (1985) revealed that exposure to photographic affect displays of President Ronald Reagan elicited emotional contagion in Democrats, Republicans and Independents; however, Democrats experienced more negative affect in response to Reagan's anger displays and less positive affect in response to his happy displays. In other words, party affiliation moderated the magnitude of emotional

contagion with Reagan, even if it did not moderate the valence. Even political enemies inspire congruent emotion with vivid affect displays. The contagiousness of Reagan's affect displays was evident in both direct self report (McHugo, et al., 1985) and indirect EMG measures (McHugo, et al., 1985). By feeling the emotions of political figures and others featured in political advertising, viewers are invited to vicariously experience the mutual role taking and sharing of subjectivity that resonates with actual face-to-face interaction.

The content and formal conventions of televised political advertising are designed to enhance the emotional quality of one's attitude toward political figures. Jamieson (1992) observed that political attack advertising employs several conventions that define a grammar of mood, including "quick cuts, use of black and white, dark colors, shadowed lighting, stark contrasts, videotape, the voice of a seemingly "neutral" announcer, and ominous music" (p. 51). Political practitioners are well aware of television's unique power to bypass reasoning and strike at the electorate's emotional core (Brader, 2005; Gore, 2007; Hart, 1999; Postman, 1985; Westen, 2007). Based on his over 30 years in political office, former Vice President Al Gore (2007) speculated that, "the visceral vividness portrayed on television triggers instinctual responses similar to those triggered by reality itself – and without being modulated by logic, reason, and reflective thought" (p. 19). Westen (2007) posited that emotion is the crucial ingredient of all successful televised political television advertising (Westen, 2007).

Elicited affect is a reliable outcome of video exposure (Gross & Levinson, 1995; Nabi, 2003; Pfau, Houston, & Semmler, 2007). Gross and Levenson (1995) examined the influence of 78 film clips chosen for their thematic and emotional content. Fourteen of

the clips reliably induced seven discrete emotional states: amusement, anger, contentment, disgust, fear, sadness, surprise and no emotion. For example, a clip from *The Shining* elicited fear, whereas a clip from *When Harry Met Sally* reliably induced amusement. Nabi (2001) used video of animal cruelty to elicit highly arousing and unpleasant affect. Video conveys affect. Some studies have shown that video's aural channel is a crucial ingredient of that capacity.

Commercial advertising uses music to create emotional associations with their featured products. Music is an enormously reliable method of instilling affect (Balch, Myers, & Papotto, 1999; Sousou, 1997). Sousou (1997) used classical music selections to induce both happy and sad mood states. He found that sad music elicited sadness and happy music elicited happiness, but sad music was the stronger induction. Balch and colleagues (1999) used classical music selections to successfully elicit both emotional valence (pleasant/unpleasant) and magnitude (low arousal/high arousal). Alpert and Alpert (1989) manipulated the musical background in commercial advertisements. They too found that sad music elicited a sad mood better than happy music elicited a happy mood, but both conditions were more effective than controls. Even at short durations and in the multi-modal environment of commercial advertising, music significantly influences affect.

Evidence also shows that commercial music influences persuasive outcomes, like purchase intention (Bruner, 1990; Oakes, 2007). Gorn (1982) posited that the influence of commercial music is the product of classical conditioning. He found that products associated with pleasant music were chosen at a significantly greater rate than products associated with unpleasant music. Alpert and Alpert (1989) found that sad background

music was a better predictor of greeting card purchases than happy background music. In another study, Alpert and colleagues (2005) revealed that happy music sold celebratory greeting cards and sad music sold sympathy cards. Music is a consistent and reliable predictor of potentially-biasing affect (Balch, et al., 1999; Sousou, 1997), and when it is embedded in the background of commercial advertising, it translates into attitudinal and behavioral influence (J. I. Alpert & Alpert, 1989; M. I. Alpert, et al., 2005; Bruner, 1990; Gorn, 1982; Oakes, 2007).

Although music and visuals in political advertising have rarely been studied, political commercials regularly recruit both music and evocative visuals to make an emotional connection with their targeted candidate(s) (Brader, 2005, 2006; Jamieson, 1992; Westen, 2007). Brader (2005) posited that political spots are more than just words: "They are full of pictures, sound, and music" (p. 4). His content analysis of over 1400 television ads found that ads invoking fear were more likely to use dark colors and visual cues of death, decay and desolation. He further revealed that fearful ads employed tense/somber music or discordant sound effects. Brader concluded that the least emotionally evocative advertisements were simple talking head appeals, which are the kinds of audiovisual presentations typically employed in experimental comparisons of video and print (Chaiken & Eagly; Worchel, et al., 1975). Rather, research should compare video and print with richer forms of video and print content. Although talking head appeals transfer affect through facial cues, their focus on semantic information draws them too close to print for adequate comparisons with video, which is experientially richer.

Print's emphasis on semantic information limits its ability to convey affect, while video heightens the role of affect. Print asks "is it true?", but video asks, "how does it feel?" (Schwartz, 1973). McLuhan (1995) observed that print instills a dispassionate, reflective and detached outlook. Indeed, the ability to control one's emotional reactions is a form of discipline fostered by reading. Postman (2001) posited that reading is content-focused, serious and rational. Gore (2007) praised print for its logic, reason and ability to induce reflection. He lamented television's "visceral vividness…[and]…capacity to trigger instinctual responses" (p. 19). Pfau et al. (2007) found that self-reported exposure to televised presidential campaign advertisements predicted greater affect toward those candidates. Krugman (1971) demonstrated that television and print are associated with distinct mental processes. He argued that television activates the right hemisphere of the brain, which is more emotional (Krugman, 1980). Appel, Weinstein and Weinstein (1979) provided additional evidence for Krugman's argument. They explained that television viewing begins as a left-brain activity, but it quickly shifts to the right brain. In summary, substantial amounts of empirical evidence shows that video elicits affective responses (M. I. Alpert, et al., 2005; Brader, 2005; Gorn, 1982; Gross & Levinson, 1995; Hatfield, et al., 1992; Hsee, et al., 1990). Therefore, it seems reasonable to posit that video attack advertising elicits more extreme affective responses than print attack advertising.

H9a: Compared to exposure to print-mediated attack advertising, video-mediated attack advertising elicits greater positive affect toward the supported candidate.

H9b: Compared to exposure to print-mediated attack advertising, video-mediated attack advertising elicits greater negative affect toward the targeted candidate.

The Experiential Qualities of Print versus Video Attack Advertising

The conditions under which an attitude is formed influence its strength and its relationship to consistent behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a; K. U. Millar & Tesser, 1989; Regan & Fazio, 1977). Regan and Fazio (1977) summarized the important role of attitude strength:

> This implies that two individuals having the same attitude, as determined by conventional measures, may differ considerably in the degree to which they will act consistently with the attitude. The person whose attitude is a product of direct interaction with the attitude object will be more likely, in general, to behave consistently with that attitude than someone whose attitude was formed in a less direct manner. (p. 31)

Attitudes formed under conditions of direct experience are composed of more information than attitudes formed under indirect experience. Because video contains more information than print (i.e., more visual, more musical and equivalent semantic information), it provides a more direct experience than print. Therefore, video elicits greater levels of attitude strength (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a, 1978d, 1981; Regan & Fazio, 1977) and attitude-behavior consistency (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; K. U. Millar & Tesser, 1989; Regan & Beverley, 1978).

Direct and indirect experiences represent opposite poles on a common continuum of experiential quality, in which one pole is designated a direct experience and the other

pole is designated as an indirect experience (Fazio & Zanna, 1981; Regan & Fazio, 1977). The most basic distinction between direct and indirect experience is the amount senses employed in the experience. A directly experienced object demands the attention of the entire range of senses. An indirectly experienced object may invoke only one sense. Like the directness of experience, media technology can be distinguished by the number of senses they extend (McLuhan, 1967). Because video excites more senses, it is more directly experiential than print.

The fidelity of audio-visual media technology is apparent in the reactions of those encountering it for the first time. In the early days of film, American and European audiences were often overwhelmed by the "train effect", which was the "anxious or panicky reaction to films of approaching vehicles" (Bottomore, 1999, p. 177). Audiences often flinched, gasped, screamed, fainted or even panicked at the filmic approach of trains or horses. Bottamore explained that the train effect was the product of a psychological phenomena called *looming* - a reflexively evasive reaction to objects in one's field of vision that appear to rapidly grow, as though they were a quickly approaching danger (Regan & Beverley, 1978). Conscious awareness of a film's fictional quality can obviate the looming response, but even in fictional depictions, the looming response can be excited by surprising events. Horror films often exploit the looming response by directing the audience's attention to one scenic location, while a menacing force surprisingly bursts into the action from another location. The atomic explosion in the *Daisy Ad* may have invoked a similar reaction. The capacity to trick the mind into suspending its disbelief is a knack that print cannot easily accomplish. Gore (2007) observed that, "the simulation of reality accomplished in the television medium

is…astonishingly vivid and compelling compared with the representations of reality conveyed by printed words" (p. 19).

Print is an abstract experience, and video is a concrete experience. The former is indirect. The latter is direct. Meyrowitz (1994) observed that television transforms the word into a sensory event that competes "with abstract print knowledge" (p. 58). As a concrete medium, television *organizes* reality with material or tangible objects. Alternatively, print *represents* reality abstractly, meaning it accomplishes communication without reference to a particular example or object. Saussure (1959) vividly articulated the separation between print and reality. He observed that language is an indirect form of experience. The signifier is merely an arbitrary empirical sign pointing toward something concrete. It is three steps removed from experience. The signified is two steps removed from experience. It is the mental picture conjured by the signifier. At the final step, the signifier and the signified meet concrete experience at the level of the referent: the tangible object to which a single word refers. Television bypasses the signified by collapsing the signifier into the referent (Olson, 1988). Williamson (1978) reasoned that televised advertising conveys the impression that "an advertisement is simply a transparent vehicle for the 'message' behind it" (p. 17). Whereas print's manufactured quality is evident in its straight lines and uniformity, the televised experience is comparatively natural. Schwarz (1973) observed that, "many of our experiences with electronic media are coded and stored in the same way they are perceived. Since they do not undergo a symbolic transformation, the original experience is more directly available" (p. 25).

Concrete experiences predict both stronger and more behaviorally consistent attitudes than abstract/ representational experiences (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a; Regan & Fazio, 1977). Regan and Fazio (1977) found that students who directly experienced a college housing shortage demonstrated more attitude-consistent behaviors regarding housing policy than students who merely heard about the shortage second hand. The two groups held similar attitudes, but the direct experience group was more willing to sign a petition and organize to support their attitude. In a similar study, Fazio and Zanna (1978a) compared students who had actually participated in psychological research to students who had no such experience. The experienced participants who positively evaluated research participation were more willing to volunteer for a future research project than the inexperienced participants who negatively evaluated research participation. The housing and research participation paradigms provide convincing evidence that direct experience predicts attitude-behavior consistency, but the inability of either study to randomly assign subjects mitigates the certainty of their findings (Regan & Fazio, 1977). Fazio and Zanna (1977) resolved the problem of random assignment with an experiential research paradigm using a set of intellectual puzzles. Rather than employing existing experiences, the researchers contrived an indirect and direct experience condition with a set of intellectual puzzles. Direct experience participants were given the chance to directly work the puzzles, whereas indirect experience participants merely reviewed puzzles that were already solved. After evaluating the puzzles, participants were given a chance to "play" with the puzzles. Compared to indirect participants, direct experience participants were more likely to play with the

puzzles they evaluated most highly. Direct experience participants also played with their preferred puzzles for a longer period of time than indirect experience participants.

Fazio and Zanna (1978b, 1978c, 1981) reasoned that direct experiences influence attitude-behavior consistency through attitude strength. Both the contrived (i.e., puzzles) and existing experience (i.e., housing shortage and research participation) paradigms demonstrated that direct experience predicts stronger attitudes than indirect experience (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a). More specifically, direct experience predicts attitude that are held with greater certainty and confidence (Fazio & Zanna, 1978a, 1981). Fazio and Zanna (1978a) further demonstrated that attitude strength mediated the relationships between direct experience and attitude-behavior consistency. Fazio and Zanna (1981) argued that direct experience's attitude strengthening affect on attitudes might be due to the greater magnitude of information provided by a direct experience and the greater attitude accessibility that affords. They cited research by Fazio and Chen (in Fazio & Zanna, 1981) that corroborated their reasoning. Extant research empirically supports the conclusion that providing copious information about an attitude object increase attitude accessibility, strength and behavioral consistency.

If video political attack advertising provides a more direct experience than print political attack advertising, it too should predict stronger and greater attitude-behavior consistency. Fazio, Zanna and Cooper (1978) found that a video-mediated task produced more attitude-behavior consistency when the task was combined with affective empathy for the person who was depicted performing the task. Given televised political attack advertising's ability to convey affect (Brader; Gore, 2007; Jamieson, 1992; Westen, 2007), it might operate like the direct experience in Fazio et al. (1978). Furthermore, the

accumulation of reviewed findings and theorizing suggests that televised political attack advertising is a more direct experience than print political attack advertising. Compared to print, television provides a more concrete (Meyrowitz, 1994), natural (Schwartz, 1973) and affective (Gore, 2007; Postman, 2001) experience. Television provides more information about an attitude object than print does, and the information that television provided is more dynamic. Jamieson reasoned that television's power is Svengalian; it reconstitutes "'reality' in ways that heighten the power of the visceral appeal" (p. 10). Therefore, it is reasonable to posit that, compared to print-mediated political attack advertising, exposure to video-mediated political attack advertising provides a more direct experience, which elicits greater attitude-behavior consistency.

> **H10a:** Compared to print-mediated political attack advertising, video-mediated political attack advertising elicits greater attitude-behavior consistency with respect to evaluation of the initially supported candidate and vote intention.
>
> **H10b:** Compared to print-mediated political attack advertising, video-mediated political attack advertising elicits greater attitude-behavior consistency with respect to evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and vote intention.

CHAPTER VI

RECEIVER INFLUENCES

Studies of mass communication have often invited the fallacious inference that media influence is uniform (see Gerbner & Gross, 1976). The hypodermic model of media effects was conventional wisdom until the 1960's (Martin, 1976), when it became clear to just about everyone that mass communication effects are highly conditioned by individual differences (Klapper, 1960; McGuire, 1986; McLeod & Reeves, 1980). For many researchers, however, that realization had come much sooner. The Payne Fund studies found that movies influenced "different children in different ways" (in McDonald, 2004, p. 186). Cantril's famous study of public reactions to Orson Welles' radio broadcast of *The War of Worlds* found that those who were more suggestible, fatalistic and uncritical were the most likely to panic (in McDonald, 2004). McLeod and Reeves (1980) argued that mass media effects are contingent upon the situation and characteristics of individual receivers. Now, receiver variables are a common factor in mass media effects research (Laswell, 1948; McGuire, 1969; Petty & Wegener, 1998).

Concern with the contingent effects of individual characteristics is especially evident in studies of political communication effects (Martin, 1976). Correlation-based investigations of political advertising's influence fastidiously track and control receiver differences (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Ansolabehere, et al., 1999; Franz, et al., 2008; Goldstein & Freedman, 2002; Lau & Pomper, 2004), and experimental investigations use random assignment to wash out idiosyncratic receiver influences (Keppel & Wickens, 2004). In other situations, receiver influences may actually drive political advertising's effects. In fact, it can be illuminating to treat receiver differences

as an independent factor. For example, strength of partisan identification can be an influential conditional factor of political communication effects (Bartels, 2000; Berelson, et al., 1954; Campbell, et al., 1960; Popkin, 1994). This chapter reviews the conditioning effect of political partisanship on attack advertising effects. This chapter also discusses using college students as a subject population. Researchers have questioned the validity of using this population (see Pinkleton, 1997, 1998); however, those concerns may be unwarranted (Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982; Greenberg, 1987).

Political Partisanship

Political partisanship is an important force in American politics (Patterson, 2002). It influences who turns out to vote and for whom they vote (Bartels, 2000; Berelson, et al., 1954; Campbell, et al., 1960; Popkin, 1994). Berelson and colleagues' (1954) study of the 1948 election was one of the first to find that partisan loyalties predicted voter preferences. Campbell et al. (1960) concluded that partisanship shapes voter's attitudes toward the candidates and issues in any given election. Forty years later, Bartels (2000) restated the importance of partisanship to presidential voting behavior. He revealed that, from 1956 to 1996, about 75% of the voting public identified themselves as strong partisans. Patterson (2002) observed that partisanship influences democratic behavior. Popkin (1994) extended Down's (1957) explanation that partisanship reduces the costs of voting by reducing the informational burdens of vote choice. Given partisanship's powerful and independent influence on democratic behaviors and decision-making, any evaluation of political attack advertising should either control for partisanship or directly manipulate its influence.

Political partisanship is an important moderator of political attack advertising effects (Kaid, 1981). Basil, Schooler and Reeves (1991) statistically removed the influence of partisanship from their experimental evaluation of attack advertising effects. Matthews and Dietz-Uhler (1998) revealed a greater backlash against political attack advertising when the sponsor and viewer shared the same political party affiliation. The attacks may have been perceived as a norm violation, which then warranted the backlash as a form of in-group norm enforcement. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) revealed that attack advertising turns weak partisans into strong partisans, although that greater degree of commitment was not reflected in behavioral intentions. Rather, exposure to the attacks elicited reduced levels of political efficacy, regardless of their level of commitment. Other studies produced contrary results. Dardis, Shen and Edwards (2008) found that partisanship did not condition the influence of attack advertising exposure on political cynicism or self efficacy. In sum, it seems that attack advertising reinforces party loyalty, but its influence on democratic attitudes and behavior is less clear. Therefore, it seems reasonable to posit a hypothesis with respect to the partisanship's influence on candidate support and a research question with respect to its influence on democratic values.

H11a: Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary for non-partisans than for partisans.

H11b: Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary for non-partisans than for partisans.

H11c: Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate for non-partisans than for partisans.

H11d: Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate for non-partisans than for partisans.

RQ3a: How does candidate-sponsored political attack advertising influence democratic political efficacy for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ3b: How does candidate-sponsored political attack advertising influence trust of American government for non-partisans versus partisans?

Few studies have investigated interaction between partisan strength and political attack advertising effects. Even less research has examined interactions between strength of partisanship and political attack sponsorship. Because independent sponsorship seems to enhance the credibility of attack advertising (Garramone, 1985; Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002; Pfau, et al., 2002), it should mitigate backlash effects; however, this effect may not translate for strong versus weak political partisans. These uncertainties and contradictions may explain why Franz and colleagues (2008) dropped the partisanship interaction term from their study of advertising tone effects. They "failed to find an authoritative story to the question of whether exposure to political ads matters for different types of voters" (p. 135); but they also concluded that, "such questions represent the next stage of the scholarly search for advertising effects" (p. 135). Given the lack of clear direction in existing research, this dissertation posits the following research

questions with respect to the moderating role of partisanship on the influence of PSG-sponsored attack advertising.

RQ4a: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence evaluations of the implied beneficiary for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ4b: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG- sponsored political attack advertising influence intention to vote for the implied beneficiary for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ4c: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored attack advertising influence evaluations of the targeted candidate for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ4d: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence intention to vote for the targeted candidate for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ5a: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence democratic political efficacy for non-partisans versus partisans?

RQ5b: Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence trust in American government for non-partisans versus partisans?

Justification for Studying Young Voters

Young voters have become an important group of politically active citizens (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the

Vote, 2008c; CNN, 2004; Harvard University Institute of Politics, 2007; Marcelo, Lopez, Kennedy, & Barr, 2008). In the 1990's, the typical young person was individualistic, alienated, self-focused and politically uninterested (Harwood Group, 1993). Until the 2004 general presidential election, turnout among America's 18 to 29 year olds was declining steadily since its peak in 1972 (Marcelo, et al., 2008). In 2000, only 40% of young voters cast a general election ballot. By 2004, that number increased to 49%. Exit polls showed that young people voted in greater numbers than those over 65 (CNN, 2004). Even when the percentage of young voters dropped to 25% in the 2006 mid-term elections, that was still an increase from the 2002 mid-term, when only 22% of young people voted (Marcelo, et al., 2008). The 2006 mid-term proved that youth voters could be influential. They provided winning margins for the Senate races in Virginia and Montana (Harvard University Institute of Politics, 2007). Two Democratic Senators owe their election to youth turnout in their states.

Young voters also flexed their electoral muscle in the 2008 presidential election. In particular, their impact on the primaries was huge. Compared to 2004, double and triple the number of young people participated in primaries or caucuses across the nation (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the Vote, 2008c). A perfect storm of aggressive get-out-the-vote efforts, issues that mattered to young people (e.g., the economy and the Iraq War) and several contested elections motivated young people to become politically engaged. Now, it is up to researchers and practitioners to determine how to keep them involved in 2010.

Getting and keeping young people interested in politics is crucial for the health of our democracy (Harvard University Institute of Politics, n.d.). Obviously, young people

are the largest source of new voters (Marcelo, et al., 2008). Nearly two-thirds of new voters in 2004 were 18 to 29 year old. As a coherent group, with identifiable interests, the youth vote is crucial. In 2004, 20.1 million young people gave their votes to the presidential candidates. In 2006, they gave 10.8 million votes to the congressional candidates. Youth voters substantially influenced the 2008 presidential primary campaign (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the Vote, 2008c). In Iowa, they came out at three times the rate that they did in 2004 (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the Vote, 2008a). Saul (2008) reported that, young voters were a major factor in Obama's Iowa victory. They also showed up in the general election. Richardson (2008) reported that, in the 2008 general election, Obama won over 60% of young voters. Before Obama, Reagan held the record for the largest percentage of young voters at 54%.

Campaigns need young people for more than just their votes. The Harvard Institute of Politics (n.d.) reported that, "young people have the energy, optimism, and time to devote to a campaign" (p. 4). During the run up to the 2004 general election, college students showed their support for campaigns by attending campaign rallies, volunteering and even contributing money. As a group, young people represented 36% of campaign volunteers, 15% of volunteers and 16% of all political contributors.

Some have questioned the ecological validity of using college students to test and evaluate political communication effects. Pinkleton (1997, 1998, 2001) warned that using students jeopardizes external validity. In their landmark study of *Going Negative*, Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) went to great expense to avoid using college students. Nevertheless, college students are the principle participants in the vast majority of

experimental studies concerning attack-advertising effects (Meirick, 2002; Pfau, et al., 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998).

This dissertation embraces college student participants. Even if one grants they are unrepresentative of the larger voting population, their growing influence justifies their relevance as a unique and important demographic. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the Vote (2008c) reported that about 60% of college students voted in 2004, compared to about 45% of non-students. Given the size and homogeneity of the young voters, it seems prudent to better understand their response to political communication. Furthermore, experimental research is designed to edify theoretical processes that, according to Greenberg (1987), require "the use of investigations that are internally valid and *not* diluted with real world features" (p. 159). Since homogenous populations (e.g., college students) limit confounding variations between subjects, using them contributes to claims of internal validity (Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982). On two fronts, therefore, this dissertation justifies its use of a student population. If one focuses on their systematic differences, student participation is justified by their growing influence (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement and Rock the Vote, 2008c; CNN, 2004; Harvard University Institute of Politics, 2007; Marcelo, et al., 2008). On the other hand, the homogeneity of the college-student experience enhances the internal validity of using college students in experiments (Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982; Greenberg, 1987). Either way, young voters are worthy experimental participants.

CHAPTER VII

INOCULATION AGAINST PSG AND CANDIDATE-SPONSORED ATTACK ADVERTISING

The unpredictability and potency of PSG-sponsored extreme attack advertising poses a serious challenge for candidates. Conventional campaign communication may not be sufficient to defend against their influence. Political campaigns generally execute three advertising strategies: attacks, acclaims and/or refutations (Benoit, et al., 1997), but a post-hoc refutational strategy may be ineffective against extreme political attacks. Several studies by Pfau and colleagues have shown that a preemptive defensive refutation strategy is more effective against political attacks than a post-hoc refutation strategy (C. An, 2003; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, Kenski, Nitz, & Sorenson, 1990). This chapter posits that a preemptive refutational strategy is effective against candidate and PSG-sponsored extreme attack advertising. The inoculation theory of resistance to persuasion offers the most comprehensive prescription for such a strategy (Compton & Pfau, 2005b; Pfau, 1997; Szabo & Pfau, 2002). Eagly and Chaiken (1993) called inoculation the "grandparent theory of resistance to attitude change" (p. 561). This chapter posits that inoculation advertisement appeals are capable of surrounding political attitudes with a shield of protection against PSG-sponsored extreme attack advertising. In addition, this chapter makes the case that inoculation can defend democratic values against the demobilizing influence of candidate-sponsored extreme attacks. Ultimately, this chapter posits that a preemptive inoculation strategy can defend the electorate from the worst effects of both PSG and candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

This is the first study to construct and test inoculation appeals that reach voters as video or print-mediated political advertisements. Prior investigations of inoculation have relied on essays (C. An, 2003; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). This study adapts the inoculation essay strategy to the format of political advertising. In part, this study translates the theory of inoculation into the reality of presidential campaign communication. To maximize inoculation's electoral impact, it should be adapted for the dominant mode of political discourse, which is advertising (Geer, 2008). This chapter argues that both print and video inoculation advertisements protect political attitudes, although they accomplish their effects through distinct processes. In addition to demonstrating the practicality of inoculation against extreme political attacks, this dissertation also illuminates critical mechanisms in the video and print inoculation processes.

The Inoculation Construct

The inoculation message strategy was inspired by studies of two-sided message effects (Hovland, Lumsdaine, & Sheffield, 1949; Lumsdaine & Janis, 1953). Lumsdaine and Janis (1953) revealed that one and two-sided messages were equally persuasive; however, attitude change elicited by a two-sided message was significantly more resistant to subsequent counterpersuasion than attitude change elicited by a one-sided message. The authors reasoned that the two-sided messages "inoculated" participants against counterpersuasion.

McGuire (1961a, 1964, 1970) developed Lumsdaine and Janis' (1953) inoculation analogy into a complete theory of resistance to persuasion. Fearing social psychologists had over emphasized social influence, McGuire (1970) redirected his research to

developing and testing "ways to immunize people against persuasion" (p. 90). His inoculation theory of resistance to persuasion relies on a biological analogy that elegantly summarizes and explains its central assumption (McGuire, 1964):

> In the biological situation, the person is typically made resistant to some attacking virus by pre-exposure to a weakened dose of the virus. This mild dose stimulates his defenses so he will be better able to overcome any massive viral attack to which he is later exposed. (p. 200)

Therefore, just as the human immune system recruits antibodies to neutralize threatening viruses, the human belief system recruits *counterarguments* to neutralize *threatening* arguments.

Taken together, threat and counterargumentation are at the core of conventional inoculation (Compton & Pfau, 2005b). Traditional inoculation messages are delivered in two stages. First, they elicit threat with a forewarning of potent and imminent counter-persuasion (McGuire, 1962b). Second, they elicit counterargumentation with refutational pretreatments, which present a combination of weakened counterattitudinal attacks and strong refutations of those weakened attacks (Pfau, et al., 1997). Taken together, threat and counterargumentation are the core mechanisms of the basic inoculation model (Compton & Pfau, 2005a); however, threat is widely considered to be the more indispensable component (Compton & Pfau, 2005a; McGuire, 1962b; Pfau, 1997; Pfau & Kenski, 1990).

Until recently, elicited threat was indirectly inferred from the presence of successful resistance to persuasion (Pfau, 1997; Pfau, Holbert, Szabo, & Kaminski, 2002). McGuire and Papageorgis (1962a) inferred the existence of elicited threat when

they found that the combination of forewarning and a refutational pretreatment conferred greater resistance to persuasion than a refutational pretreatment alone. In another study, Anderson and McGuire (1965) inferred that elicited threat was operative when the combination of normative reassurances and refutational pretreatments conferred less resistance to persuasion than refutational pretreatments alone. In yet another study, McGuire (1964) directly manipulated threat levels by varying the number of threatening arguments relative to the number of refutations. Results confirmed that the highest threat condition (four counterarguments and no reassuring refutations) conferred greater resistance than the lowest threat condition (i.e., two counterarguments and no reassuring refutations). The most convincing inference of threat is derived from the relative effectiveness of refutational-same and refutational-different pretreatments (Pfau, 1997). Refutational-same pretreatments present and refute the same arguments appearing in a subsequent attack message, whereas refutational-different pretreatments present and refute arguments different from those appearing in a subsequent attack message (Pfau, et al., 2002). Papageorgis and McGuire (1961) found that refutational-different and refutational-same pretreatments conferred equivalent levels of resistance to persuasion; therefore, they inferred that the success of refutational different pretreatments is explained by a motivation to generate counterarguments, since participants had not been exposed to those counterattacks. Eventually, researchers developed and successfully tested a direct measure of threat (M. Burgoon, Cohen, Miller, & Montgomery, 1978; Miller & Burgoon, 1979), which consistently confirmed threat's instrumental role in the inoculation process (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001; Pfau, et al., 1997). Pfau (1997) reasoned that the motivational component of inoculation spreads "a broad

blanket of protection" (pp. 137-138) against an indefinite number and variety of specific threats to one's existing beliefs.

Traditional inoculation's "blanket of protection" is cut from the cloth of substantive counterargumentation. Pfau and Compton (2005b) observed that, "inoculation treatments build an arsenal of argumentation" (p. 101) that strengthens attitudes against strong attacks. In other words, inoculation motivates receivers to generate an array of substantive counterarguments to potential arguments against their targeted belief(s). However, the theory's founders merely inferred that counterargumentation was responsible for resistance to persuasion. In all of McGuire's inoculation research, only one study attempted to directly measure counterargumentation (Papageorgis & McGuire, 1961). Unfortunately, the study did not reveal significant differences between the refutational pretreatment and control conditions. Inoculation advocates have since attributed that failure to a poorly conceived measure of counterargumentation (Compton & Pfau, 2005b). In fact, inoculation demonstrably elicits a wide variety of belief-bolstering materials like active generation of counterarguments (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, et al., 1990; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001; Pfau, et al., 1997; Pfau, 1992), recognition of counterarguments (Pfau, Compton, et al., 2006; Pfau, et al., 2004), and even the construction of elaborate associative networks (Pfau, et al., 2005). Inoculation also confers resistance to persuasion through non-traditional processes, like attitude accessibility (Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, et al., 2003), affect (Pfau, et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001), involvement (Pfau, et al., 1997), and attitude certainty (Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, Ivanov, et al., 2005; Pfau, et al., 2003).

Regardless of the particular processes, inoculation's capacity to confer resistance to novel counterattacks makes it one of the most practically useful social influence theories. Initially, that utility was limited to cultural truisms, which was a byproduct of over reliance on the biological analogy. McGuire (1964) reasoned that only those "beliefs maintained in so monolithic an ideological environment would analogize to the health status of an organism raised in a germ-free environment" (p. 201). Therefore, inoculation theory was originally used to protect only the most widely agreed-upon beliefs, which were almost all related to the health domain, like regularly brushing one's teeth and faith in penicillin (McGuire, 1964). Although the basic inoculation model was built by protecting truisms, such beliefs are actually quite rare (McGuire, 1970), which limited the theory's early development. Inoculation has since been used to protect controversial beliefs in a variety of domains: commercial marketing (Godbold & Pfau, 1998; Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, 1992), public relations (M. Burgoon, Pfau, & Birk, 1995; Pfau, Haigh, Sims, et al., 2006), academic honesty (Pfau & Compton, 2008), anti-smoking campaigns (Pfau, Van Bockern, & Kang, 1992), support for the Iraq War (Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006) and various public policy issues, like marijuana legalization and gun control (Pfau, et al., 2008). Now, inoculation theory is widely recognized as a general theory of social influence (Compton & Pfau, 2005a; Pfau, et al., 2002). Regardless of the domain, however, the inoculation message strategy is apt for reinforcing existing beliefs against anticipated counterinfluence. In particular, inoculation is a useful means of protecting political attitudes (C. An & Pfau, 2004a, 2004b; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990).

Protecting Candidates from PSG-Sponsored Advertising

Inoculation may preempt potent PSG-sponsored attack advertising. In many cases, political advertising is the most reliable means of communication between candidates and voters (Geer, 2008); however, candidates are not the sole sponsors of political advertising (S. An, et al., 2006; Franz, et al., 2008; opensecrets.org, 2007; Pfau, et al., 2002; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). Presidential campaign advertising is sponsored by a wide variety of organized interests, like the political parties, political action committees and, of course, PSGs. Moreover, non-candidate sponsors of advertising are more willing to "go negative" (Franz, et al., 2008), especially at the presidential level (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995, p. 132). Candidates are more circumspect about using negative tactics. Fearing a backlash from the voters, they sparingly employ attacks in their advertising (West, 2004). In fact, there appears to be a negative relationship between accountability to the voters and willingness to go negative. Less accountable groups sponsor more voluminous and more vicious attacks. And, the least accountable groups are those that hide their donor's identities and partisan intentions (e.g., 527 and 501c) (Center for Public Integrity, 2007b; Public Citizen, 2004b, 2005). As noted earlier, PSGs, like the *Swift Boat Veterans for Truth* (*SBVT*) and *MoveOn.org*, have been called the stealth front groups of political campaigns (Public Citizen, 2004b, p. 4). Like well-funded covert special operatives, PSGs can nimbly attack anyone, anywhere, anytime and they do so with very little accountability. PSGs are the shock troops of negative campaigning. As such, they wreak havoc on a presidential candidate's campaign. This chapter posits that inoculation may be able to obviate their influence (C. An & Pfau, 2004a, 2004b; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001)

When dealing with the powerful negativity of PSGs, a defensive post-hoc strategy is simply inadequate. Even against the most conventional forms of political attack advertising, such a strategy is risky (Jamieson, 1996; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; West, 2004). Pfau and Kenski (1990) recognized that refutations and rebuttals may not do "much more than to minimize the damage already done by an attack message" (p. 70). Some political attacks, no matter how outrageous, inevitably bias the electorate. Television especially amplifies the irreversibility of political attacks. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) observed that, "the breadth of television's reach makes it difficult to dispel rumors or counteract the effects of negative information" (p. 90). Jamieson (1996) observed that, even if a candidate responds quickly, strategically, appropriately and with the cooperation of the press, any "counterattack may simply legitimize false claims and magnify their impact" (p. xxii). A further complication is that voters generally perceive counterattacks as mean spirited, which can incite a backlash against the sponsoring candidate (West, 2004). The cycle of attack and response can quickly spiral out of control, leaving both candidates damaged (Allen & Burrell, 2002; Basil, et al., 1991; Funk, 2001) and the public disenchanted with the democratic process (Allen & Burrell, 2002; Ansolabehere, et al., 1999; Ansolabehere, Iyengar, Simon, & Valentino, 1994; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999). The risk of such a spiral forces all but the most desperate candidates to moderate both the quantity and the incivility of their attacks. PSG-sponsored attacks are not so constrained.

A defensive strategy against PSGs leaves candidates vulnerable when they are the least able to respond to an attack. Such periods occur when the campaign is nearing an end, or when candidates have already spent most or all of their ad budgets. Research and

recent experience demonstrate that un-refuted political attacks can take on a form of reality that, albeit not actually real, becomes real in its consequences (Jamieson, 1992). In part, Kerry's need to save resources for the late-October advertising blitz compelled his ambivalent response to the *SBVT* early attacks (Thomas, 2004). His team's hesitation was a crucial factor in the success of the *SBVT* campaign. The Democratic consultant James Carville argued that, by the time the Kerry team struck back, it was already too late (in Thomas, 2004).

American political campaigns are not immune from Lenin's proverbial observation that, "a lie told often enough becomes truth". A positive appeal is the least effective response to an attack (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995). Therefore, defense-oriented candidates must counterattack, but PSG do not offer a clear target. Counterattacking against an unaffiliated group incurs all the costs of attacking and few of the benefits. An initial cost is embedded in the inherent disadvantages of attacking, which almost always damages the attacker's public image (Merritt, 1984; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, et al., 1991) and demobilizes the persuadable members of the electorate (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995). Even strong supporters may punish their own candidate for going negative (Matthews & Dietz-Uhler, 1998).

The legally mandated independence of PSG attackers further complicates the situation for a candidate who chooses a post-hoc defensive strategy. The implied beneficiary of PSG-sponsored such attacks can credibly disavow the group's activities, even while he or she is elected on the shoulders of its claims. For the embattled candidate, the time spent responding to PSGs increases the defending candidate's negatives, while his/her opposition remains unscathed and above the fray. Even if the

defending candidate manages to irrevocably damage an aggressive PSGs credibility, the group's covert donors can simply move their money into another aggressively negative front group. Furthermore, the decentralized character of PSGs makes them unpredictable. They can massively attack, selectively attack or alternate strategies to keep defending candidates constantly off balance and off message. Multiple attacks quickly overextend the defensive capacities of even the most efficient campaigns. Political campaigns are substantially weakened by fighting on multiple fronts.

Given the complexity of defending against PSG attacks, the best strategy is preventative. Inoculation is an effective preemptive strategy against corporate stealth groups (Pfau, Haigh, Sims, et al., 2006), and it might also be useful against PSGs. More generally, inoculation is an effective method of preempting a variety of political attacks (for examples, see C. An & Pfau, 2004a, 2004b; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988, 1990; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990).

Pfau and Burgoon (1988) were the first to use inoculation in a political context. During the last month of a closely contested Senate campaign, they used refutational-same and refutational-different inoculation pretreatments to protect voter attitudes against counter-persuasion. Both same and different-inoculation treatments conferred resistance to persuasion. Inoculated participants expressed more favorable evaluations of their initially preferred candidate, greater intention to vote for that candidate and less favorable evaluations of the attacking source's composure and extroversion.

In another study, Pfau and colleagues (1990) demonstrated inoculation's usefulness in presidential politics. They used the 1988 race between Dukakis and Bush to contrast inoculation (same and different) versus post-hoc refutation on their ability to

protect attitudes against direct-mail attack messages. Both same and different-inoculation treatments conferred resistance to persuasion, and they both elicited a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the attack. Furthermore, inoculation was more effective than post-hoc refutation for strong partisans and independents, although results for weak partisans were more complex. Pfau and colleagues (1990) concluded that, "in the first direct comparison of the two alternative strategic responses to political attacks, the inoculation strategy generally proved more effective than post-hoc refutation in combating the influence of political attacks" (p. 39). Still, neither of these studies examined the influence of inoculation against televised political attack messages, which are the most dominant source of political attacks (Brader, 2005; Geer, 2008; Jamieson, 1992; West, 2004).

Two studies have addressed inoculation's ability to preempt televised political attack messages (C. An, 2003; C. An & Pfau, 2004). During the 2002 mid-term elections, C. An (2003) tested inoculation against opposition-sponsored television political attack advertising. Compared to controls, inoculation was associated with more favorable evaluations of the candidate targeted by the attack. Inoculation also protected participatory behavioral support of the targeted candidate, like contributing to the campaign, donating time, recruiting others and vote likelihood. Results further revealed that inoculation's effectiveness was substantially enhanced when the source of the inoculation message conveyed high credibility. In another study, C. An and Pfau (2004) investigated the potential of inoculation to preempt the influence of attacks made during a 2002 televised general election debate between Senatorial candidates. Participants who received an inoculation-different pretreatment evaluated their initially preferred candidate

more favorably than those in a control condition. Unlike the advertising study (C. An, 2003), the inoculation effect was not significant for partisan behavioral intentions (e.g., voting, volunteering or donating money for the preferred candidate). The authors reasoned that inadequate power might have limited the results. Surprisingly, no other studies have examined inoculation's capacity to protect candidate preferences against political attack advertising. This is the first study to test inoculation against televised attack ads during an ongoing presidential contest.

This is also the first study to compare specific and generic inoculation messages. Over a decade ago, Pfau (1997) observed that inoculation's "broad blanket of protection" is particularly useful in political campaigns (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988, 1990; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990). Since then, candidate-specific inoculation has demonstrated its worth (C. An, 2003; C. An & Pfau, 2004a); however, a new generation of inoculation appeals broadens the "blanket of protection" to include entire classes of persuasion. These generic inoculation appeals have protected attitudes against soft-money sponsored attack ads (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001), corporate-front-group stealth campaigns (Pfau, et al., 2007) and print news photographs (Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006). While both specific and generic inoculation appeals are demonstrably effective, no study has compared them within the same context.

This dissertation redresses that deficit. Within the context of the 2008 presidential campaign, it tests the quality of both candidate-specific and generic inoculation appeals. Whereas specific inoculation appeals must be constructed for each candidate, a single generic inoculation appeal confers protection across candidates, which makes it more efficient than specific inoculation. Research suggests that both will be effective; however,

no precedent or theory exists on which to base an estimation of their relative capacity. Therefore, this dissertation offers two sets of hypotheses that predict each technique's individual effectiveness and one research question that asks which one is more effective.

H12a: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

H12b: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H12c: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.

H12d: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.

H13a: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

H13b: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H13c: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.

H13d: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.

RQ6a: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ6b: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ6c: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ6d: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the candidate supported in PSG- sponsored political attack advertising?

H14a: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

H14b: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H14c: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.

H14d: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.

H15a: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

H15b: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

H15c: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.

H15d: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.

RQ7a: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in candidate-sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ7b: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in candidate -sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ7c: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in candidate -sponsored political attack advertising?

RQ7d: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the candidate supported in candidate - sponsored political attack advertising?

Protecting Democratic Values from Candidate-Sponsored Extreme Negativity

Inoculation may be the best way to protect the electorate from the demobilizing effects of extreme attack advertising. Although the demobilizing influence of political

attack advertising is generally controversial (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Brooks & Geer, 2007; Franz, et al., 2008; Jamieson, 1992; West, 2004), scholars agree that extreme negativity substantially harms the electorate's faith in democracy (Brooks & Geer, 2007; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999; Lau & Pomper, 2001). Extreme attack advertising is one-sided, image-oriented and uncivil. Each dimension of candidate-sponsored extreme advertising discourages voters: one-sided attacks (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998), personal attacks (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, et al., 1991) and uncivil language (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). Some have suspected that campaigns occasionally employ extreme attacks to intentionally demobilize voters who would otherwise support the opposition (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995). This dissertation posits that candidates and democratic activists can employ either generic or candidate-specific inoculation appeals to preempt the detrimental influence of extreme attacks on the electorate's faith in democracy and willingness to participate in politics.

When the electorate complains about too much negativity in political advertising, they may be complaining about the most extreme negativity, like one-sided attacks ads. One-sided attacks are purely negative, meaning they are entirely focused indicting an opponent's record, competence or general fitness for office. Two-sided political attacks, on the other hand, compare the relative merits of one candidate against another. The electorate generally prefers two-sided to one-sided information about politicians (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998). Two-sided political ads mimic the kind of engagement that "enables audiences to determine which argument has the greater force" (Jamieson, 1992, p. 216). Purely negative or one-sided political attacks, however, simply

give the impression *all* politicians are at best inept and at worst, corrupt. The most extreme forms of attacks harm attitudes toward both the sponsoring candidate and the targeted candidate (Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). Furthermore, direct comparisons between one and two-sided attacks show that one-sided political ads are less favorably evaluated (Meirick, 2002; Pinkleton, 1998), and they may be more demobilizing (K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999). One-sided messages appear manipulative and make it hard for the public to compare candidates on the criteria they find important. The electorate is turned off by political communication that does not facilitate its ability to evaluate politicians on their issue positions, promises and ability to govern (Patterson, 1993).

Political attacks focusing on personalities may disillusion and demobilize the electorate (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Patterson, 1993). Image-oriented political advertising focuses on candidates' personality or superficial personal characteristics (Kaid & Johnston, 1991). Issue-oriented advertising, on the other hand, emphasizes the "candidates' stands on the campaign issues" (Johnston & Kaid, 2002). The electorate prefers issue to image-oriented advertising (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Finkel & Geer, 1998; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Thorson, et al., 1991). The implicit message of image-oriented attack ads is that politicians are disappointing, incompetent and the government they run is unresponsive (Hart, 1999). Issue-oriented advertising, on the other hand, channels the electorate's need for policy information, which reinforces faith in democracy, facilitates engagement and welcomes democratic participation (Jamieson, 1992). For much of the electorate, personal attacks are simply unpleasant (Thorson, et al., 1991) and a clear violation of civility (Mutz, 2007).

Uncivil political attacks are an inappropriate and demobilizing form of political discourse (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005). The electorate is disappointed and disgusted by political discourse that would otherwise be inappropriate in civil society. Uncivil political discourse is simply defined as quarrelsome, impolite and unfriendly (Mutz, 2007). It tends to employ inflammatory language and superfluous observations (Brooks & Geer, 2007). In the high stakes world of political competition, civility is often the first casualty. In fact, the dangers of incivility are explicitly acknowledged by deliberative bodies, which intentionally maintain a strict system of order and decorum (e.g., *Roberts Rules of Order*). Paid political advertising is not so formally constrained, and history is replete with illustrations of uncivil political attack advertising (e.g., the *SBVT* accusations against John Kerry and *MoveOn.org*'s indictment of General David Patraeus as the one who 'betrayed us'). The empirical evidence converges on a single conclusion: uncivil political discourse damages the public's confidence in politicians and political institutions (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; K. F. Kahn & Kenney, 1999; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005).When uncivil tactics combine with one-sided image-oriented attacks, the preponderance of evidence points to an almost certain demobilizing effect.

Inoculation may provide an effective means of preempting the deleterious influence of extreme advertising on democratic attitudes. Inoculation is a demonstrable effective method for protecting democratic values from televised political attacks (Pfau, et al., 2002). C. An and Pfau (2004) attempted to use candidate-specific inoculation to defend democratic values from attacks conveyed during a televised Senate debate, but they found that, "candidate attacks initiated in debates do not undermine participatory

attitudes, therefore muting inoculation's effect on normative outcomes" (p. 432). In an earlier study, Pfau and colleagues (2002) used generic inoculation to protect democratic values from the deleterious influence of soft-money sponsored issue advertising. The generic inoculation obviated harmful effects for Republicans but not for Democrats or Independents. Nevertheless, those findings are encouraging. This dissertation posits that both candidate-specific and generic inoculation appeals may protect democratic values from the deleterious influence of extreme political attack advertising. It also poses a research question concerning the relative influence of candidate versus generic inoculation.

H16a: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to political attack advertising in terms of greater trust in American government.

H16b: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to political attack advertising in terms of greater democratic political efficacy.

RQ8a: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their protection of trust in American government?

RQ8b: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their protection of democratic political efficacy?

Print and Video's Influence on the Inoculation Process

The multi-mediated nature of contemporary presidential campaigns provides a good context in which to study how the medium of presentation affects the inoculation process. Today's presidential campaigns communicate through multiple media. In a technique called bracketing (Overby, 2007), campaigns simultaneously broadcast thematically-related political messages through a variety of mediated outlets, like television, radio, newspapers, magazines and direct mail. This multi-mediated reality of contemporary presidential campaigns raises practical and theoretical questions related to inoculation's effectiveness and its processes. One such question concerns the capacity of inoculation to confer resistance when a refutational pretreatment is presented in one medium (e.g., video), and the attack is presented in another (e.g., print). Previous research shows that both medium-different (Holbert, 2000; Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001) and medium-same inoculation treatments (McGuire, 1964, 1970; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, Haigh, Sims, et al., 2006; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001; Pfau, et al., 2002; Pfau, et al., 2003) successfully confer resistance; however, no study has directly compared their relative effectiveness (Pfau, et al., 2000). This dissertation fills that gap in the literature. It posits that differences between the processes elicited by each media are substantial enough to influence the relative effectiveness of medium-same and medium-different inoculation. This argument is supported by medium theory's contention that media communicate through distinct processes (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, et al., 2000; Worchel, et al., 1975). The most extreme form of this claim posits that media are epistemic (Chesebro, 1984; Meyrowitz, 1994). For example, it is generally accepted that audiovisual media persuade

via source cues, whereas print media persuade via semantic content (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Keating & Latane, 1976; Meyrowitz, 1982; Pfau, 1990; Worchel, et al., 1975). This dissertation seeks to replicate that finding, but it also embarks on a more adventurous expedition into the radical proposition that media are epistemic (Chesebro, 1984; Ong, 1982; Postman, 1982). Specifically, it tests the proposition that audiovisual media persuade through directly experiential processes (e.g., affect, attitude strength and attitude accessibility), whereas print media persuade through indirectly experiential processes (e.g., counterarguing). The directness of experience with an attitude object influences affect toward the attitude object (Fazio, et al., 1978; M. G. Millar & Millar, 1996), attitude strength (Fazio & Zanna, 1978b, 1978c; Regan & Fazio, 1977) and attitude accessibility (Fazio & Zanna, 1981).

Inoculation confers resistance regardless of which media are enlisted for the refutational preemption or the persuasive attack messages (see C. An & Pfau, 2004; McGuire, 1962b; Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). Most inoculation research demonstrates resistance by pairing print-mediated refutational pretreatments with print-mediated attack messages (McGuire, 1961; McGuire, 1962b; McGuire, 1964, 1970; McGuire & Papageorgis, 1961; Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau et al., 2008; Pfau, et al., 2003), but print-mediated refutational pretreatments are also effective against video-mediated attacks (C. An & Pfau, 2004; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). And, video-mediated refutational pretreatments are effective against print-mediated attacks. Furthermore, video-mediated refutational pretreatments confer resistance to video-mediated attacks (Godbold & Pfau, 1998), and one study showed that video-mediated refutational pretreatments confer resistance against attacks

mediated by peer pressure (Pfau, et al., 1992). Indeed, regardless of the medium of refutational pretreatment or the medium of attack, inoculation is an effective method of protecting existing attitudes. Therefore, it is a simple matter to infer that print and video inoculation treatments confer resistance to the influence of political attack advertising.

However, if media are epistemic (Chesebro, 1984; McLuhan, 1967; Ong, 1982), variations in media must influence the way in which inoculation hardens attitudes against counterpersuasion. Several studies of belief and attitude change demonstrate that media are epistemic. That is, they demonstrate that distinct media are more effective with some types of evidence and less effective with other types (Chaiken & Eagly, 1976; Keating & Latane, 1976; Pfau, 1990; Pfau, et al., 2000; Worchel, et al., 1975). For example, a persuasive message conveyed by a highly credible source is more effective on television than in print (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Pfau, 1990; Worchel, et al., 1975). On the other hand, a well-argued print message is equally persuasive whether the source is likeable or not (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983). The decisive factor for transforming mere information into belief is an attractive or highly credible source, which is to say that television's principle epistemic criteria are interpersonal. Print, on the other, transforms mere information into belief with cogent and well-supported arguments, which is to say that print's epistemic criteria are propositional or semantic. When conveyed by these media, inoculation may both confer resistance, even if they do so by different processes. In other words, video inoculation may be mediated by source considerations and print inoculation may be mediated by content considerations.

Pfau and colleagues (2000) compared the processes by which video versus print inoculation confer resistance to persuasion. They found that video inoculation highlighted

source considerations in the process of resistance to persuasion. More specifically, the source considerations of similarity/depth, character and receptivity/trust were operative. Therefore, this study expected to find a similar result.

H17a: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's source credibility.

H17b: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's relational communication.

In keeping with the assumption that print is more cognitive than video (Gore, 2007; Krugman, 1971; Postman, 1985), Pfau et al. (2000) posited that print inoculation confers more counterarguing output than video inoculation. That hypothesis was not confirmed; instead, video inoculation was non-significantly associated with more counterargumentation. Even more interesting was that, compared to the control condition, print failed to produce statistically significant levels of counterarguing output, whereas video's output was statistically significant. The authors (Pfau, et al., 2000) suggested that the video may have been more involving than they had assumed (see Worchel, et al., 1975). This dissertation extends that logic. It posits that video is more like a lived experience than print (Keating & Latane, 1976; Worchel, et al., 1975).

Video *recreates* high fidelity live experience. Print only *represents* it. Video can be understood with the untrained human senses (McLuhan, 1967; Schwartz, 1973). Print requires years of training, and even then, it remains a relatively impoverished and highly contrived form of experience. Fazio and Zanna (1981) observed that direct experience

makes “more information about the object available to the individual than an indirect experience” (p. 186). When matched against one another, video provides more access to potential attitude objects than print; therefore, it is a more direct experience. Of course, both media contain a semantic channel, but video’s semantic channel conveys the additional dimension of paravocalic communication, which carries substantial connotative and emotional meaning (Scherer, 1986). Video’s aural channel is further capable of recruiting music to directly elicit emotion (Balch, et al., 1999; Jamieson, 1992; Sousou, 1997). Video’s visual channel is particularly able to convey emotion, which it accomplishes through two conceptual paths: contagious affect displays (Hatfield, et al., 1992) and emotionally evocative scenes (Jamieson, 1992), like fear or enthusiasm (Brader, 2005). Ultimately, the real advantage of video is its ability to strengthen attitude accessibility and enhance attitude certainty, which are each independent mediators of inoculation’s capacity to confer resistance to persuasion (Pfau, et al., 2005). In short, video is more emotional and experiential (Gore, 2007; Hart, 1999; Schwartz, 1973), whereas, print is more cognitive and reflective (Gore, 2007; Ong, 1982; Postman, 1982; Schwartz, 1973).

Video’s capacity to elicit emotion is further enhanced by the presentation of vivid emotional cues, which are transferred through emotional contagion. Emotional contagion is the vicarious “catching” of another’s emotions from subtle cues embedded in affect displays, posture and/or paravocalics (Hatfield, et al., 1992). Although it is traditionally considered an interpersonal phenomenon, research shows that emotional contagion also operates through video and photographic depictions of emotionally charged others (Elaine Hatfield, et al., 1994; Hsee, et al., 1990; Hsee, Hatfield, & Chemtob, 1992;

Lanzetta, et al., 1985; McHugo, et al., 1985). The potency of emotional contagion is further enhanced by intimate camera distances (i.e., 6 to 18 inches), which are commonly employed on television (Meyrowitz, 1982, 1992) and in televised political discourse (Mutz, 2007). Research has even demonstrated emotional contagion through photos and/or videos of presidents (Lanzetta, et al., 1985; McHugo, et al., 1985).

More broadly, political advertising uses *both* emotionally evocative visuals and music to elicit emotion. Televised political advertising is particularly capable of using visuals to create persuasive emotional connections (Brader, 2005, 2006; Jamieson, 1992). Westen (2007) argued that the most effective and memorable political advertisements provoke a symphony of emotions. For example, the *Daisy Ad* is replete with emotionally enticing visuals, like the vulnerable child and the atomic blast, which may invoke feelings of contentment, surprise, fear, anxiety or even anger. Music and sound effects are another important source of video's power to elicit emotion (Brader, 2006; Jamieson, 1992). In commercial advertising, emotionally evocative music influences attitudes toward the advertised products (Bruner, 1990; Gorn, 1982; Oakes, 2007), and substantial reasoning demonstrates that music in political advertising is persuasive (Jamieson, 1992).

Unlike music, print is more likely to invoke reflection than impulsive emotional reactions (Gore, 2007; Postman, 1985; Schwartz, 1973). Some research shows that merely processing printed information mitigates the emotional consequences of affective phenomena, like the mere exposure effect (Zajonc, 2001). Moreover, video's emotionally charged visual and aural channels are simply absent in print. Whereas print may convey emotion indirectly by implicating cognitive motivational relational themes (Lazarus,

1991b), visuals convey affect directly and even, non-consciously (Dimberg, et al., 2000; Elaine Hatfield, et al., 1994; Hsee, et al., 1992; Whalen, et al., 1998).

Emotion can be elicited directly or indirectly. Emotionally evocative visuals (Brader, 2005; Jamieson, 1992) elicit emotion through non-cognitive processes. On the other hand, cognitive awareness of the relationship between one's goals and the environment elicit emotion through the mediating process of cognition (Lazarus, 1991a, 1991b). Both evocative visuals and relational themes have elicited emotion in inoculation research (Nabi, 2003; Pfau et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001; Pfau & Compton, 2008). Pfau et al. (2001) compared cognitive, affective-happiness and affective-anger inoculation messages. The cognitive manipulation was a traditional refutational preemption message (McGuire, 1964), whereas the affective-happiness and affective-anger manipulations elicited emotion with goal attainment and goal inhibition themes (Lazarus, 1991a, 1991b). Results showed that the affective-anger and cognitive treatments conferred the most resistance to persuasion. Structural equation models further revealed that the emotional inoculation treatments conferred resistance through both traditional (e.g., inoculation → threat → counterarguing → resistance) and non-traditional processes (e.g., inoculation → threat → anger → resistance). Using similar inoculation treatments to Pfau et al. (2001), Pfau and colleagues (2008) revealed that counterarguing output was both affective and cognitive, even if cognitive counterarguing output dwarfed the affective counterarguing output. Nabi (2003) embedded emotionally evocative visuals directly into refutational preemption messages. Her results justified the conclusion that, "visuals can influence degree of inoculation conferred through their

affective level and placement within an inoculation video, above and beyond any argumentative or emotional impact of a message's text" (p. 218).

Given the capacity of video to elicit affect and print's capacity to elicit cognitive reflection, it seems reasonable to posit that the former induces an affective process of resistance to persuasion, whereas the latter stimulates a cognitive process. Such a finding might help explain Pfau and colleague's (2000) finding that video inoculation elicited greater threat and counterarguing output than print. Those differences, albeit slight, might have been the product of the additional emotional stimulation provided by the video's affective content. Pfau, et al. (2001) explained that elicited anger enhances the motivation to defend one's beliefs in the face of imminent counterpersuasion; therefore, Pfau and colleague's (2000) video inoculation treatment may have elicited anger, which then manifested itself as greater threat. However, Pfau and colleagues (2000) employed a relatively impoverished video manipulation. It did not convey evocative visuals or emotional music. Given a more robust video manipulation, video may elicit greater levels of affect and threat.

H18a: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase positive affect for the initially supported candidate.

H18b: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more affective associative network content about the initially supported candidate.

H18c: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video inoculation elicits more threat in the process of resistance to political attack advertising.

In terms of counterarguing, Pfau at al's (2000) finding that video produced more of it may mean that video inoculation produced both affective and cognitive counterargumentative content, while print only produced cognitive output. That difference may have created a superficial impression that counterargumentation was greater for video. Therefore, it seems reasonable to posit that a sensitive measure, which can delineate affective from cognitive bolstering content, might effectively demonstrate that video confers resistance through affective processes, while print confers resistance through cognitive processes.

H18d: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits less counter argumentation against potential attacks on the initially supported candidate.

H18e: Compared to video-mediated inoculation, print-mediated inoculation elicits more cognitive associative network content.

H18f: Compared to video-mediated inoculation, print-mediated inoculation elicits a less favorable evaluation of political attack advertising.

As a form of direct experience, video-mediated inoculation confers resistance to persuasion by enhancing attitude confidence and certainty.[1] Compared to attitudes formed with indirect experience, attitudes formed with direct experience are held with more certainty and confidence (Fazio & Zanna, 1978b, 1978c, 1981; Regan & Fazio, 1977). If one accepts that direct and indirect experiential media are differentiated by the amount of information they convey (Fazio & Zanna, 1981), video is a more direct

[1] See Chapter Five for a complete discussion of the argument that print is a form of indirect experience and video is a form of direct experience.

experience than print, and as such, it may operate like direct experience with respect to its influence on attitude strength. Therefore, it seems reasonable to posit that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation is associated with greater attitude confidence and greater attitude certainty.

H18g: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits greater phase-two attitudinal confidence regarding the initially supported candidate.

H18h: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitudinal confidence regarding the evaluation of the political attack advertising.

Furthermore, existing research has demonstrated that attitude certainty is a distinct, albeit non-traditional, mechanism by which inoculation treatments confer resistance to persuasion. Given a close relationship between attitude certainty and attitude confidence, all three forms of elicited attitude strength might mediate the relationship between video inoculation and conferred resistance to persuasion.

Finally, attitudes strengthened by video-mediated inoculation may also be associated with more attitude-behavior consistency than attitudes strengthened by print. Research has consistently demonstrated that direct experience with an attitude object enhances attitude-consistent behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1978b, 1978c, 1981; M. G. Millar & Millar, 1996; Regan & Fazio, 1977). As would be expected, the mechanism of that process is attitude strength, which was frequently predicted by attitude confidence and certainty (Fazio & Zanna, 1978b). Since video is a more direct experience than print, video inoculation may be a better protector of attitude-consistent behavior.

H18i: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and intention to vote for that candidate.

H18j: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and intention to vote against that candidate.

Fazio and Zana (1981) offered an attitude accessibility explanation for direct and indirect experience's ability to strengthen attitudes and enhance attitude-behavior consistency. They reasoned that, "the more salient or available an attitude is, the more likely it is that the individual will access that attitude on observation of the attitude object" (p. 189). Fazio and Chen (in Fazio & Zanna, 1981) tested the attitude accessibility explanation with a response-latency paradigm. Results showed that attitudes formed under direct experience were more accessible than attitudes formed under indirect experience. Using a thinking and talking measure of attitude accessibility, at least two studies demonstrated an attitude accessibility explanation for inoculation's ability to confer resistance to persuasion (Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, et al., 2003). Fazio and Chen (in Fazio & Zanna, 1981) found that direct experience produced an immediate increase in attitude accessibility. Interestingly, Pfau and colleague's (2000) finding that video produced immediate resistance to persuasion might be explainable by demonstrating that video, like direct experience, elicits immediate attitude accessibility.

H18k: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the 2008 general election.

H18l: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the initially-supported candidate.

H18m: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two associative network content regarding the initially-supported candidate.

H18n: Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more strongly accessible associative network content regarding the initially-supported candidate.

If the aforementioned hypotheses regarding the relative processes of print and video-mediated inoculation are validated, it stands to reason that inoculation is a more effective strategy when the refutational pretreatment medium matches the medium in which attacking counterpersuasion will appear. Media represent distinct informational environments (Meyrowitz, 1985; Postman, 1982), but they also represent distinct epistemologies or ways of knowing (Chesebro, 1984; Ong, 1982). Whether in terms of affect (Gore, 2007; Postman, 1985) or source considerations (Chaiken & Eagly, 1983; Keating & Latane, 1976; Pfau, 1990; Worchel, et al., 1975), video and print elicit distinct processes of influence. These distinctions have also been evidenced in inoculation research (Pfau, et al., 2000); however, no research has directly compared medium-same inoculation and medium-different inoculation. However, if distinct media highlight

distinct forms of information (e.g., direct experience, indirect experience, affect or source considerations), an inoculation medium that highlights one constellation of information should be more effective against attacks that highlight the same constellation of considerations. Therefore, to the extent that print and video inoculations operate through distinct processes, medium-same inoculation should confer more resistance to persuasion than medium-different inoculation.

H19a: In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.

H19b: In terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate, printed inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.

H19c: In terms of a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the attack, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to print-mediated attacks than to video-mediated attacks.

H19d: In terms of a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the attack, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.

H20a: In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.

H20b: In terms of a greater intention to the vote for the targeted candidate, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.

H20c: In terms of a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the political attack, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.

H20d: In terms of a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the political attack, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated political attacks than to printed attacks.

CHAPTER VIII

METHOD

This study evaluated the content of 2008 presidential advertising, its influence on potential voters and the potential for an inoculation message strategy to obviate that influence. A content analysis of the 2008 general election advertising and a three phase experimental study answered nearly 100 research questions and hypotheses. This section conveys the study's method and procedures. It proceeds in two broad sub-sections. The first articulates the content analysis of over 300 political advertisements from three sponsors: presidential candidates, FEC-compliant political advocates and PSGs (PSG). The second sub-section provides a detailed account of the research design and measures used to estimate the effects of candidate versus PSG-sponsored attack advertising and generic versus candidate-specific inoculation.

Content Analysis of 2008 Presidential Political Advertising

The functional theory of campaign discourse (Benoit, 2006; Benoit, et al., 1997) was used to content analyze the 2008 televised presidential advertising. The functional theory assumes that vote choice is determined by a simple algorithm, which compares a candidate's negative traits to her positive traits. It predicts that voters choose the candidate with the most positive traits and the least negative traits. It further predicts that campaign organizations use communication to maximize perceptions of both their own candidates' positive traits and their opponents' negative traits. Across sponsors, campaigns and media, the functional theory's predictions have explained the content of presidential campaign advertising (Airne & Benoit, 2005; Benoit, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004b; Benoit & Stein, 2005). Therefore, the functional theory was deemed an

appropriate lens through which to evaluate the magnitude and form of negativity present in 2008 general election presidential spots.

The ads for this analysis were downloaded and transcribed from *The Ad Wars* (Scheinkman, Xaquin, McLean, & Weitberg, 2009a), which is an online database of the presidential spots aired in the top 100 media markets from April 3, 2008 through November 5, 2008. The list of ads used to populate the database was created by the Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG), which uses sophisticated satellite tracking technology to record every political ad aired in the nation's largest media markets (Campaign Media Analysis Group, 2009). A total of 19 ads were excluded because they were in Spanish; however, many of those were simple translations of English ads. Table **1** displays the final sample of 325 political spots from three sponsors: candidates (171), PSGs (44) and FEC-compliant third parties (110). The operational definition of PSGs was organizations engaged in political advocacy that were not registered with the FEC. Federal Election Commission compliant groups, on the other hand, were those registered with the FEC. Ads sponsored by both the national political party and the candidate were considered party ads and were coded as FED-compliant ads. The candidate spots were those funded and created by the major party candidate's campaign organization. The candidate's campaign organizations were registered with the FEC.

Before providing the ads to coders, the researcher unitized their semantic content into individual themes, which are "the smallest units of discourse that are capable of expressing a complete idea" (Benoit, 2000, p. 248). A single ad typically communicates multiple themes. For example, the McCain campaign's ad entitled *Served* conveyed five themes:

> [McCain Speaking] I've served my country since I was seventeen years old and spent five years longing for her shores. I came home dedicated to a cause greater than my own. [Theme 1] We can grow our economy, [Theme 2] we will cut government waste. [Theme 3] Don't hope for a stronger economy, [Theme 4] vote for one. [Theme 5]

The final sample of 325 spots was divided into 1546 themes: candidates (1043), FEC-compliant third parties (363) and PSGs (140).

Themes were content analyzed for their function. Thematic functions are attacks, acclaims or defenses (Benoit, 2006; Benoit, et al., 1997). An attack portrays "the opposing candidate or opposing candidate's political party in an unfavorable light" (Benoit, et al., 1997, p. 9). In an ad entitled *Savagery*, Defenders of Wildlife *attacked* Governor Sarah Palin: "As Alaska governor, Palin promotes the vicious aerial killing of wolves. With no chance to escape, riddled with gun shots, it's a brutal death." In contrast to an attacking theme, "an acclaim portrays the sponsoring candidate or the candidate's political party in a favorable light" (p. 9). In an ad entitled *Charlie Christ*, the Republican National Committee *acclaimed* Senator John McCain: "[Governor Charlie Christ speaking] John McCain is uniquely qualified to lead our nation through a crisis." Finally, a thematic defense "responds to a prior attack on the candidate or the candidate's political party" (p. 9). In an ad entitled *McCain Say Anything*, Obama's campaign *defended* their candidate from an attack by Senator John McCain:

> His [i.e., McCain] defense spending attack: it's a lie. Here's what McCain's own military advisor Robert Kagen said: 'Obama wants to increase defense spending.

He wants to add 65000 troops to the Army and recruit 27000 more Marines to fight terrorism'.

Finally, non-functional themes are those that do not provide an explicit reason to vote for or against a candidate (Benoit, 2000).

The 2008 presidential spots were also content analyzed for topic. Functional themes attack, acclaim or defend with reference to one of two topics: character or policy. A character theme "addresses characteristics, traits, abilities, or attributes of the candidates" (Benoit, 2000, p. 281). In an ad entitled *Surgeon*, the Republican National Committee attacked Senator Barack Obama's character in terms of his lack of experience:

> [Male Announcer] Would you get on a plane with a pilot who has never flown? Would you trust your child with a person who has never been with children? Would you go under with a surgeon who has never operated? Can you hand your nation to a man [Obama] who has never been in charge of anything?

A policy theme concerns "government action or problems amendable to such action" (p. 281). In an ad entitled *Timeline*, *MoveOn.org* attacked Senator John McCain on his policy position concerning Iraq: "He [McCain] will spend hundreds of millions of dollars more to keep our troops in Iraq for years and years."

Four graduate student coders identified the functions and topics conveyed by the sample of 2008 presidential political spots. After two coder training sessions, the team of content analysts articulated a single set of coding guidelines used to analyze a 10% sample of themes. Table 2a displays the final coder rules. Intercoder reliability was calculated with J. Cohen's *kappa* (1960), which accounts for chance agreement between

coders. According to standard set forth by Landis and Koch (1977), coders achieved almost perfect reliability (κ = .92) on function and substantial reliability (κ = .71) on topic. Table 2b displays the complete reliability statistics. Upon reaching a reliable level of agreement, the remaining 90% of themes were divided between the four coders, who completed the analysis in less than two weeks.

Political Attack Advertising and Inoculation Studies

Participants

Participants for both the advertising effects and the inoculation study were recruited from eligible voters among the undergraduate students at The University of South Dakota. Respondents were given class time to complete phase 1 of the study. In exchange for their participation, students earned course credit. Of the 387 students who began the study at phase 1, 383 completed phase 2 and 370 completed all three phases (a 96% retention rate). Ultimately, another 16 respondents were dropped from the analysis due to substantial omissions or confounding assignment errors. The final retention rate was 91%.

Research Design

Examination of the political advertising and the inoculation effects was accomplished with a three-phase pre-post randomized experimental design. The data collection period ran from 09/29/2008 through 11/03/2008. At phase 1, respondents reported their initial attitudes, feelings and behavioral intentions toward the 2008 major presidential candidates. Throughout the study, respondents were exposed to messages targeting the candidate they supported at phase 1. Therefore, the inoculation messages singled out impending attacks against the candidate whom the participant initially

supported at phase 1, and the attack messages targeted the same initially supported candidate. Cells were balanced so they contained about equal number of Obama and McCain supporters. At inoculation-phase, participants were randomly assigned to a media (print or video) and an inoculation condition (control, candidate-specific and generic). Respondents in the inoculation-control conditions (i.e., print and video) were further divided into attack conditions (control, candidate-sponsor and PSG-sponsor). All of the cells were balanced with respect to strength of party identification. Each contained about 1/3 weak identifiers, 1/3 moderate identifiers and 1/3 strong identifiers. A total of 16 cells were created and statistically analyzed. On the administrative level, however, there were 96 cells: 2 (print versus video) by 3 (inoculation control, candidate-specific inoculation and generic inoculation) by 3 (attack control, candidate-sponsored and PSG-sponsored attack) x 2 (McCain supporter and Obama supporter) x 3 (weak, moderate and strong partisanship). The administrative cell structures and the final cell sizes are displayed in Appendix 1.

Phase One: Procedure

Phase1 was identical for all respondents. Public speaking instructors at The University of South Dakota escorted students to a large lecture hall where the researcher presented the study, consent materials and initial survey to respondents. The phase 1 instrument is displayed in Appendix 2. Students expected to receive course credit in exchange for their participation in all three phases of the research. Students who did not want to participate could obtain course credit for participating in other research or by completing a short written assignment. Those who consented to participate were told the research concerned the processing of print versus video media. The phase 1 instrument

contained several items that confirmed the cover story. Respondents reported their demographic information, media use, level of consumer materialism and parasocial interaction with favorite television personalities. These items are currently under analysis in a distinct cross-sectional study of parasocial interaction's association with consumer materialism. For this study, however, the relevant phase 1 questions concerned the respondent's initial candidate preference and strength of partisan identification. Both instruments are explained in the measurement section.

Inoculation Phase: Procedure

Approximately one week after completing phase 1, respondents reported for phase 2. Phase 2 was conducted in a conference room at The University of South Dakota's temporary student union. At the start of phase 2, the researcher randomly assigned participants to a media and an inoculation condition. The media conditions were print and video. The inoculation conditions were control (i.e., no inoculation), candidate-specific inoculation and generic inoculation. Respondents assigned to control condition were further divided between the attack conditions, which were to be administered at phase 3. All 16 cells were balanced so they contained an approximately equal number of respondents from each of five categories: McCain supporter, Obama supporter, weak partisan, moderate partisan and strong partisan. Once respondents were assigned to a condition, they were given a phase 2 survey and a print or video set of two inoculation messages. Appendix 3 displays an exemplary phase 2 instrument. Participants were instructed to read or watch the messages before beginning the survey. Respondents in the video condition were given a Zenith-brand seven inch wide LCD portable DVD player (model # DVP615) and a set of Koss over-the-head headphones with a frequency

response of 80Hz-18kHz. The researcher inserted the condition-specific DVD into the player, but the respondents were free to adjust the volume to a comfortable level. Respondents in the print condition were given two print inoculation advertisements in plastic slip covers. At the completion of phase 2, participants were told to return for phase 3 in approximately one week.

Inoculation Phase: Messages

Print. The print experimental materials strove for mundane realism. All respondents were exposed to two full-color print advertisements. Respondents in the print control condition were exposed to traditional commercial advertisements. Respondents in the inoculation conditions saw inoculation messages that were contrived to look like traditional print advertisements. The layout for those ads was borrowed from an Ogilvy (1985) design. Their semantic content was adapted from messages used in previous political campaign inoculation research (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, et al., 1990), and the photos in those ads were captured from screen prints of televised political advertising. A total of six printed inoculation ads were produced: two Obama-specific ads, two McCain-specific ads and two generic ads.

The candidate-specific inoculation ads singled out the opposition candidate and two salient campaign issues. The threat component warned respondents of coming attacks from the opposition candidate, and the refutational preemption content concerned energy or taxes. A USA/Today Gallup poll, from early September, 2008 showed that two-thirds of Americans rated energy prices and the economy as the most important issues of the presidential campaign (Page, 2008). In fact, the economy remained the most salient issue

through the end of the campaign, and energy remained among the top five most important issues (Polling Report Incorporated, 2009).

Except for mentioning the major party candidates, generic print inoculation ads did not focus on the particular discursive contours of the 2008 campaign. The generic threat component warned participants about the coming assault of effective attack ads, but they did not single out a single sponsor of those advertisements. In addition, their refutational preemption content derogated all forms of political attack advertising. The only link between the generic ads and the 2008 campaign were photos of the candidates, which were intended to remind respondents of the attitude object which would be attacked by political advertising. Excepting the 2008-specifc photos, these ads were intended to work for any electoral contest in which political attack advertising is an important mode of campaigning.

Both the candidate-specific and the generic inoculation print advertisements were sponsored by a fictional political action group called Citizens for an Informed Electorate, which has been used in previous inoculation research (Pfau, et al., 1990). Each inoculation message, regardless of its content, was constructed with a similar format, similar visuals and a similar word count. Burgoon and colleagues (1978) recommended that message content across conditions should be as similar as possible. Both the candidate-specific and the generic inoculation print advertisements were created with Microsoft Publisher. Along with the control advertisements, all of the print inoculation ads are included in Appendix 4.

Video. Formal inoculation messages have not been presented in a conventional video advertising format. Video inoculation messages have typically consisted of an

onscreen narrator, who is shot at a medium distance and who simply reads a typical print inoculation message (Pfau, et al., 2000). While some video inoculation messages have provided visual illustrations (Godbold & Pfau, 1998; Nabi, 2003; Pfau, et al., 1992) or musical background (Pfau, et al., 1992), none have employed the entire symphony of television advertising conventions, including music, memorable semantic content and compelling visuals. West (2004) reported that the Clinton team used the logic of inoculation in the 1992 and the 1996 presidential campaigns. In reality, the Clinton team employed threat messages in their speeches, but their ads consisted of nothing more than contrast appeals or what West called "positive attack ads" (p. 149). This study may provide the first illustration of a "commercialized" inoculation appeal.

The content of the video inoculation materials in this study paralleled the content in the print materials. As in the print condition, the video control advertisements were traditional advertisements. Both control and inoculation ads were not embedded. Most importantly, both the semantic content and the flow of the print and video inoculation ads were identical. The principal investigator used Adobe's Premier Elements 4.0 to combine the semantic content of the print inoculation advertisements with publicly available video content, photos and music. The final product was six professional looking video-mediated inoculation advertisements. The ads were burned onto DVD's and labeled according to their condition.

The principle difference between the print and video inoculation advertisements was due to the inherent differences between the media. In other words, the video ads included narration, music and dynamic visual content. The semantic content was identical to the print ads, but for the video ads, it was narrated by a female colleague in department

of communication studies at The University of South Dakota. Furthermore, each ad conveyed a nearly identical musical score that emotionally punctuated each element of the inoculation message: threat and refutational preemption. Each ad announced its relationship to the presidential campaign with easily recognizable segments of *Hail to the Chief* - a synecdoche for the American presidency. Soon after, the threat component was reinforced with generically ominous music. Threat was followed by *America the Beautiful*, which introduced and punctuated the refutational preemption portion of the inoculation message. Video content was consistent with the thematic content of both the semantic and aural channels. An American flag waved while *Hail to Chief* played. During the threat component, short excerpts of 2008 presidential advertising were shown, with each excerpt separated by televised snow. The intended effect was to mimic a TV flipping from channel to channel only to find one negative ad after another. Visually, the transition between the threat and refutational preemption segments was accomplished with a depiction of the television turning off to reveal a white screen and the fade in of black text displaying the name of the ad's sponsor: Citizens for an Informed Electorate. While the refutational preemption was announced in the vocal channel, "Informed Citizens" were shown in the viewer's social space (for a discussion of para-proxemics, see Meyrowitz, 1982). The video inoculation ads can be viewed on the principal investigator's You Tube Channel. Specific links to each ad are provided in Appendix 5.

Attack Phase: Procedure

Respondents who completed phase 1 and phase 2 qualified to participate in phase 3. Assignment at phase 2 facilitated the efficient administration of phase 3, which occurred approximately one week after phase 2. The researcher provided participants

with the appropriate experimental materials and survey instruments. He further instructed the respondents to carefully read or watch the experimental messages before beginning and completing the survey instrument. Upon completion of the phase 3 survey instrument, participants were given a debrief script and thanked for their participation. A phase 3 instrument is displayed in Appendix 6.

Attack Phase: Measures

Video. To maintain mundane realism, experimental materials were embedded into television programming typically enjoyed by 18 to 24 year olds. The participants viewed an episode of the popular sitcom *Scrubs*, which "focuses on the bizarre experiences of fresh-faced medical intern John 'J.D.' Dorian (Zach Braff) as he embarks on his healing career in a surreal hospital crammed full of unpredictable staffers and patients" (tv.com, 2009b). The particular episode used in this study is entitled *My Big Brother* (Hobert & Spiller, 2002): "J.D.'s older brother Dan is in town. Turk is thrown out of a patient's funeral for not knowing his name and feels even worse because earlier he made a bet with Dr. Cox over another patient's life" (tv.com, 2009a). *Scrubs* was syndicated on several cable and network channels, and it typically aired between 5 and 7 PM, which Freedman and colleagues (2004) report is a time slot during which political advertisements are often aired. A section of the *Scrubs* episode can be accessed through Appendix 5.

The researcher cut two commercial breaks into the episode's content. Each break consisted of three commercials. The first and third commercials were not manipulated. They were included to enhance the sense of mundane realism. In each break, the experimental commercials were placed in between the traditional spots. The control conditions conveyed three traditional commercial spots in each break.

A realistic variety of traditional commercials were used for the mundane and control commercials. Four commercials advertised products and two were anti-drug public service announcements. Appendix 5 provides a link to one of the commercial breaks used in the study. It displays both the flow of the break and two of the six mundane/control commercials.

Each political attack condition contained two distinct advertisements that varied with the target of the attack. The ads targeting Obama were taken from the campaigns of two PSGs: *Let Freedom Ring* and *American Issues Project*. The ad sponsored by *Let Freedom Ring* attacked Obama for his ostensibly inconsistent policy positions, and the *American Issues Project* ad attacked Obama for his association with William Ayers – a 60's radical and violent protestor. In the PSG-sponsored condition, these ads were aired in their original form. In the candidate-sponsored condition, the PSG logo and disclaimer were edited out and replaced with a McCain disclaimer. The ads targeting McCain were also taken from the campaigns of two PSGs: *MoveOn.org* and *Campaign to Defend America*. The ad sponsored by *MoveOn.org* attacked McCain for his association with a political advisor who worked for several authoritarian regimes around the world. The ad sponsored by *Campaign to Defend America* attacked McCain for his association with George W. Bush and the 43rd president's policy positions. In the PSG-sponsored condition, these ads were aired in their original form. In the candidate-sponsored condition, the PSG disclaimer was edited out and replaced with an Obama disclaimer. Ultimately, eight experimental ads were communicated across the attack conditions at phase 3. Links to the experimentally manipulated political attack ads are provided in Appendix 5.

Print. To maintain the sense of mundane realism conveyed in the video condition, the printed experimental ads were embedded within a series of soft-news stories taken from popular magazines. A total of four stories were used to approximate the effect of the entertaining television content in the video condition. The first story concerned an exposition of Jennifer Love Hewitt's personal body image (Jessen, 2008). The second related to Michael Phelps' appearance on the Kellogg's Corn Flakes cereal box (Boehm, 2008). The third was an explanation of mouth jewelry's harmful influence on dental health (Science Daily, 2008), and the fourth was a story about Jerry Seinfeld's pending appearance in a series of Microsoft ads (Vranica & Guth, 2008). A total of three pages of entertaining print content were separated by two sets of print advertisements. Each break in the print content contained three commercials. In both breaks, the first and third ads were mundane, and the second was the experimental advertisement. The mundane ads consisted of two movie ads and two anti-drug public service announcements. The control ads were also mundane. One advertised Hewlett Packard printers and the other advertised Wonder-Soft brand toilet tissue.

The experimental print ads were adaptations of the video experimental ads. The adaptation was accomplished with the Ogilvy (1985) layout. In each case, an effort was made to preserve both the semantic and visual content of the advertisements. For each condition, sponsorship of the printed ads was manipulated by altering the text, logos and disclaimers appearing at the bottom of the attacks. Appendix 7 displays the experimental printed attack ads and the printed control ads.

Measures

Initial candidate preference. Respondents nominally reported which candidate they initially supported. Most expressed a definitive preference, but a substantial minority was undecided. For them, global evaluations of the two candidates were summed mathematically and compared to determine which presidential candidate they preferred most. Global evaluation (Burgoon, Cohen, Miller, & Montgomery, 1978) was measured with six, 7-interval, bipolar adjective pairs: wrong/right, negative/positive, unfavorable/favorable, unacceptable/ acceptable, foolish/wise and bad/good. In the final sample, 139 respondents were considered McCain supporters and 215 were considered Obama supporters. With respect to the candidates, other items assessed emotions, behavioral intentions and attitude strength, but those measures were not directly used in this study's analysis. Therefore, reliability and normality statistics were not calculated for those measures.

Strength of party identification. Strength of party identification was expected to directly influence some of the dependent variables examined in this study, including attitudes toward democracy (Patterson, 2002), turnout (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995) and willingness to behaviorally support a particular candidate (Bartels, 2002; Campbell, et al., 1960). It was also expected to interact with the attack advertising conditions. Therefore, participants at phase one were asked to report their political party affiliation: Democratic (0 = no / 1 = yes), Republican (0 = no / 1 = yes) or independent (0 = no / 1 = yes) and their strength of partisan identification (0 = no affiliation / 7 = strong party affiliation). The final sample consisted of 124 Republicans, 129 Democrats and 100 non-affiliated respondents. For non-affiliates, strength of party identification was scored as no

affiliation (i.e., zero). Using an approximately tripartite split, a relatively equal number of weak, moderate and strong partisans were assigned to each experimental message and control conditions. For data analytic purposes, however, a median split was used to divide the subjects into weak and strong partisanship conditions. Using those criteria, 177 respondents were classified as weak partisans and 177 were classified as strong partisans.

Sponsor credibility. Two dimensions of sponsor credibility (McCroskey, Holdridge, & Toomb, 1974; McCroskey & Jensen, 1973) were measured as dependent variables. Competence was measured with three, 7-interval bipolar adjective pairs: unintelligent/intelligent, unqualified/qualified and incompetent/competent. Character was measured with three, 7-interval bipolar adjectives: selfish/unselfish, bad/good and dishonest/honest. Competence and character are common measures of credibility in both political communication (Pfau, Diedrich, Larson, & Van Winkle, 1993) and inoculation research (C. An, 2003; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). In this study, the two dimensions were measured with respect to the inoculation sponsor at phase 2 and the attack sponsor at phase 3.

Inoculation sponsor credibility. Respondents were asked to rate the credibility of the inoculation sponsor: *Citizens for an Informed Electorate*. Principal components analysis (PCA) was used to simplify inoculation sponsor credibility. Eigenvalues greater than one were used to determine the number of components to extract. In one iteration, the analysis revealed that the two credibility dimensions represented a single factor, which explained 68% of the variance. No variables were removed for low commonalities, and overall factorability was commendable (MSA = .865 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, X^2 [df = 15] = 1529, $p < .001$). Furthermore, all six variables loaded on a

single component, with the no loadings less than .76. Finally, the six-item index measuring inoculation sponsor credibility was highly reliable (alpha = 90.67, $N = 354$).

Attack sponsor credibility. Respondents rated the credibility of the attack sponsor at phase 3. Principal components analysis (PCA) was used to simplify attack sponsor credibility. Eigenvalues greater than one were used to determine the number of components to extract. After a single iteration, the analysis revealed that the two credibility dimensions represented a single factor, which explained 76.92% of the variance. No variables were removed for low commonalities. In fact, the lowest commonality was .71, and overall factorability was commendable (MSA = .90 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, X^2 [$df = 15$] = 1183, $p < .001$). Furthermore, all six variables loaded on a single component, with the no loadings less than .84. Ultimately, the six-item index measuring inoculation sponsor credibility was highly reliable (alpha = 95.25, $N = 354$).

Relational communication. Relational communication (J. Burgoon & Hale, 1987) is a useful way to measure pseudo-interpersonal interaction with mediated others (Pfau, 1990; Pfau et al., 2000). This study measured three dimensions of relational communication: immediacy/ affection, receptivity/trust and similarity/depth. Immediacy/ Affection was measured with four, 7-interval, Likert items, where 1 meant strongly disagree and 7 meant strongly agree with the following phrases: "the sponsor communicated a sense of warmth"; "the sponsor seemed enthusiastic in communicating with me"; "the sponsor seemed interested in communicating with me"; "the sponsor seemed involved in the communication". Similarity/Depth was measured with four, 7-interval, Likert items, where 1 meant strongly disagree and 7 meant strongly agree with

the following phrases: “the sponsor made me feel he/she was similar to me”; “the sponsor seemed friendly to me”; “the sponsor appeared to care whether or not I liked him or her”; and “the sponsor acted as if he/she would like to get to know me better”. Receptivity/Trust was measured with four, 7-interval, Likert items, where 1 meant strongly disagree and 7 meant strongly agree with the following phrases: “the sponsor seemed like the kind of person who would be willing to listen to me”; “the sponsor seemed sincere in communicating to me”; “the sponsor appeared interested in communicating with me”; and “the sponsor communicated a sense of honesty”. Relational communication was measured with respect to the Citizens for an Informed Electorate, who constituted the sponsor of the inoculation messages. The three-dimensional construct was also measured with respect to the attack advertising sponsors at phase 3.

Inoculation sponsor relational communication. Respondents evaluated the inoculation sponsor’s (i.e., Citizens for an Informed Electorate) relational communication at phase 2. Principal components analysis (PCA) was used to simplify the factorability of the relational communication construct. Eigenvalues greater than one were used to determine the number of components to extract. A single iteration revealed that the three relational communication dimensions represented a single factor, which explained 61.42% of the variance. No variables were removed for low commonalities, although two variables dipped just below .50. Among all 12 variables, however, overall factorability was excellent (MSA = .94 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity, X^2 [df = 66] = 3091, $p <$ .001). Furthermore, all 12 variables loaded on a single component, with the no loadings

less than .45. The 12-item index measuring inoculation sponsor relational communication was highly reliable (alpha = 90.67, $N = 354$).

Attack advertising sponsor relational communication. Respondents evaluated the attack advertising sponsor's relational communication at phase 2. Principal components analysis (PCA) was used to analyze the factorability of the attack sponsor's three dimensions of relational communication. Eigenvalues greater than one were used to determine the number of components to extract. A single iteration revealed that the three relational communication dimensions represented a single factor, which explained 76.92% of the variance. No variables were removed for low commonalities. In fact, the lowest communality was .50. Among all 12 variables, however, overall factorability was excellent (MSA = .94 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, X^2 [$df = 66$] = 2205, $p < .001$). Furthermore, all 12 variables loaded on a single component, with the no loadings less than .71. The 12-item index measuring inoculation sponsor relational communication was highly reliable (alpha = 95.54, $N = 354$).

Positive affective evaluation. Affective evaluations represent one of four attitudinal dimensions (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998; Krosnick, et al., 1993; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). This study's three-item index of positive emotion was developed by Dillard and colleagues (Dillard, Plotnick, Godbold, Freimuth, & Edgar, 1996; Smith & Dillard, 1997). Respondents were asked to report the extent to which a particular attitude object made them feel happy, cheerful or content, where one meant none of the feeling and seven meant a lot of the feeling. This scale has been used in other inoculation research examining the role of emotion in the process of resistance to persuasion (Pfau et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001). It has also been used in medium

theory research examining the distinct influences of printed words versus vivid photographs (Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006). At phase 2, participants reported their level of positive affect for their initially supported candidate (alpha = 92.26, *N* = 354). At phase 3, they reported their level of positive affect for the candidate whom they initially opposed (alpha = 91.74, *N* = 354).

Negative affective evaluation. This study's three-item index of negative emotion was developed by Dillard and colleagues (Dillard, et al., 1996 Freimuth, & Edgar, 1996; Smith & Dillard, 1997). Respondents reported the extent to which a particular attitude object made them feel irritated, annoyed and angry, where one meant none of the feeling and seven meant a lot of the feeling. This scale has been used in other inoculation (Pfau et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001) and medium theory research (Pfau, Haigh, Fifrick, et al., 2006). At phase 3, participants reported their level of negative affect for the candidate whom they opposed at phase 1 (alpha = 95.26, *N* = 354).

Associative network content. Associative networking captures "the structure of meaning for a given subject" (Novak, 1990, p. 227). The technique was designed as an educational tool, but it works in any domain (Novak, 1998), and more specifically, it has been used in inoculation research (Pfau, et al., 2005). To capture the structure of participants' attitudes about their initially preferred candidate, they were asked to create an associative network based on an illustrative example. Such a network consists of circles (i.e., nodes) displaying concisely worded thoughts or feelings, which are connected to one another with a spider-like web of associative lines. See Appendix 3 to view an exemplary concept map. After viewing that example, participants were prompted to construct a concept map depicting their own associations with the candidate whom

they supported at phase 1. Associative network content was evaluated for the number of nodes ($N = 354$) and the number of links ($N = 353$) respondents generated.

Associative network accessibility. Associative network content was evaluated for its strength of perceptual fluency. Participants were asked to rate the strength of each node on scale of one to seven, where one meant very weak and 7 meant very strong ($N = 354$).

Affective and cognitive associative network content. The respondent's associative network content was finally evaluated for its relative cognitive and affective content. That effort was accomplished with the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) dictionary and computerized content analysis program, which has successfully categorized cognitive and affective content in a variety of contexts (Dijikic, Oatley, & Perterson, 2006; Handelman & Lester; J. H. Kahn, Tobin, Massey, & Anderson, 2007; Pennebaker, Francis, & Booth, 2001). LIWC (Pennebaker, et al., 2001) also distinguished the level of emotion in writings by physicists versus fiction writers (Dijikic, et al., 2006) and suicide completers and attempters (Handelman & Lester, 2007). LIWC has even delineated the subtle emotional differences in writings of those who recently viewed an amusing, as opposed to, a sad film clip (J. H. Kahn, et al., 2007). LIWC operates by comparing a computer text file to its dictionary of over 78 word categories, including positive affect, negative affect and cognition. For any text file, LIWC provides a percentage of affective words and a percentage of cognitive words. By using percentages, as opposed to absolute numbers, LIWC allows comparisons of files consisting of unequal word lengths (Pennebaker et al., 2001). LIWC was used to assess the affective and cognitive content of the associative networks. For each associative

network, LIWC provided an affective and a cognitive value, which was expressed on a scale of 0 to 100. The affective and cognitive content of each of these categories was then averaged and summed to provide a summative cognitive and affective value for each participant's networks.

Counter argumentation. Counterargumentation is considered a core inoculation process (Pfau, 1997; Pfau et al., 2008; Pfau, et al., 1997). As others have (Pfau, et al., 2000; Pfau, et al., 1997), this study operationally defined counterarguing with a thought listing exercise inspired by Brock (1967) and Greenwald (1968). Participants generated a list of counterarguments they considered while completing the attitude measures. Subsequently, participants were instructed to generate responses to each of the listed counterarguments. Counter argumentation was assessed by summing the number of counter arguments with their responses. Unfortunately, several participants failed to complete the counter argumentation measure, or they completed incorrectly. They were eliminated from the analysis ($N = 339$).

Attitude confidence. Attitude confidence is a dimension of attitude strength (Krosnick & Abelson, 1991). Participants rated the confidence of their attitudes with four, 7-interval, bipolar adjectives: right/wrong; confident/not confident; certain/uncertain; negative/positive; sure/unsure (M. Burgoon, et al., 1978). At phase 2, respondents reported the confidence of their attitudes regarding negative political advertising (alpha = 92, $N = 354$), the initially supported candidate (alpha = 90.93, $N = 354$) and the initially opposed candidate (alpha = 94.53, $N = 354$).

Global evaluation. Cognitive evaluations represent one of the four attitudinal dimensions (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998; Krosnick, et al., 1993;

Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). They were assessed as global (Burgoon, Cohen, Miller, & Montgomery, 1978) toward several specific attitude objects across phases 2 and 3. The concept was measured with six, 7-interval, bipolar adjective pairs: wrong/right, negative/positive, unfavorable/favorable, unacceptable/ acceptable, foolish/wise and bad/good. At phase 2, respondents reported their global evaluation of negative political advertising (alpha = 91.85, *N* = 354), their initially supported candidate (alpha = 92.26, *N* = 354) and the initially opposed candidate (alpha = 95.05, *N* = 354). At phase 3, respondents reported their global evaluation of the arguments presented in attack advertising (alpha = 96.79, *N* = 354), their initially supported candidate (alpha = 96.57, *N* = 354) and the initially opposed candidate (alpha = 95.67, *N* = 354).

Attitude accessibility. Attitude accessibility is a dimension of attitude strength (Krosnick, et al., 1993). It refers to the amount of time it takes to conjure an attitude from memory (Fazio, Chen, McDonel, & Sherman, 1982). Typically, it is measured with timed response latency measures; however, Krosnick and colleagues (1993) found that a simple thinking and talking paradigm correlated highly with response latency. This study used the thinking and talking paradigm, which included two, 7-interval, Likert-type items, where one meant "rarely" and seven meant "often" in response to two questions. The first asked participants, "Compared to other issues, how often do you think about the issue of presidential politics?" The second question asked, "Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss with friends, family members, or others the issue of presidential politics?" Inoculation research has often used the thinking and talking paradigm to assess attitude accessibility (Pfau & Compton, 2008; Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, et al., 2003). At phase 2, attitude accessibility was evaluated with respect to the 2008 presidential election

(alpha = 92.03, *N* = 354), the initially supported candidate (alpha = 92.13, *N* = 354) and the initially opposed candidate (alpha = 93.46, *N* = 354).

Vote intention. Behavioral intentions represent one of four attitudinal dimensions (Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, 1998; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). In this study, behavioral intention was assessed with a single, 7-interval, Likert-type item, where 1 meant very unlikely and 7 meant very likely that the respondent would "go to the polls and vote for the candidate on Election Day". This measure has been used as a behavioral indicator in both inoculation (C. An & Pfau, 2004a) and general political communication research (Pfau, et al., 2007; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). At phase 2, vote intention was measured with respect to the initially supported candidate (*N* = 354) and the initially opposed candidate (*N* = 351). At phase 3, it was also measured with respect to the initially supported candidate (*N* = 354) and the initially opposed candidate (*N* = 350).

Threat. Threat was measured at phase 2. Threat is an essential component of inoculation process (Pfau, 1997; Szabo & Pfau, 2002). Participants were asked to "respond to the prospect that they could come into contact with persuasive messages that might cause them to rethink their position on the issue in questions". Available responses included five, 7-interval, bipolar adjective pairs: unintimidating/intimidating, safe/dangerous, not harmful/ harmful, non-threatening/threatening, and not risky/risky. For nearly 30 years, this measure has validated threat's central role in the inoculation process (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001; Pfau, et al., 1997). It was measured at phase 2 (alpha = 92.77, *N* = 354).

Democratic political efficacy. For more than 50 years, democratic political efficacy has been measured by the ANES (The American National Election Studies, n.d.).

This study used two items from that scale. Those Likert items asked participants to rate their agreement with two statements, where one meant strongly disagree and seven meant strongly agree: "people like me don't have any say in what the government does" and "public officials don't care much what people like me think". The NES external political efficacy measures have been used in previous research estimating the influence of advertising tone on democratic process variables (Finkel & Geer, 1998). Democratic political efficacy was measured at phase 3 (alpha = 76.47, *N* = 354).

Trust in American government. Trust in the officials and institutions enacting American government is an important indicator of political legitimacy. The ANES has measured trust in American government since the late 1950's. This study borrowed four items from that measure. The Likert items asked participants to rate their agreement with four statements, where one meant strongly disagree and seven meant strongly agree: "I can always trust the government in Washington to do what is right"; "the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. It is not run for the benefit of all people"; "the government wastes a lot of money we pay in taxes"; and "quite a few people running the government are crooked". Similar measures have been used in a variety of studies examining negative advertising's demobilizing influence (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995; Ansolabehere, et al., 1994a; Dardis, et al., 2008). Trust in American government was measured at phase 3 (alpha = 74.67, *N* = 354).

CHAPTER IX

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Data analysis was performed with a variety of strategies tailored to their particular research questions or hypotheses. Chi-square tests for independence evaluated the content of 2008 presidential campaign advertising. Between-subject factorial univariate analyses of variance and independent sample *t*-tests estimated the influence of attack advertising and the inoculation effects. Significant omnibus results were followed up with pairwise or interaction contrast analyses. In cases requiring path analytic examinations of process variables, regression-based mediation analyses were employed (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Kenny, 2008). And, comparisons between partial correlations were tested with Fischer's *r* to *z* transformations (J. Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Data Assumptions

Missing data. An examination of individual items within the three questionnaires revealed that no item contained more than 5% missing data, and in fact, most items did not contain any missing data ($N = 354$). Missing data was truly random. Every subject provided at least two responses on every scale; therefore, missing data was replaced with the mean of nearby points within subject and within the scale from which the data was missing. This approach was justified by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) who reported that less than 5% missing data is "less serious and almost any procedure for handling missing values yields similar results" (p.63).

Outliers. Using +/- 4 standard deviations from the mean as the criteria, each variable was examined for outlying cases. Because outliers were significantly different from the rest of the sample, they were excluded from the final analysis. Indeed, the

chance that outliers belonged to the same population as other respondents was 1:31,574 or less than 0.00003%. Excepting the associative network and counter-argumentation variables, a total of 8 outliers were discovered. Those cases were excluded from any analyses involving the variables in which the outliers appeared. A similar procedure was applied to the associative network and counter-argumentation variables. Those three variables (i.e., affective associative network content, cognitive associative network content and total counter-argumentation) yielded a total of 10 cases with outliers. Again, the outliers were simply excluded. An unreported analysis revealed that these deletions did not substantively influence the final results.

Normality. Skew and kurtosis statistics for the examined variables are displayed in Table 4b. Several variables were significantly skew or kurtosis. As per the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), several transformations were applied to the offending variables, but the overall distributions were not substantially improved. Therefore, the original data was used for the final analysis.

General Analysis Strategies

An assortment of independent sample *t*-tests and between-subjects univariate factorial analyses of variance evaluated most of the hypotheses and research questions. The independent variables for these tests were inoculation condition (control, inoculation against candidate-sponsored attack ads and generic inoculation against all political attack ads), attack (control, candidate-sponsored attack ads and PSG-sponsored attack ads), media (print versus video), media match (media match versus media mismatch) and/or partisanship (weak versus strong). Although the configuration of independent factors varied from test to test, three groups of dependent variables remained intact across three

groups of mean comparisons: inoculation-phase inoculation processes, attack-phase attack outcomes and attack-phase inoculation outcomes. Table 4 displays these variable sets.

When ANOVA omnibus results revealed significant effects or interactions, contrast analyses examined specific differences. Critical values for those contrasts were calculated with the *t*-table, as opposed the *F*-table. This method of calculating contrast analyses accommodates heterogeneous variance and unequal cell sizes. It relies on standard errors of the implicated means, as opposed to the omnibus error term (Keppel & Wickens, 2004). Because using these variances alters the assumptions of the normal *t*-distribution, the critical value approximation required an adjusted degree of freedom value (Satterthwaite, 1941, 1946). Formulas for the contrast analyses are displayed in the included footnote.[2]

This study also employed a regression-based mediation analysis strategy (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Kenny, 2008). Kenny's (2008) procedure is based on three distinct regression equations. The first regresses the outcome variable on the antecedent variable (path c_1). The second regresses the intervening variable on the antecedent variable (path a), and the third regresses the outcome on both the antecedent and the intervening variables (paths [c_2] and [b]). Results from these regression analyses produce four signs needed to determine an intervening variable's role in the relationship between an

[2] The *t* value of the modified contrast analyses was calculated by dividing the contrast value by an estimate of the local standard error. The formulas used to perform the calculations relied on the properties of the groups involved in the contrast: $t = \hat{\psi}/s_{\Phi}$ and $s_{\Phi} = \sqrt{\sum c_j^2 s_j^2/n_j}$. Keppel and Wickens (2004) reported that "the unequal variances give the test statistic a sampling distribution that differs from the normal *t* distribution" (p. 157). Thus, a modified sampling distribution was examined with a distinct and substantially more complicated calculation for the degrees of freedom (Satterthwaite, 1941, 1946): $df = \frac{s_{\Phi}^4}{\sum \frac{c_j^4 s_M^4}{n_j - 1}}$

antecedent and an outcome variable. The first is the relationship between the antecedent and outcome variable (path c_1). The second is the relationship between the antecedent variable and the intervening variable (path a). The third is the relationship between the intervening variable and the outcome variable, while controlling for the influence of the antecedent variable (path [b]). The fourth sign is the relationship between the antecedent and the outcome variable, after controlling for the influence of the intervening variable (path [c_2]). Three conditions must be met to make a strong case for intervention. First, the relationship between the antecedent and the intervening variable must be substantial and ideally, it should be significant. Second, the relationship between the antecedent and outcome variable must be substantially altered by the addition of the intervening variable, and third, the difference between paths c_1 and paths [c_2] must be significantly different as determined by some statistical measure (e.g., Sobel, 1982). If path [c_2] is significantly smaller than path c_1, then the process variable is said to mediate the relationship between the antecedent and the outcome variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Judd & Kenny, 1981). Alternatively, if path [c_2] is significantly larger than path c_1, the process variable is said to suppress the relationship between the antecedent and the outcome variable (MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002).

The Fischer's *r* to *z* transformation was used as a test of significant difference between two independent correlations (J. Cohen, et al., 2003). This test transforms *r* values into *z* values and divides the difference by their shared variation. The resulting *z* value maps onto the standard normal distribution. If it is greater than 1.96, the two correlations are significantly different.

Thematic Content of Political Attack Advertising

Functions of PSG versus Candidate Advertising Content: Hypothesis H1a

Hypothesis 1a predicted that 2008 PSG (PSG) sponsored advertising was more negative than candidate-sponsored political advertising. A chi-square test for independence between advertising sponsorship (PSG versus candidate) and ad function (acclaim versus attack) revealed that the thematic content of 2008 general election advertising depended on sponsorship, $\chi^2(1, N = 1094) = 46.94, p < .001, V = .21$. Candidates attacked less (51%) than PSGs (82%). Therefore, H1a was confirmed.[3] In the 2008 general presidential election, PSG-sponsored political advertising was proportionately more negative than candidate-sponsored political advertising. Table 5a provides complete descriptive statistics for the functional themes of candidate and PSG-sponsored advertising.

Functions of FEC Approved versus PSG Advertising Content: H1b

Hypothesis 1b posited that 2008 PSG-sponsored political was more negative than FEC-approved third-party political advertising. A chi-square test for independence revealed that the relationship between advertising sponsorship and ad function was significant, $\square^2(1, N = 471) = 3.79, p = .05, V = .09$. PSG-sponsored ads (82%) attacked more than FEC approved third-party ads (73.6%). Thus, H1b received strong support. Table 5b provides descriptive statistics for the PSG and FEC functional themes of 2008's general election presidential advertising content.

Relative Topics of PSG, Candidate and FEC Advertising Content - H2a, H2b and RQ1

[3] To avoid redundancy, I henceforth refrain from using the terms "significantly' and "non-significantly"; rather, I highlight differences and lack of differences. In rare instances, I use those terms when significance levels are controversial (e.g., when a test is significant by a marginal or one-tailed standard).

Hypotheses 2a, H2b and RQ1 concerned the topics of attacking themes in the content of 2008 presidential political advertising. A single chi-square test of independence evaluated the relationship between attack advertising sponsorship (PSG, FEC-compliant and candidate-sponsored) and attacking topic (policy versus character). Sponsorship was related to the thematic topic, $X^2(2, N = 844) = 29.13, p < .001, V = .19$. PSG attacks emphasized character more than policy (55%). In contrast, the attacks of FEC-compliant organizations (54%) and candidates (69%) emphasized policy more than character. This pattern validated the expectations of H2a and H2b, which posited that candidate-sponsored attack advertising emphasized policy more than character and PSG-sponsored attacks emphasized character more than policy. In response to RQ1, the analysis showed that FEC-compliant third-party ads emphasized policy more than character. Table 5c displays the complete descriptive statistics for the analysis of H2a, H2b and RQ1.

Attack-Phase Attack Outcomes

Inoculation Phase: Sponsor Credibility - H3

Hypothesis 3 posited that PSG-sponsored attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the sponsor's credibility than candidate-sponsored attacks. A three-way between-subjects factorial analysis of variances estimated the influence of attack sponsorship (PSG versus candidate), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on sponsor credibility. Omnibus results are displayed in Table 6a. There was no main effect for the attack condition, $F(1, 76) = .61, p = .44, \eta^2 = .008$. Therefore, H3 was not confirmed. The influence of attack advertising on sponsor

credibility did not differ between the sponsorship conditions (candidate: $M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.19$, $N = 42$ versus PSG: $M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 42$).

Inoculation Phase: Global Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary - H4a, H5a, H6a, H11a and RQ4a

Hypotheses 4a, 5a, 6a, 11a and RQ4a posited that political attack advertising sponsorship influences global evaluation of the message's implied beneficiary. All inoculation conditions were deselected for this analysis, so only the attack conditions were considered. This approach is typical for inoculation research examining both the independent influence of particular attacks and inoculation's ability to obviate that influence (see Pfau, Park, Holbert and Cho, 2001).

A three-way between-subjects analysis of variance evaluated the influence of political attack advertising (none, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on global evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the attacks. Table 6b displays the omnibus findings from the analysis. There was no main effect for the attack condition, $F(2, 118) = .04$, $p = .96$, $\eta^2 = .0007$, which is to say that the attacks did not influence global evaluation for their implied beneficiary. Contrary to the expectation of H4a, PSG-sponsored advertising ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 42$) did not elicit a more favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary than candidate-sponsored attacks ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.40$, $N = 42$). In addition, the analysis also failed to confirm H5a and H6a. Neither the candidate nor the PSG-sponsored attacks were more influential than the control condition ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 24$). Results were similarly disappointing for H11a. There was no attack by partisan interaction, $F(2, 118) = .20$, $p = .82$, $\eta^2 = .003$. The influence of candidate-sponsored attacks did not differ between weak ($M = 3.53$, SD

= 1.19, N = 24) and strong partisans (M = 2.45, SD = 1.45, N = 18). Finally, the answer to RQ4a was that the influence of PSG-sponsored attacks did not differ between weak (M = 3.69, SD = 1.06, N = 26) and strong (M = 2.35, SD = 1.30, N = 16) partisans.

Inoculation Phase: Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary - H4b, H5b, H6b, H11b and RQ4b

Hypotheses 4b, 5b, 6b, 11b and RQ4b posited that the attack advertising conditions elicit differing intentions to vote for the implied beneficiary of the attack. A three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance evaluated the influence of attack (none, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on intention to vote for the implied beneficiary. Omnibus results are displayed in Table 6c. There was not an attack main effect, $F(2, 118) = 1.08$, $p = .34$, $\eta^2 = .019$. The control (M = 1.40, SD = .93, N = 46), candidate (M = 1.59, SD = 1.08, N = 42) and PSG (M = 1.76, SD = 1.21, N = 42) sponsored conditions did not significantly differ. Therefore, H4b's prediction that PSG attacks are more influential than candidate attacks was not confirmed; H5b's expectation that candidate-sponsored attacks are more influential than no attack was not confirmed; and H6b's claim that PSG attacks are more influential than the control condition was not confirmed. Furthermore, attack did not interact with partisanship, $F(2, 118) = .98$, $p = .38$, $\eta^2 = .016$. Contrary to H11b, the influence of the candidate-sponsored attack did not differ between weak (M = 2.04, SD = 1.27, N = 24) and strong (M = 1.00, SD = 1.00, N = 18) partisans. Hypotheses 4b, 5b, 6b and 11b were not confirmed, and the answer to RQ4b was that the influence of PSG-sponsored attacks on intention to vote for the implied beneficiary did not differ between weak (M = 1.96, SD = 1.28, N = 26) and strong (M = 1.28, SD = 1.26, N = 16) partisans.

Inoculation Phase: Global Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate - H4c, H5c, H6c, H11c and RQ4c

Collectively, H4c, H5c, H6c, H11c and RQ4c posited that the advertising conditions differ on their association with global evaluation of the targeted candidate. A three-way between-subjects univariate ANOVA evaluated the influence of attack (control none, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on phase three global evaluation of the targeted candidate. Table 6d displays omnibus findings for the analysis. There was not an attack main effect, $F(2, 118) = 1.17$, $p = .31$, $\eta^2 = .02$. PSG ($M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.30$, $N = 42$) attack advertising was not more influential than candidate ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 42$) attack advertising, and neither the candidate nor the PSG-sponsored attack conditions were more influential than the control condition ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.24$, $N = 46$). Therefore, H4c's prediction that PSG attacks are more influential than candidate attacks was not confirmed; H5c's expectation that candidate-sponsored attacks are more influential than the control condition was unconfirmed; and H6c's claim that PSG attacks are more influential than the control condition was not confirmed. Furthermore, attack did not interact with partisanship, $F(2, 118) = .80$, $p = .45$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Contrary to H11c, the influence of the candidate-sponsored attacks did not differ between weak ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 1.11$, $N = 24$) and strong ($M = 5.73$, $SD = 1.08$, $N = 18$) partisans. None of the hypotheses were confirmed, and the answer to RQ4c is that the influence of PSG-sponsored attacks on global evaluation of the targeted candidate does not differ between weak ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 1.23$, $N = 26$) and strong ($M = 5.99$, $SD = 1.07$, $N = 16$) partisans.

Inoculation Phase: Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate - H4d, H5d, H6d, H11d and RQ4d

Hypotheses 4d, 5d, 6d and 11d claimed that the attack conditions elicit differing intentions to vote for the targeted candidate. A three-way between-subjects univariate ANOVA calculated the influence of attack (none, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. As revealed in Table 6e, there was no main effect for the attack condition, $F(2, 118) = .90$, $p = .41$, $\eta^2 = .015$. The control ($M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.92$, $N = 46$), candidate ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 2.38$, $N = 42$) and PSG ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 2.15$, $N = 42$) sponsored attack advertisements did not differ on their association with intention to vote for the targeted candidate. Therefore, H4d's prediction that PSG attacks are more influential than candidate attacks was not confirmed; H5d's expectation that candidate-sponsored attacks are more influential than the control condition was unconfirmed; and H6d's claim that PSG attacks are more influential than the control condition was not confirmed. Furthermore, the attack by partisanship interaction was not significant, $F(2, 118) = .42$, $p = .66$, $\eta^2 = .007$. Hypothesis 11d was unconfirmed. The influence of candidate attacks ads did not differ between weak ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 2.37$, $N = 24$) and strong ($M = 5.94$, $SD = 1.83$, $N = 18$) partisans. Ultimately, H4d, H5d, H6d and H11d were not confirmed, and the answer to RQ4d is that the influence of PSG-sponsored attacks on intention to vote for the targeted candidate does not differ between weak ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 2.14$, $N = 26$) and strong ($M = 6.19$, $SD = 1.38$, $N = 16$) partisans.

Inoculation Phase: Democratic Political Efficacy - H7a RQ2a, RQ3a and RQ5a

Hypothesis 7a, RQ2a, RQ3a and RQ5a posited claims and questions about the relationship between the attack condition and democratic political efficacy. A three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance was calculated to examine the influence of attack (control, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on democratic political efficacy. The omnibus results are displayed in Table 6f. They show there was not a main effect for attack condition, $F(2, 118) = 1.17$, $p = .31$, $\eta^2 = .019$. No differences were found between the candidate ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.28$, $N = 42$) PSG ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.49$, $N = 42$) and control ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 1.53$, $N = 46$) conditions. Therefore, H7a was not confirmed. Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored attack advertising does not elicit less democratic political efficacy. In addition, the answer to RQ2a is that PSG-sponsored attacks do not influence democratic political efficacy. Furthermore, the attack by partisan interaction was not significant, $F(2, 118) = .02$, $p = .98$, $\eta^2 = .0003$. Thus, the answer to RQ3a is that candidate-sponsored attacks do not elicit differing levels of democratic efficacy for weak ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.02$, $N = 24$) versus strong ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 18$) partisans. Finally, the answer to RQ5a is that PSG-sponsored attacks do not elicit different levels of democratic efficacy for weak ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 26$) versus strong ($M = 4.22$, $SD = .82$, $N = 16$) partisans.

Inoculation Phase: Trust in American Government - H7b, RQ2b, RQ3b and RQ5b

Hypothesis 7b, RQ2b, RQ3b and RQ5b examined the relationship between the attack condition and trust in American government. A three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance was calculated to examine the influence of attack (control, candidate and PSG), media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on

trust of American government. The omnibus results are displayed in Table 6g**.** They show that the attack conditions did not differ, $F(2, 118) = 1.42$, $p = .25$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Neither the candidate ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.03$, $N = 42$) nor the PSG ($M = 4.29$, $SD = .96$, $N = 42$) sponsored attack conditions differed from control ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 46$) on trust in American government. Therefore, H7b was not confirmed, and the answer to RQ2b is that exposure to PSG-sponsored attack advertising does not influence trust in American government. Furthermore, the attack by partisan interaction was not significant, $F(2, 118) = .39$, $p = .68$, $\eta^2 = .006$. Thus, the answer to RQ3b is that candidate-sponsored attacks do not elicit differing levels of democratic trust for weak ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 1.02$, $N = 24$) versus strong partisans ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 18$). Finally, the answer to RQ5b is that PSG-sponsored attacks do not elicit differing levels of democratic trust between weak ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 26$) and strong ($M = 4.22$, $SD = .82$, $N = 16$) partisans.

Relative Processes of Print versus Video-mediated Attack Advertising Influence: H8a-H8c

Hypothesis 8a. Hypothesis 8a posited that evaluation of sponsor credibility intervenes in the process of video-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. The print and inoculation conditions were removed from this mediation analysis, which is graphically depicted in Figure 1a. Path a was calculated by regressing evaluation of sponsor credibility on exposure to video-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = .23$, $F(2, 65) = 10.74$, $p < .05$. Path c_1 was calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to the video-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = .17$, $F(2, 65) = 7.81$, $p < .05$. Finally, paths [b] and [c_2] were calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to video-mediated

attack advertising and evaluation of the sponsor's credibility, $R^2 = 13.85$, $F(3, 64) = 13.85$, $p < .05$. Evaluation of sponsor credibility intervened in the process of video-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to vote for the targeted candidate (Sobel = 2.78. $p < .05$).

Video attack advertising influenced vote intention for the target through two distinct and opposing routes. The direct route was negative, which means that exposure to the video attack predicted a lesser intention to vote for the target. The indirect route consisted of two negative paths that, when multiplied, produced a positive route. The first negative path was between exposure to the video attack and sponsor credibility. The second was between sponsor credibility and vote intention. The net effect of the video attack through the indirect route was to increase intention to vote for the target. In other words, perceptions of the attack sponsor's credibility suppressed the negative relationship between exposure to the video attack and intention to vote for the target, which explains why removing sponsor credibility, increased the magnitude of the direct and negative relationship. Therefore, H8a was confirmed. In part, perceptions of sponsor credibility intervened in the relationship between video attack advertising and vote intention.

Hypothesis 8b. Hypothesis 8b posited that evaluation of sponsor relational communication intervenes in the process of video-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. The print and inoculation conditions were removed from this mediation analysis, which is graphically depicted in Figure 1b. Path a was calculated by regressing evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication on exposure to video-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = .17$, $F(2, 65) = 7.81$, $p < .05$. Path c_1 was calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to

the video-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = .15$, $F(2, 65) = 6.82$, $p < .05$. Finally, paths [b] and [c_2] were calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to the video-mediated attack advertising and evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication, $R^2 = .25$, $F(3, 64) = 8.28$, $p < .05$. Ultimately, relational communication intervened in the process of video-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to the vote for the targeted candidate (Sobel = 2.11, $p < .05$). Exposure to video-mediated attack advertising was negatively related to evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication, and relational communication was negatively associated with intention to vote for the targeted candidate. Mirroring the intervention of sponsor credibility in H8b, evaluation of sponsor relational communication suppressed the influence of video attack advertising on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. Statistically removing evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication strengthened the negative relationship between exposure to video attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate. Hypothesis 8b was confirmed.

Hypothesis 8c. Hypothesis 8c posited that evaluation of the attack message intervenes in the process of print-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. The video and inoculation conditions were removed from the mediation analysis, which is graphically depicted in Figure 1c. Path a was calculated by regressing argument evaluation on exposure to print-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = -.02$, $F(2, 59) = .30$, $p = .74$. Path c_1 was calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to the print-mediated attack advertising, $R^2 = .22$, $F(2, 59) = 9.67$, $p < .05$. Finally, paths [b] and [c_2] were calculated by regressing intention to vote for the targeted candidate on exposure to print-mediated attack advertising and argument

evaluation, $R^2 = .22$, $F(3, 58) = 6.80$, $p < .05$. Evaluation of the argument in the attack messages did not intervene in the process of print-mediated attack advertising's influence on intention to the vote for the targeted candidate (Sobel = .89, $p = .37$). Hypothesis 8c was not confirmed.

Inoculation Phase: Positive Emotional Response toward Implied Beneficiary - H9a

Hypothesis 9a posited that video attack advertising elicits a greater positive emotional response to the implied beneficiary than print attack advertising. Because PSG and candidate-sponsored attack advertising had not elicited differing outcomes, the sponsorship conditions were collapsed into a single attack condition, which was then held constant so the influence of print and video attack advertising could be compared, while controlling for the influence of partisanship. Therefore, H9a was evaluated with a two-way between-subjects ANOVA that examined the influence of media (print versus video) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on positive emotional response to the implied beneficiary of the attack message. Omnibus results are presented in Table 6h. They show that the media conditions did not differ, $F(1, 80) = .011$, $p = .65$, $\eta^2 = .003$. Compared to the printed attack advertisements ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.91$, $N = 41$), the video attacks ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.91$, $N = 43$) did not elicit greater positive emotion for the implied beneficiary. Thus, H9a was not confirmed.

Inoculation Phase: Negative Emotional Response toward Targeted Candidate - H9b

Hypothesis 9b posited that video attack advertising elicits a greater negative emotional response toward the targeted candidate than print attack advertising. A two-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance examined the influence of media (video versus print) and partisanship (weak versus strong) on negative emotional

response to the candidate targeted in the attack advertisement. The omnibus results are displayed in Table 6i, and there was not a media main effect, $F(1, 80) = .004$, $p = .95$, $\eta^2 < .001$. Thus, H9b was not confirmed. Compared to printed political attack advertising ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 2.18$, $N = 41$, video attacks ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 2.02$, $N = 43$) did not elicit a greater negative emotional response toward the targeted candidate.

Inoculation Phase: Attitude – Behavior Consistency - H10a and H010b

Hypotheses 10a and 10b examined the relative capacities of print and video-mediated influence to elicit attitude-behavior consistency. Hypothesis 10a predicted that, compared to print-mediated attack advertising, video-mediated attack advertising elicits greater consistency between evaluations of the targeted candidate and intention to vote for that candidate. The results for PSG-sponsored attacks contradicted that expectation. Within the video condition, evaluation of the targeted candidate positively predicted vote intentions (attitude: $M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.37$; vote: $M = 4.33$, $SD = 2.29$, $N = 24$: $r(21) = .46$, $p < .05$), but an identical relationship was uncovered in the print condition (attitude: $M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.24$; vote: $M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.75$, $N = 18$: $r(15) = .73$, $p < .004$). Furthermore, a comparison of the z values did not reveal a difference between the print and video conditions (r to $z = -1.28$, $p = .20$). Within the PSG-sponsored condition, H10a was not confirmed. The candidate-sponsored condition also failed to confirm H10a. Both video mediated (attitude: $M = 4.85$, $SD = 1.12$; vote: $M = 4.84$, $SD = 2.46$, $N = 19$: $r(16) = .55$, $p < .05$) and print-mediated (attitude: $M = 5.20$, $SD = 1.12$; vote: $M = 4.65$, $SD = 2.37$, $N = 23$: $r(20) = .84$, $p < .05$) candidate attacks elicited a positive relationship between evaluation of the targeted candidate and vote intention, but the magnitude of the correlation in the print condition was marginally greater than video condition's

correlation (r to z: -1.80, $p < .10$). Therefore, H10a was not confirmed in either the print or the video conditions.

Hypothesis 10b posited video-mediated influence is associated with greater attitude-behavior consistency than print-mediated influence. However, the dependent variable for H10b was intention to the vote for the implied beneficiary of the attack message, as opposed to the targeted candidate (as in H10a). In the video PSG-sponsored condition, there was a positive and marginally significant ($p < .10$) relationship between evaluation of the supported candidate and intention to vote for that candidate (attitude: $M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.1$; vote: $M = 1.58$, $SD = 1.1$, $N = 24$: $r(21) = .38$, $p = .08$), but in the print condition, the positive relationship was fully significant (attitude: $M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.59$; vote: $M = 2.00$, $SD = 1.33$, $N = 18$: $r(15) = .56$, $p < .05$). In other words, the print condition elicited attitude-behavior consistency, while the video condition did not. Ultimately, there was no difference between the two correlations (r to z: -.68, $p = .49$), and the trend contradicted the expectations of H10b. These results were replicated for the candidate-sponsored attack ads. The print advertisements elicited a positive correlation between evaluation and vote intention for the implied beneficiary (attitude: $M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.38$; vote: $M = 1.74$, $SD = 1.25$, $N = 23$: $r(19) = .48$, $p = .03$), while the video ads failed to produce a reliable correlation between evaluations and vote intention (attitude: $M = 2.93$, $SD = 1.45$; vote: $M = 1.42$, $SD = .83$, $N = 19$: $r(15) = .15$, $p = .56$). Once again, the correlation in the print condition was greater than the correlation in the video condition even if was not reliable (r to z: 1.11, $p = .27$).

Taken together, these findings do not support the expectation (i.e., H10a & H10b) that video elicits more attitude-behavior consistency than print. In the video condition,

two of four tests showed a reliable correlation between attitude and behavior, but print elicited attitude-behavior consistency across all four tests. Moreover, the print correlations tended to be larger than the video correlations, even if those differences were never fully significant. These findings contradicted the expectations of H10a and H10b.

Attack-Phase Inoculation Outcomes

Hypothesis 12a – Hypothesis 12d: Generic Inoculation against PSG Attacks

Hypothesis 12a: Hypothesis 12a posited that, compared to the control, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that examined the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate targeted by PSG-sponsored attack advertising. Table 7a displays the results for this analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 81) = .15$, $p = .70$, $\eta^2 = .002$. Hypothesis 12a was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.30$, $N = 42$), generic inoculation ($M = 5.57$, $SD = 1.02$, $N = 47$) does not elicit greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

Hypothesis 12b. Hypothesis 12b posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate. The prediction was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (control versus generic),

media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate targeted in the PSG-sponsored attack ads. Table 7b displays the results for this analysis. The omnibus test revealed marginally significant findings for the inoculation main effect, $F(1, 81) = 3.45$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2 = .04$ and the inoculation by media interaction, $F(1, 81) = 3.71$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Given that both were only marginally significant, the interaction was interpreted and the main effect was ignored. On vote intention, video-mediated generic inoculation (generic inoculation: $M = 6.28$, $SD = 1.21$, $N = 25$; control: $M = 4.33$, $SD = 2.30$, $N = 24$) was superior to print-mediated generic inoculation (generic inoculation: $M = 5.68$, $SD = 1.91$, $N = 22$; control: $M = 5.56$, $SD = 1.76$, $N = 18$), $t(72) = 2.32$, $p = .02$. Therefore, H12b received weak support in the video condition and no support in the print condition.

Hypothesis 12c. Hypothesis 12c posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the ads' implied beneficiary. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that tested the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of PSG attack advertising's implied beneficiary. Table 7c displays the results for this analysis. There was not a main effect for inoculation, $F(1, 81) = .06$, $p = .80$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Thus, H12c was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 42$), generic inoculation ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.18$, $N = 47$) against all political attack advertising did not elicit greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the advertisements' implied beneficiary.

Hypothesis 12d. Hypothesis 12d posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that tested the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising. Table 7d displays the results for this analysis. The main effect for inoculation was marginally significant, $F(1, 81) = 2.98$, $p = .09$, $\eta^2 = .04$. In other words, generic inoculation ($M = 1.32$, $SD = .81$, $N = 47$) elicited more resistance than control ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 1.21$, $N = 42$) on intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the PSG attack advertisements, $t(71) = 2.01$, $p = .05$. Thus, H12d was weakly confirmed.

Hypothesis 13a – Hypothesis 13d: Candidate Specific Inoculation against PSG Attacks

Hypothesis 13a. Hypothesis 13a posited that, compared to control, candidate specific inoculation against attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the target of PSG attack advertising. Table 8a displays the results for this analysis. There was no main effect for the inoculation condition, $F(1, 73) = .04$, $p = .85$, $\eta^2 = .0005$. In other words, candidate-specific inoculation ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.30$, $N = 39$) did not elicit more

resistance than control (M = 5.24, SD = 1.30, N = 42) on evaluation of the target of the PSG attack advertisements. Thus, H13a was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 13b. Hypothesis 13b projected that, compared to control, candidate specific inoculation against attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the target of PSG attack advertising. Table 8b displays results for this analysis. Although there was no main effect for inoculation, $F(1, 73) = .10$, $p = .75$, $\eta^2 = .001$, there was an inoculation by media interaction, $F(1, 73) = 4.85$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .06$. With respect to vote intention for the target of PSG-sponsored attacks, video-mediated inoculation (control: M = 4.75, SD = 1.86, N = 24; inoculation: M = 5.79, SD = 1.87, N = 18) elicited more resistance than print-mediated inoculation (control: M = 5.64, SD = 1.78, N = 18; inoculation: M = 4.86, SD = 1.88, N = 21), $t(75) = 2.15$, $p = .03$. Thus, H13b was confirmed in the video condition but rejected in the print condition.

Hypothesis 13c. Hypothesis 13c posited that, compared to control, candidate specific inoculation against attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the attack. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the PSG attacks' implied beneficiary. Table 8c displays results of the analysis. There was no

main effect for the inoculation conditions, $F(1, 73) = .42$, $p = .52$, $\eta^2 = .006$. Compared to control ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 42$), candidate specific inoculation ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.16$, $N = 39$) did not elicit greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the attacks' implied beneficiary. Hypothesis 13c was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 13d. Hypothesis 13d posited that, compared to control, candidate specific inoculation against attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the attack. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the PSG attacks' implied beneficiary. Table 8d displays results of the analysis. The main effect for inoculation was not present, $F(1, 75) = 1.66$, $p = .24$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Relative to vote intention for the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising, candidate specific inoculation ($M = 1.48$, $SD = .99$, $N = 41$) did not elicit greater resistance compared to control ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 1.21$, $N = 42$). Therefore, H13d was not confirmed.

Research Question 6a – Research Question 6d: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation against PSG Attack Ads

Research Question 6a. Research question 6a inquired about the relative effectiveness of generic versus candidate specific inoculation on their ability to elicit a favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in PSG attack advertising. It was calculated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (candidate specific versus generic), media (print versus video)

and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the target in PSG attack advertising. Table 9a displays results of the analysis. The inoculation main effect was non-existent, $F(1, 78) = .03$, $p = .87$, $\eta^2 = .0004$. Therefore, the answer to RQ6a is that generic ($M = 5.81$, $SD = .96$, $N = 25$) and candidate-specific ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.14$, $N = 39$) inoculations do not differ on their capacity to elicit a favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted by PSG attack advertising.

Research Question 6b. Research question 6b inquired about the relative effectiveness of generic versus candidate specific inoculation on their ability to elicit a greater vote intention for the candidate targeted in PSG attack advertising. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (candidate specific versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the target of PSG attack advertising. Table 9b displays results for this analysis. There was not an inoculation main effect, $F(1, 78) = 2.40$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = .03$, but there was an interaction between inoculation and partisanship, $F(1, 78) = 5.18$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .06$. A follow-up analysis showed that the difference between weak (candidate: $M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.67$, $N = 19$) and strong (candidate: $M = 6.55$, $SD = 1.76$, $N = 20$) partisans was reliable in the candidate inoculation condition, $t(37) = 4.46$, $p < .01$ but not in the generic inoculation condition (weak: $M = 5.5$, $SD = 1.61$, $N = 18$; strong: $M = 6.28$, $SD = 1.62$, $N = 29$), $t(40) = 1.61$, $p = .11$. Therefore, the answer to RQ6b is that, against the influence of PSG attacks on intention to vote for the target, there is no difference between generic and candidate inoculation; however, candidate inoculation is more influential for strong partisans than for weak partisans.

Research Question 6c. Research question 6c inquired about the relative effectiveness of generic versus candidate specific inoculation on their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (candidate specific versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising. Table 9c displays results of the analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 78) = .22$, $p = .64$, $\eta^2 = .003$. The three way interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 78) = 3.28$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2 = .04$, and the inoculation by media interaction was fully significant, $F(1, 78) = 5.20$, $p = .03$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Because the clearest finding was the inoculation by media interaction, it was interpreted and the three way interaction was ignored. Follow up analyses showed that the interaction was primarily driven by the difference between video generic ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .93$, $N = 25$) and print generic inoculation ($M = 2.91$, $SD = .91$, $N = 22$), $t(39) = 2.55$, $p = .02$. Secondarily, the interaction was driven by the marginally significant difference between candidate-specific ($M = 2.51$, $SD = .95$, $N = 18$) and generic ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .93$, $N = 25$) inoculation in the video condition, $t(40) = 1.92$, $p = .06$.Thus, the answer to RQ6c is that, with respect to evaluation of the implied beneficiary of PSG attacks advertising, candidate inoculation is marginally more effective than generic inoculation but only in the video condition. That answer is further qualified by print-generic inoculation's superiority to video-generic inoculation.

Research Question 6d. Research question 6d inquired about the relative effectiveness of generic versus candidate specific inoculation on their ability to elicit a

lesser vote intention for the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (candidate-specific versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of PSG attack advertising. Table 9d displays results for this analysis. There was not a main effect for inoculation, $F(1, 78) = .28$, $p = .60$, $\eta^2 = .004$. Therefore, the answer to RQ6d is that generic ($M = 1.32$, $SD = .81$, $N = 47$) and candidate-specific ($M = 1.5$, $SD = 1.01$, $N = 39$) inoculations do not differ on their capacity to elicit resistance to PSG-sponsored attacks, as measured by intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.

Hypothesis 14a – Hypothesis 14d: Generic Inoculation against Candidate Attacks

Hypothesis 14a. Hypothesis 14a posited that, compared to the control, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack advertisements. Table 10a displays results of the analysis. The inoculation main effect was not present, $F(1, 80) = .98$, $p = .33$, $\eta^2 = .01$. Therefore, H14a was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 42$), generic ($M = 5.35$, $SD = 1.20$, $N = 46$) inoculation did not elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

Hypothesis 14b. Hypothesis 14b posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack advertisements. Table 10b displays results of the analysis. There was not an inoculation main effect, $F(1, 80) = .32$, $p = .58$, $\eta^2 = .004$. Therefore, H14b was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 4.86$, $SD = 2.15$, $N = 42$), generic ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 2.38$, $N = 42$) inoculation did not elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Hypothesis 14c. Hypothesis 14c posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisements. Table 10c displays results of the analysis. The inoculation main effect was not significant, $F(1, 80) = .53$, $p = .47$, $\eta^2 = .007$. Therefore, H14c as not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.40$, $N = 42$), generic ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.36$, $N = 46$) inoculation did not elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack message.

Hypothesis 14d. Hypothesis 14d posited that, compared to control, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus generic), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisements. Table 10d displays results of the analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 80) = .10$, $p = .75$, $\eta^2 = .001$; however, there was a marginally significant inoculation by media interaction, $F(1, 80) = 3.22$, $p = .08$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Follow up analysis of the interaction revealed that it was primarily driven by the relative superiority of video ($M = 1.05$, $SD = .98$, $N = 23$) versus printed ($M = 1.84$, $SD = .97$, $N = 23$) generic inoculation, $t(37) = 2.77$, $p = .008$. Therefore, H14d was not confirmed. Generic ($M = 1.04$, $SD = .37$, $N = 23$) inoculation was not superior to control ($M = 1.60$, $SD = .37$, $N = 23$) on its ability to elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement. On the other hand, generic video inoculation was more influential than generic inoculation in print.

Hypothesis 15a – Hypothesis 15d: Candidate-Specific Inoculation against Candidate Attacks

Hypothesis 15a. Hypothesis 15a posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate. It was tested with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of

inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attacks. Table 11a displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. Again, there was no main effect for inoculation, $F(1, 79) = 1.24$, $p = .27$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, H15a was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 42$), candidate-specific ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.10$, $N = 45$) inoculation did not elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.

Hypothesis 15b. Hypothesis 15b posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate. It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attacks. Table 11b displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The inoculation main effect was marginally significant, $F(1, 79) = 3.00$, $p = .09$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Therefore, H15b received weak confirmation. Compared to control ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 2.38$, $N = 42$), candidate-specific ($M = 5.58$, $SD = 1.84$, $N = 45$) inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Hypothesis 15c. Hypothesis 15c posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement.

It was evaluated with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisements. Table 11c displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 79) = .11$, $p = .74$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Therefore, H15c was not confirmed. Compared to control ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.40$, $N = 42$), candidate-specific ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 45$) inoculation did not elicit greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement.

Hypothesis 15d. Hypothesis 15d posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisements. Table 11d displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The inoculation main effect was not realized, $F(1, 79) = 2.35$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = .03$, but there was an inoculation by partisan interaction, $F(1, 79) = 8.76$, $p = .01$, $\eta^2 = .11$. Follow up analyses found that, among weak partisans, candidate-specific ($M = 1.21$, $SD = .81$, $N = 21$) inoculation elicited more resistance than control ($M = 2.03$, $SD = .87$, $N = 24$), $t(39) = 3.27$, $p = .002$. Alternatively, for strong partisans, there was no difference between candidate-specific inoculation and the control condition ($M = 1.26$, $SD = .83$, $N = 22$ versus control: $M = 1.00$, $SD = .84$, $N = 18$), $t(37) = .98$, $p = .33$. Therefore, H15d

was only partially confirmed. For weak partisans, candidate-specific inoculation elicited greater resistance to candidate-sponsored attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack advertisement. The same relationship was not found for strong partisans.

Research Question 7a – Research Question 7d: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation against Candidate-Sponsored Attack Ads

Research Question 7a. Research question 7a asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their ability to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in candidate-sponsored attack advertising? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that calculated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate attack advertisement. Table 12a displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The inoculation main effect was not present, $F(1, 83) = 0$, $p = 1$, $\eta^2 = 0$, but there was a three-way interaction between inoculation, media and partisanship, $F(1, 83) = 4.40$, $p = .04$, $\eta^2 = .05$. In the print condition, generic inoculation for weak partisans ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 11$) elicited less resistance than candidate-specific inoculation for strong partisans ($M = 5.95$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 13$), $t(21) = 2.97$, $p = .007$. In the video condition, candidate-specific inoculation ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 13$) for the weak partisans elicited less resistance than generic inoculation for strong partisans ($M = 5.44$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 13$), $t(44) = 3.96$, $p < .001$. Therefore, the answer to RQ7a is that candidate-specific and generic inoculation elicited differing levels of resistance, but that difference was conditioned by both the

partisanship of the respondent and the media channel through which the inoculation message was sent.

Research Question 7b. Research question 7b asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in candidate-sponsored attack advertising? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate attack advertisement. Table 12b displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 83) = 1.61$, $p = .21$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, the answer to RQ7b is that generic ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 2.04$, $N = 46$) and candidate-specific ($M = 5.58$, $SD = 1.84$, $N = 45$) inoculations against political attack advertising do not differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in candidate-sponsored attack advertising.

Research Question 7c. Research question 7c asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the attack advertisement's sponsor? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three evaluation of the sponsor of the attack advertisement. Table 12c displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no main effect for the inoculation conditions, $F(1, 83) = 1.23$, $p = .27$, $\eta^2 = .02$.

Therefore, the answer to RQ7c is that generic ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.36$, $N = 46$) and candidate-specific ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 45$) inoculations against political attack advertising do not differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the attack advertisement's sponsor.

Research Question 7d. Research question 7d asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the attack advertisement's sponsor? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), media (print versus video) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three intention to vote for the sponsor of the attack advertisement. Table 12d displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The inoculation main effect was not reliable, $F(1, 83) = 1.51$, $p = .22$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Therefore, the answer to RQ7d is that generic ($M = 1.43$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 46$) and candidate specific ($M = 1.22$, $SD = .60$, $N = 43$) inoculations against political attack advertising do not differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the attack advertisement's sponsor.

Hypothesis 16a and Hypothesis 16b: Candidate-Specific Inoculation's Influence on Democratic Values

Hypothesis 16a. Hypothesis 16a posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation better protects trust in American democracy. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), attack (candidate versus PSG) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three trust of American democracy. Table 13a

displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no inoculation main effect, $F(1, 160) = .14$, $p = .71$, $\eta^2 = .0008$, but the inoculation by attack interaction was marginally significant, $F(1, 160) = 3.61$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .02$. In the candidate attack condition, candidate-specific ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 45$) inoculation elicited less resistance than control ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 42$). However, in the PSG-sponsored attack condition, candidate-specific ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.04$, $N = 39$) inoculation elicited more resistance than control ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.08$, $N = 42$). Therefore, H16a was partially and weakly confirmed in the PSG attack condition, but in the candidate attack condition, candidate-specific inoculation actually elicited less resistance than control, as measured by trust in American government.

Hypothesis 16b. Hypothesis 16b posited that, compared to control, candidate-specific inoculation better protects democratic political efficacy. It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (control versus candidate-specific), attack (candidate versus PSG) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three democratic political efficacy. Table 13b displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no inoculation effect, $F(1, 160) = 1.97$, $p = .16$, $\eta^2 = .012$. Therefore, H16b was not confirmed. In terms of democratic political efficacy, candidate-specific inoculation did not elicit resistance against either the candidate attack (control: $M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.28$, $N = 42$; inoculation: $M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.42$, $N = 45$) or the PSG attack (control: $M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.49$, $N = 42$; inoculation: $M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.55$, $N = 39$).

Research Question 8a and Research Question 8b: Candidate versus PSG Attack Influence on Democratic Values

Research Question 8a. Research question 8a asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ on their capacity to protect trust in American democracy? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), attack (candidate versus PSG) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three trust in American government. Table 13c displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The inoculation main effect was unreliable, $F(1, 169) = .001$, $p = .99$, $\eta^2 = 0$; however, there was an interaction between inoculation and attack, $F(1, 169) = 3.83$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$. More specifically, candidate-specific inoculation ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 39$) elicited more resistance to PSG attacks than generic inoculation ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.15$, $N = 47$), and generic inoculation ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 46$) elicited more resistance to candidate attacks than candidate-specific inoculation ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.12$, $N = 45$). The answer to RQ8a is that, in terms of protecting trust in American democracy against attack advertising, the relative influence of candidate-specific and generic inoculation depends on the attack sponsor.

Research Question 8b. Research question 8b asked do generic and candidate specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their protection of external political efficacy? It was examined with a three-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific), attack (candidate versus PSG) and partisanship (low versus high) on phase-three democratic political efficacy. Table 13d displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was not an inoculation main effect, $F(1, 169) = 1.15$, $p = .284$, $\eta^2 = .007$. Therefore, the answer to RQ8b is that candidate ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 1.48$, N

= 84) and generic inoculations (M = 3.63, SD = 1.55, N = 93) do not significantly differ on their ability to protect democratic political efficacy from attack advertising.

Inoculation-Phase Inoculation Processes

Hypothesis 17a – Hypothesis 17b: Video versus Print Influence on Perceptions of Inoculation Sponsor

Hypothesis 17a. Hypothesis 17a posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's source credibility. It was investigated with a two-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of media (print versus video) and inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific) on inoculation-phase perception of inoculation sponsor credibility. Table 14a displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. There was no effect for the media conditions, $F(1, 220) = .01$, $p = .93$, $\eta^2 < .01$. Therefore, H17a was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation (M = 5.04, SD = 1.017, N = 114), video inoculation (M = 5.17, SD = .90, N = 110) did not elicit a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's source credibility.

Hypothesis 17b. Hypothesis 17b posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's relational communication. It was investigated with a two-way between-subjects univariate analysis of variance that evaluated the influence of media (print versus video) and inoculation (generic versus candidate-specific) on inoculation-phase perception of inoculation sponsor relational communication. Table 14b displays the omnibus findings for this analysis. The media main effect was unreliable, $F(1, 220) = .76$, $p = .39$, $\eta^2 = .003$. Therefore, H17b was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation (M = 5.04, SD =

1.02, $N = 114$), video inoculation ($M = 5.17$, $SD = .90$, $N = 110$) did not elicit a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's relational communication.

Hypothesis 18a – Hypothesis 18j: Influence of Print and Video on the Inoculatoin-Inoculation-Phase Inoculation Process

Hypothesis 18a. Hypothesis 18a posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase positive affect for the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.49$, $N = 114$) versus video ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.58$, $N = 110$) mediated inoculation on inoculation-phase positive affect for the initially supported candidate. The difference was in the predicted direction but not significant, $t(222) = .65$, $p = .52$. Therefore, H18a was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more inoculation-phase positive affect for the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18b. Hypothesis 18b posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more affective associative network content about the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print ($M = 14.60$, $SD = 9.14$, $N = 113$) versus video ($M = 14.03$, $SD = 9.25$, $N = 106$) mediated inoculation on inoculation-phase affective associative network content. The difference was not in the hypothesized direction, $t(217) = .46$, $p = .65$. Therefore, H18b was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more affective associative network content about the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18c. Hypothesis 18c posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more threat in the process of resistance to political attack advertising. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print ($M =$

3.03, *SD* = 1.26, *N* = 114) versus video (*M* = 2.76, *SD* = 1.10, *N* = 110) mediated inoculation on inoculation-phase threat. The difference was marginally significant, *t*(222) = 1.72, *p* = .09, but H18c was not confirmed. Compared to video inoculation, print inoculation actually elicited a marginally greater amount of threat in the process of resistance to political attack advertising.

Hypothesis 18d. Hypothesis 18d posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits less counter argumentation against potential attacks on the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print (*M* = 41.22, *SD* = 32.38, *N* = 110) versus video (*M* = 38.61, *SD* = 28.80, *N* = 106) mediated inoculation on inoculation-phase counter argumentation. Although in the posited direction, the difference was not reliable, *t*(214) = .63, *p* = .53. Therefore, H18d was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit less counter argumentation against potential attacks on the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18e. Hypothesis 18e posited that, compared to video inoculation, print inoculation elicits more cognitive associative network content about the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print (*M* = 12.72, *SD* = 8.54, *N* = 113) versus video-mediated (*M* = 13.06, *SD* = 8.77, *N* = 106) inoculation on inoculation-phase cognitive associative network content. The difference was not in the hypothesized direction, *t*(217) = .29, *p* = .77. Therefore, H18e was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more cognitive associative network content about the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18f. Hypothesis 18f posited that, compared to video inoculation, print inoculation elicits a less favorable evaluation of political attack advertising content. It

was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.25$, $N = 114$) versus video-mediated ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.26$, $N = 110$) inoculation on inoculation-phase evaluation of political attack advertising content, but there was no difference, $t(222) = .58$, $p = .56$. Therefore, H18f was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit a less favorable evaluation of political attack advertising content.

Hypothesis 18g. Hypothesis 18g posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits greater inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence regarding the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print ($M = 2.5$, $SD = 1.05$, $N = 114$) versus video-mediated ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.15$, $N = 110$) inoculation on inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence regarding the initially supported candidate. There was no difference, $t(222) = .08$, $p = .94$. Therefore, H18g was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit greater inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence regarding the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18h. Hypothesis 18h posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence in evaluation of the political attack advertising. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared print-mediated ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.68$, $N = 114$) versus video ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.69$, $N = 110$) inoculation on inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence in evaluation of the political attack advertising. There was no difference, $t(222) = .64$, $p = .53$. Therefore, H18h was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit

more inoculation-phase attitudinal confidence in evaluation of the political attack advertising.

Hypothesis 18i. Hypothesis 18i predicted that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and vote intention. Within the video condition there was a positive relationship between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and intention to vote for that candidate, $r(178) = .57$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, within the print condition, there was also a positive relationship between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and intention to vote for that candidate, $r(174) = .67$, $p < .01$. Finally, a comparison between the transformed *r* to z values did not reveal a difference between the print and video conditions (*r* to *z* = -1.52, $p = .13$). Therefore, H18i was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more phase-two attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and vote intention. In fact, the trend was in the other direction. Print elicited more attitude-behavior consistency than video.

Hypothesis 18j. Hypothesis 18j predicted that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and vote intention. Within the video condition there was a positive relationship between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and intention to vote for that candidate, $r(178) = .49$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, within the print condition, there was also a positive relationship between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and intention to vote for that candidate, $r(174) = .47$, $p < .01$. Finally, a comparison between the transformed *r* to z values did not reveal a difference

between the print and video conditions (r to z = .24, p = .81). Therefore, H18j was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and vote intention.

Hypothesis 18k. Hypothesis 18k posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the 2008 general election. It was tested with an independent sample t-test that compared print (M = 3.73, SD = 1.79, N = 114) versus video-mediated (M = 3.91, SD = 1.79, N = 110) inoculation on inoculation-phase attitude accessibility with respect to the 2008 general election. There was no difference, $t(222) = .76$, p = .45. Therefore, H18k was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more inoculation-phase attitude accessibility with respect to the 2008 general election.

Hypothesis 18l. Hypothesis 18l posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample t-test that compared print (M = 3.83, SD = 1.79, N = 114) versus video-mediated (M = 4.12, SD = 1.79, N = 110) inoculation on inoculation-phase attitude accessibility with respect to the initially supported candidate. There was no difference, $t(222) = 1.19$, p = .23. Therefore, H18l was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18m. Hypothesis 18m posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more phase-two associative network content regarding the initially supported candidate. It was tested with two independent sample t-tests. The first

compared print (M = 11.89, SD = 4.36, N = 114) versus video-mediated (M = 11.99, SD = 4.81, N = 110) inoculation on the number of generated nodes. The difference was not substantial, $t(222) = .15$, $p = .88$. The second compared print (M = 11.71, SD = 4.14, N = 114) versus video-mediated (M = 11.72, SD = 4.44, N = 110) inoculation on the number of generated links between nodes. There was no difference, $t(222) = .01$, $p = .99$. Therefore, H18m was not confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation did not elicit more inoculation-phase associative network content regarding the initially supported candidate.

Hypothesis 18n. Hypothesis 18n posited that, compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicits more strongly accessible inoculation-phase associative network content regarding the initially supported candidate. It was tested with an independent sample t-test that compared print (M = 4.94, SD = 1.09, N = 114) versus video-mediated (M = 4.21, SD = .99, N = 110) inoculation on the strength of inoculation-phase associative network content regarding the initially supported candidate. The media conditions differed, $t(222) = 1.96$, $p = .05$. Therefore, H18n was confirmed. Compared to print inoculation, video inoculation elicited more accessible inoculation-phase associative network content regarding the initially supported candidate.

Attack-Phase Medium-Same versus Medium-Different Inoculation Outcomes

Hypotheses 19a – Hypotheses 19d: Relative Effectiveness of Print Inoculation to Print Attack versus Print Inoculation to Video Attack

Hypothesis 19a. Hypothesis 19a posited that, in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks. It was tested with

an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (print to print) and mismatched inoculation (print to video). On evaluation of the targeted candidate, the difference between the matched and mismatched conditions was in the predicted direction (matched: $M = 5.63$, $SD = .88$, $N = 23$ versus mismatched: $M = 4.87$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 25$), $t(46) = 2.33$, $p = .02$. Therefore, H20a was confirmed. In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, print inoculation conferred more resistance to print attacks than video attacks.

Hypothesis 19b. Hypothesis 19b posited that, in terms of a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (print to print) and mismatched inoculation (print to video). On intention to vote for the targeted candidate, there was a predicted difference between the matched and mismatched conditions (matched: $M = 5.87$, $SD = 1.49$, $N = 23$ versus mismatched: $M = 4.6$, $SD = 2.31$, $N = 25$), $t(41.34) = 2.28$, $p = .03$. Therefore, H19b was confirmed. In terms of a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks.

Hypothesis 19c. Hypothesis 19c posited that, in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (print to print) and mismatched inoculation (print to video). On evaluation of the attack sponsor, there was no difference between the matched and mismatched conditions (matched: $M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.16$, $N = 23$ versus

mismatched: $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.37$, $N = 25$), $t(46) = 1.05$, $p = .39$. Therefore, H19c was not confirmed. In terms of less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, print inoculation did not confer more resistance to print attacks than video attacks.

Hypothesis 19d: Hypothesis 19d posited that, in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (print to print) and mismatched inoculation (print to video). On intention to vote for the sponsoring candidate, there was a predicted difference between the matched and mismatched conditions (matched: $M = 1.11$, $SD = .29$, $N = 23$ versus mismatched: $M = 2.12$, $SD = 1.90$, $N = 25$), $t(25.3) = 2.63$, $p = .01$. Therefore, H19d was confirmed. In terms of lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, print inoculation confers more resistance to print attacks than video attacks.

Hypotheses 20a – Hypotheses 20d: Relative Effectiveness of Video Inoculation to Video Attack versus Video Inoculation to Video Attack

Hypothesis 20a. Hypothesis 20a posited that, in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, video inoculation confers more resistance to video attacks than print attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (video inoculation to video attack) versus mismatched inoculation (video to print). On evaluation of the targeted candidate, there was no difference between the matched ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.22$, $N = 22$) and mismatched ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.18$, $N = 22$) conditions, $t(62) = 1.25$, $p = .22$. Therefore, H20a was not confirmed. In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the

candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, video inoculation did not confer more resistance to video attacks than to print attacks.

Hypothesis 20b. Hypothesis 20b posited that, in terms of a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, video inoculation confers more resistance to video attacks than print attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (video to video) and mismatched inoculation (video to print). On intention to vote for the targeted candidate, there was no difference between the matched ($M = 5.45$, $SD = 1.99$, $N = 42$) and mismatched ($M = 5.68$, $SD = 2.12$, $N = 22$) conditions, $t(62) = .43$, $p = .67$. Therefore, H20b was not confirmed. In terms of a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted by the candidate-sponsored attack ad, video inoculation did not confer more resistance to video attacks than to print attacks.

Hypothesis 20c. Hypothesis 20c posited that, in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, video inoculation confers more resistance to video attacks than print attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (video to video) and mismatched inoculation (video to print). On evaluation of the sponsoring candidate, there was no difference between the matched ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.38$, $N = 42$) and mismatched ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.42$, $N = 22$) conditions, $t(62) = .14$, $p = .89$. Therefore, H20c was not confirmed. In terms of less favorable evaluation of the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, video inoculation did not confer more resistance to video attacks than to print attacks.

Hypothesis 20d. Hypothesis 20d posited that, in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, video inoculation confers more resistance

to video attacks than print attacks. It was tested with an independent sample *t*-test that compared matched inoculation (video to video) and mismatched inoculation (video to print). On intention to vote for the sponsoring candidate, there was no difference between the matched ($M = 1.40$, $SD = .90$, $N = 40$) and mismatched ($M = 1.32$, $SD = .84$, $N = 22$) conditions, $t(60) = .35$, $p = .73$. Therefore, H20d was not confirmed. In terms of lesser intention to vote for the candidate sponsoring the attack ad, video inoculation did not confer more resistance to video attacks than to print attacks.

CHAPTER X

DISCUSSION

The 2008 presidential election was remarkable. Just 40 years after the assassination of Martin Luther King, the black son of a single mother defeated the white son of a Navy admiral to become the 44th President of the United States. History was in the making. The pundits proposed it in the media, and the people proclaimed it in the voting booths. The hunger for change was palpable. Gas prices were at an all time high, two wars raged, and a steadily worsening economy brought the international banking system to the brink of collapse. Activated by Democratic hope and the promise of Republican change, Americans flooded the campaigns with their time, their money and their votes. In the end, it was the Democratic candidate Barack Hussein Obama who earned the most volunteers, donations and votes. Generous donors enabled Obama to become the first presidential candidate to opt out of the general election public financing system. He raised more money than any other presidential campaign in American history (Schouten, 2008). The McCain campaign, the political parties, political action committees (PAC's) and even the PSGs were dwarfed by Obama's unfettered ability to purchase communication. His campaign expanded the boundaries of political communication into both long neglected and heretofore unknown forums. Obama posted ads inside video games, aired a 30 minute infomercial on seven national networks and even distributed tattoos on Halloween. Still, even though there is hope for change, some things stayed the same. The 2008 general presidential election was also remarkable in a way the last two presidential elections were remarkable.

An unprecedented amount was spent to mediate the 2008 presidential campaign in the language of advertising. The candidates, the political parties, the PAC's and the PSGs (i.e., 501c and 527 groups) collectively spent record amounts to broadcast their political pitches in 30 to 60 second televised political spots (McClellan, 2008). Ad spending was up 40% from 2004. And, the ads continued their trend toward extreme incivility. In ad entitled *Celeb*, McCain mocked Obama for being too popular and even compared the Democratic candidate to Brittany Spears and Paris Hilton – people who were notoriously famous for just being famous. Obama also used uncivil appeals. In an ad entitled *Still*, he mocked McCain's age by claiming that the Republican candidate did not know how to send an email. Still, advertising by outside groups was the most negative. It routinely accused Obama of associating with domestic terrorists and McCain of being a doddering old man and puppet for George W. Bush. Taken together, the ads of 2008 offered an outstanding context in which to conduct a large scale study of the most important form of contemporary political communication (Jamieson, 1996)

This study investigated the content of the 2008 general election ads, their influence, the capacity of inoculation to obviate that influence and the role media technology plays in the process of that influence. One of this study's clearest findings was that PSG's broadcast the most extreme forms of negative ads. Furthermore, this research showed that those highly negative ads can be effective, albeit their influence is complicated by the role of source credibility. However, that influence can be obviated by generic inoculation messages. Finally, this study showed that distinct forms of media technology exercise their influence through distinct processes. Like the 2008 presidential

election, this study's findings are often complicated, but at other times, they provide something new and even profound.

Sponsorship's Influence on Presidential Advertising Content

The general election phase of presidential campaigns is starting earlier and earlier (West, 2004; Franz, et al., 2008). The 2008 contest was no exception. Advertising began in March. By November, more than $425 million was spent on election ads that mentioned a presidential candidate (Scheinkman, Xaquin, McLean, & Weitberg, 2009b). John McCain ran his first ad on March 11. By November, his campaign spent $125 million on 75 ads. Obama began much later, but only because his primary lasted longer. Obama ran his first ad ran on June 11, but by November, his campaign spent almost twice as much as McCain's: $235 million on 118 television spots. Combined, the candidates spent about $360 million on 193 ads. Independent groups spent about $65 million. The first PSG-sponsored general election ad ran in July. By November, PSG's had spent about $8.5 million on 35 ads. The FEC-compliant groups also aired their first ads in July, but by November, they spent much more than the PSG's: $57.5 million on 105 ads. This study described and compared the content of the 2008 ads.

The content analysis examined nearly every 2008 general election presidential advertisement. It tested the proposition that a sponsor's level of anonymity is associated with the quantity and quality of negativity in its political spots. The analyzed ads were sponsored by candidate campaigns, FEC-approved organizations and PSGs. Statistical analysis revealed that about 50% of the candidate's thematic content was negative; 74% of the PAC content was negative and 82% of the PSG content was negative. Tests for independence showed that the proportion of negativity was contingent on sponsorship.

The candidates, who are legally required to appear in their ads, balanced their negative appeals with an almost equal proportion of positive appeals. The PSG and FEC-compliant sponsored ads provided disclaimers, but there was no single person to take responsibility for the content; therefore, they had less to lose from conveying a greater proportion of negative content. Consistent with previous research (Benoit, 2006; Franz, Freedman, Goldstein, & Ridout, 2008), third-party sponsors were more negative than the candidates.

Compared to recent presidential elections, the proportion of negativity in 2008 was relatively consistent with the levels of negativity in 2000 and 2004. Whereas 59% of the 2008 general election themes were negative, about 61% of the 2004 themes attacked and in 200, 58% attacked (Benoit, 2004). Since 2000, the proportion of negativity in presidential races has been substantially greater than it was during the first 50 years of televised advertising. Benoit (2001) reported that, between 1952 and 1996, the overall proportion of negative thematic content in presidential races was only 37% from all sources. The recent uptick in negativity may be explained by the larger role played by outside groups in recent elections.

Non-candidate advertisers attack more often (Benoit, 2006; Franz, et al., 2008), and their attacks are more extreme. This study found that the quality of attack themes depended on the ad's sponsor; such that, non-candidate sponsors attacked on character more than policy. There was a positive relationship between the attacking sponsor's anonymity and its proportion of character attacks. Candidates attacked on character the least (31%). PSG's attacked on character the most (55%), and FEC-compliant sponsors

(46%) were in the middle. The presence of highly anonymous money in campaigns seems to promote both more negativity and more personal forms of it.

It is worth noting that this study of 2008 political advertising content did not incorporate advertising buy data into its conclusions. Ad placement and ad buy decisions are consequential strategic decisions (West, 2004). The state of the art in functional analysis of political advertising weights thematic content by both the number of times those themes air and their estimated reach (Semmler, Whitehill, Hammer, Hill, Seurer & Stech, 2009). Such weighted content analyses provide the most accurate estimations of advertiser intent and potential influence (Pryor, 2001; Franz, et al., 2008).

On the other hand, the news media often amplifies the most unusual or apt forms of political attack advertising. The best example of the amplification effect was the 1964 *Daisy Ad*; however, more recent examples abound. The late Senator Paul Wellstone (D-MN) aired an unexpectedly humorous attack ad that was often replayed on local news programs (Pfau, Parrot & Lindquist, 1992). Even more recently, the *Swift Boat Veterans for Truth's* first ad was amplified by cable news, talk radio and even the network news (Dionisopoulos, 2009). In these three cases, negative content alone was influential. Ads like these have been called phantom ads (Kurtz, 2008). They run once, but their novelty provokes and directs the public debate. In other words, the most extreme attacks are often more influential than their ad buys would suggest.

Extreme attacks can also inspire a spiral of negativity across an entire campaign (Andres, 2007). When candidates attack they lock themselves into a kind of mutually assured destruction. Pfau and Kenski (1990) reported that, "one of the most important lessons in attack politics is the necessity of responding to an attack quickly and

persuasively" (p. 11). Conventional wisdom is that presidential candidate Mike Dukakis (D-1988) lost because his campaign failed to respond more quickly to attacks on his record as Massachusetts Governor (Jamieson, 1992; West, 2004). His frustrated presidential bid is now a cautionary tale to those who would otherwise ignore Roger Ailes' dictum that, "when punched, punch back" (in Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995). Ansolobehere and Iyengar (1995) empirically demonstrated that the least effective response to an attack is a positive claim. The most effective response is another attack. Generally speaking, the prudent strategy against negative advertising is more negativity. The introduction of highly negative attacks into a campaign may ratchet up the level of negativity from all sources.

This type of incivility arms race was apparently on display in the 2004 presidential election. An increase in attacks by uncoordinated interest groups was associated with an across the board increase in negativity (Franz, et al., 2008). Between 2000 and 2004, spending by PSGs rose from $151 million (Malcomb, et al., 2005) to $486 million (Weissman, 2009). Uncoordinated groups aired 75,304 ads in 2000 and 160,743 in 2004. In both years, about 70% of uncoordinated ads were negative (Franz, et al., 2008). Political parties matched the increasing magnitude of negative ads. They increased their own proportion of pure attack advertisements from 45% in 2000 to 70% in 2004. Coordinated interest groups also increased their proportion of pure attack advertisements from 29% in 2000 to 44% in 2004. During the same period, both parties and coordinated interest groups reduced their proportion of positive advertisements (Franz, et al., 2008). The parties reduced their proportion of promotional appeals from 25% in 2000 to 10% in 2004, and coordinated interest groups reduced their proportion of

promotional appeals from 39% in 2000 to 17% in 2004. These apparent associations lack the certainty of statistical analysis or the logic of non-spuriousness, but they join a constellation of argumentation and evidence supporting Andres' (2007) argument that PSG-sponsored incivility predicts greater levels of overall incivility. A heuristic program of study would clearly articulate and test a *negative campaign contagion hypothesis*.

The question then becomes so what? PSGs injected more negativity into public discourse, and that might even influence the overall negativity of presidential campaigns. If political negativity is a positive good, then PSGs should be applauded. If it is effective, then campaigns should be aware and ready to either pre-empt or respond to political negativity. On the other hand, many have speculated that high levels of negativity erode the health of our democracy. If any of the aforementioned outcomes is demonstrated, policymakers, activists and candidates need to pay close attention to PSG activity. Activists and lawmakers have called for more regulation of PSGs, but not a single experimental study has investigated the influence of this unique brand of attack advertising. This study attempted to redress that deficit with the first experimental evaluation of PSG-sponsored attack advertising's influence.

Extreme Political Attack Advertising's Influence on Audiences

This study examined 35 hypotheses and research questions related to the influence of extreme political attack advertising. Those questions were organized into three broad categories: sponsorship influences, medium effects and interactions with partisanship. Sponsorship was examined to determine the relative influence of candidate versus PSG-sponsorship on several campaign outcomes, like intention to vote for a particular candidate and democratic values. The advertising conditions were also

compared to a control condition. The second group of hypotheses concerned the influence of media on several theoretical outcomes, like affect and attitude-behavior consistency. The final set of hypotheses concerned the moderating influence of political partisanship on political attack advertising's influence.

Attack advertising effects. Because voting is a comparative act, presidential candidates have a strong incentive to communicate their own strengths, while simultaneously conveying their opponents' weaknesses (Benoit, 2006). Generally, voters praise candidates for the former and criticize them for the latter. Voters despise the negativity (Begley & Interlandi, 2008), but no candidate has ever captured the White House with a purely positive campaign. Anecdotal and systematic empirical evidence show that some amount of negativity is needed to win an election (Jamieson, 1996; West, 1996; Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1995). Still, presidential candidates must strike a delicate balance between going negative and staying positive. Negativity that is too one-sided or too personal elicits backlash effects (Haddock & Zanna, 1997; Meirick, 2002; Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Pinkleton, 1997, 1998; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992). This research posited that such backlash effects are mitigated when extreme political negativity is sponsored by third-party PSGs. More specifically, it was expected that attacks sponsored by a PSG attack sponsor would be perceived as more credible than attacks sponsored by a candidate.

Persuasion is powerfully influenced by perceptions of the communicator's credibility. More than 2000 years ago, Aristotle observed that, "we believe good men more fully and more readily than others" (Aristotle, 1954, p. 1356a). Therefore, the first

and perhaps most important test of sponsorship effects was a comparison of PSG and candidate sponsorship on perceptions of the sponsor's credibility.

Results showed PSG-sponsored attack ads were not perceived as more credible than candidate-sponsored attacks. Using identical advertising content and only manipulating sponsorship, PSGs were not perceived as more credible than the candidates; however, a post hoc analysis showed that, compared to no attack, the combined attacks were associated with lower levels of perceived credibility. A univariate factorial ANOVA analyzed the influence of the collapsed attack condition (0 = no attack / 1 = attack), partisanship (0 = weak / 1 = strong) and media (0 = print / 1 = video) on sponsor credibility. There was a main effect for the combined attack conditions, $F(1, 122) = 12.21$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .07$. Compared to the control condition ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 1.25$, $N = 46$), the extremely negative ads were associated with less credibility for the combined attacks ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.08$, $N = 84$), $t(105) = 2.83$, $p < .01$. The original hypothesis posited a difference between PSG and candidate-sponsored attacks, but it did not consider the possibility that the extreme attacks, by themselves, reduce the credibility of the sponsor, which was the ultimate outcome.

Reductions in credibility for the combined sponsorship conditions may explain the lack of findings for hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7 and research question 2. The remainder of this section describes the null findings for sponsorship, and it explains those null findings by showing that the advertisements' influence was blocked by their initial impact on sponsor credibility. That explanation will be referred to as the *credibility suppression explanation*.

Sponsorship did not directly influence any dependent variables related to campaign outcomes. It was expected that PSG-sponsored ads are more effective than candidate-sponsored ads, as measured by more support for the implied beneficiary and less support for the target. Those expectations were not confirmed. Hypotheses 4a through H4b predicted that PSG-sponsored attacks elicit a more favorable evaluation of their implied beneficiary, a less favorable evaluation of their target, a greater intention to vote the implied beneficiary and a lesser intention to vote for the target. A detailed statistical analysis of each dependent variable failed to reveal a single main effect for sponsorship. However, it was stilled hoped that, at least, the attack conditions (i.e. candidate and PSG-sponsored) would elicit some effects relative to the control condition. That hope also went unfulfilled.

Disappointing findings were discovered for the eight hypotheses (i.e., H5, H6 & H7) that compared each attack condition to a common control condition. Based on arguments that candidate-sponsored extreme attacks backfire against both the sponsoring candidate (Pfau & Burgoon, 1989; Shapiro & Rieger, 1992; Thorson, Christ, & Caywood, 1991) and erode faith democratic values (Brooks & Geer, 2007; Funk, 2001; Mutz, 2007; Mutz & Reeves, 2005), hypothesis 5 and 7 posited that candidate attacks would reduce favorable evaluations of the sponsor, reduce intention to vote for the sponsor, increase favorable evaluations of the target, increase intention to vote for sponsor, reduce trust in American government and erode democratic political efficacy. These predictions were not confirmed. Similarly disappointing results were found for the expectations of hypotheses 6a through 6b, which posited that, compared to the control condition, PSG-sponsored attacks increase favorable evaluations of the sponsor, increase

intention to vote for the sponsor, decrease favorable evaluations of the target and decrease intention to vote for sponsor. A separate set of research questions asked about the influence of PSG-sponsored attacks on trust of American government and democratic political efficacy. Compared to the control condition, PSG-sponsored attacks did not influence those democratic values.

This consistency of null findings suggests a systematic failure in the execution of the experiment or conception of attack advertising's influence. Post-hoc analyses sought to reveal the underlying pattern. In fact, attack advertising's influence was more complicated than the hypotheses posited. Like many media effects, the advertisement's influence was indirect (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960). More specifically, sponsor credibility indirectly affected the influence of attack, which is an explanation supported by analogous research (Garramone, 1984; Garromone & Smith, 1984; Groenendyk & Valentino, 2002). Garramone and Smith (1984) found that independent sponsors of political advertising are more credible than candidate sponsors. They also revealed that the independent ads were more influential. In another study, Garramone (1984) confirmed that, "perceived truthfullness of a negative political commercial is positively related to its intended impact" (p. 258). Groenendyk and Valentino (2002) found that issue advertising was both more credible than candidate advertising, and it was more influential.

The intervening influence of sponsor credibility was also on display in this study. More specifically, it was examined as a mediating variable. Several post-hoc regression-based mediation procedures, like those used to examine hypothesis 8 (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Kenny, 2006), were used to test the post-hoc expectation that credibility indirectly

affected the influence of the combined attack conditions. Firstly, the attack conditions were collapsed into a single factor (0 = no attack / 1 = attack), which was directly related to the dependent variables in hypotheses 4, 5, 6, 7 and research question 2 (path c_1). Secondly, sponsor credibility was regressed on attack exposure (path a). Thirdly, the aforementioned dependent variables were jointly regressed onto attack exposure (path [c_2]) and sponsor credibility (path [b]). All three regression equations were calculated while controlling for the influence of media (0 = print / 1 = video) and partisanship (0 = weak / 1 = strong). The variance attributed to the indirect path through sponsor credibility was quantified and tested with the Sobel (1982) procedure. Figures 2 through 4 graphically display these post-hoc analyses.

The first dependent variables analyzed with this mediation procedure were favorable evaluation of the target and intention to vote for the target. The targets were the candidates whom the respondents supported at phase one. Results showed that attack exposure elicited a less favorable evaluation of the sponsor's credibility (R^2 = .15, F(4, 125) = 17.01, p < .001), and the reduction in credibility predicted a more favorable evaluation of the target (R^2 = .33, F(4, 125) = 16.63, p < .001), followed by a greater intention to vote for the target (R^2 = .28, F(4, 125) = 13.39, p < .001). Furthermore, a reevaluation of the direct path (i.e., controlling for credibility) between attack exposure and support for the candidate showed that controlling for credibility freed the attacks to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the target (Sobel = 2.59, p = .009) and a lesser intention to vote for the target (Sobel = 2.45, p = .01). In other words, the indirect role of sponsor credibility produced a backlash against the attackers' persuasive intent, but

controlling for credibility allowed the ads to have their intended effect. Figure 2a and 2b graphically depict this post hoc analysis.

A parallel analysis revealed an identical pattern of results for the candidate supported in the attack ads. The dependent variables in the second set of mediation analyses were favorable evaluation of the attacks' beneficiary and intention to vote for the beneficiary. Those findings are graphically depicted in Figures 2a and 2b. The candidate supported in the attack ad was also the candidate whom the respondents reported rejecting at phase one. Results showed that attack exposure elicited a less favorable evaluation of sponsor's credibility (R^2 = .15, F(4, 125) = 17.01, p < .001), and the reduction in credibility predicted a less favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in the attack (R^2 = .40, F(4, 125) = 22.06, p < .001), followed by a lesser intention to vote for the candidate supported in the attack (R^2 = .16, F(4, 125) = 7.26, p < .001). Furthermore, a reevaluation of the direct path between attack exposure and support for the benefited candidate showed that, removing credibility freed the attacks to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the beneficiary (Sobel = -2.88, p = .004) and a greater intention to vote for the beneficiary (Sobel = -2.07, p = .04). In other words, the intervention of sponsor credibility produced a backlash against the attacks' persuasive intent. By removing credibility from the equation, the ads moved audience's closer to supporting the candidate whom they rejected at phase one. When credibility was removed, the extreme attacks changed the audience's attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The dependent variables in the third set of mediation analyses were trust in American government and democratic political efficacy. Those analyses are graphically depicted in Figures 3a and 3b. Sponsor credibility did not intervene in the relationship

between exposure to attack advertising and trust in government (Sobel = -.29, p = .77) or in the relationship between exposure to the attacks and democratic political efficacy (Sobel = 1.25, p = .21). Thus, the *credibility suppression explanation* did not clarify the null findings for democratic values. Therefore, this study provided strong support for the argument that democratic values are not harmed by exposure to attack advertising (Finkel & Geer, 1998; Franz, et al., 2008; Geer & Lau, 1998; Geer, 2000, 2008; Goldstein & Freedman, 2002).

For campaign outcomes, however, these post-hoc analyses showed a clear and consistent pattern of effects. First, the extreme attacks elicited unfavorable evaluations of their sponsor's credibility, which in turn elicited a backlash in the form of boomerang effects (more support for the target and less support for supported candidate). Secondly, the attacks worked as intended once credibility was removed from the equation. The implication of these findings is two-fold. First, a less favorable evaluation of the sponsor's credibility explains why the sponsorship hypotheses were unconfirmed. The second implication is more interesting. Sponsor credibility is the only barrier to the effectiveness of extreme attacks on a candidate's character. Therefore, these attacks could work as intended when sponsor credibility is irrelevant or when faith in the sponsor is strong enough to resist derogations for any reason. Indeed, several methods exist for increasing a source's credibility.

Even the most unbelievable sources can be made trustworthy if they argue for positions that apparently violate their own self interest (Walster, Wood, & Chaiken, 1966) or if they violate the audience's expectations (Eagly, Wood, & Chaiken, 1978). These propositions may explain why the *Swift Boat Veterans for Truth* (*SBVT*) ads were

so devastatingly effective in 2004. Kerry established the expectation that his fellow Vietnam veterans were uniquely qualified to discuss his qualifications for the presidency. Because the *SBVT* were also Vietnam Vets who had served close to John Kerry, voters might have included them among the band of brothers who had been endorsing Kerry's candidacy. During the Iowa caucus campaign, Kerry substantially advanced his candidacy with a television advertisement in which one of his swift-boat shipmates testified that the Senator had saved his life. At the 2004 Democratic national convention, Kerry placed his military service at the forefront of his campaign. He even invited four veterans to endorse his candidacy, referring to them as his "band of brothers". Not only had many of the members of *SBVT* served with Kerry, some were even pictured in his official presidential campaign literature. Believing that the *SBVT* must have had a good reason to betray their "brother in arms", voters might have been more willing to believe the group's personal and one-sided attacks.

Such speculation deserves to be tested under rigorous conditions. Future research should directly manipulate the credibility of third-party attack advertisers relative to the extremity of their attacks. In the meantime, this study offers an important principle to political practitioners. Even when audiences support the target of an attack, they can be persuaded by an extremely negative advertising message, so long as the attack sponsor's credibility can sustain the attack itself. It would be very interesting to test the limits of credibility with respect to extreme forms of political propaganda, like the paranoid style (Hofstadter, 1964).

Can credibility overwhelm objections to arguments that the Republicans seek authoritarian fascism or that Obama is the member of a fifth column intent on enslaving

Americans to an Islamic-Marxist state? In recent years, both ideas have gained currency in American discourse. Neither is conducive to the kind of political compromise that is necessary for democratic governance (see Madison, 1787). If one believes that her political opponent seeks the destruction of civilization, it defies reason to compromise with him. This research shows that combating such extreme beliefs with skilled argumentation may be futile. Rather, such an effort should focus on enhancing the credibility of the extreme position's spokesperson or spokespersons.

The impact of channel on attack advertising's influence. It was posited that video political attack advertisements are source oriented, affective and directly experiential, whereas print political attack advertisements are message oriented, cognitive and indirectly experiential. These expectations were tested within the context of both political attack advertising effects and the inoculation effects. This section discusses the findings related to political attack advertising. Two hypotheses posited that relational communication and source credibility indirectly affected attack advertising's influence. Another hypothesis posited that message factors impact the influence of printed attack advertising. Finally, video and print-mediated political attack advertisements were compared on their capacity to elicit affective responses and attitude-behavior consistency. All of these tests were justified by the central assumptions of medium theory (Chesebro, 1984; McLuhan, 1964; Meyrowitz, 1994; Ong, 1982; Postman, 1985).

Medium theory proposes that media represent distinct epistemological environments (Chesebro, 1984; McLuhan, 1964; Meyrowitz, 1994; Ong, 1982; Postman, 1985). Because video conveys experiential access to a message's source (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Meyrowitz, 1982; Pfau, 1990), it was expected that video-mediated attack

advertising's influence would flow through source factors. The two source factors tested here were source credibility (McCroskey, Holdridge, & Toomb, 1974 1974; McCroskey & Jensen, 1973) and relational communication (J. Burgoon & Hale, 1987). Both dimensions of source were indirect factors in the process of video-mediated political attack advertising's influence on intention to vote for the targeted candidate. In addition, perceptions of communicator credibility and relational communication indirectly mitigated the intended influence of the video-mediated political attack ads. By removing their influence, the video attack ads operated as intended; which is to say, they reduced intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Given that findings from the post-hoc analyses showed that the ads exercised their influence through credibility, it became necessary to determine if an isolated print condition produced the same intervening relationships. Post-hoc analysis showed that neither credibility (Sobel = .84, p = .39) nor relational communication (Sobel = .52, p = .60) intervened in the process of printed political attack advertising's influence. Thus, video attack influence operates through processes that are distinct from print attack influence. It was also expected that printed attacks exercise their influence through message factors. That was not the case. Nevertheless, these findings provided additional confirmation of medium theory's claim that video foregrounds source factors (Beninger, 1987; Pfau, 1990), even if it did not confirm the claim that print operates through message factors.

Tests of print and video's relative capacity to elicit emotion similarly failed to operate as expected. It was reasoned that video elicits more affect than print. That expectation was tested with respect to positive affect for the implied beneficiary of the

attack and negative affect for the target of the attack. Those expectations were not confirmed, although the null findings could result from the similarity between the print and video ads. Both video and print ads contained stimuli that are associated with the elicitation of affect, like vivid colors (Brader, 2005) and facial affect displays (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1992; Hsee, Hatfield, & Chemtob, 1991). Therefore, the distinction between the media may not have been vivid enough to produce the hypothesized differences. A more powerful manipulation would simply compare plain black and white print to full color video attacks.

The unexpected findings for media's influence on attitude-behavior consistency are more difficult to explain. Based upon video's similarity to lived experience (Beninger, 1987; Horton & Wohl, 1956; Meyrowitz, 1982), it was expected that, compared to print, video elicits a greater degree of attitude-behavior consistency. That expectation was supported by extant research showing that directly formed attitudes elicited more attitude-behavior consistency than the indirectly formed attitudes (Fazio & Zanna, 1978, 1981; Fazio, Zanna, & Cooper, 1978). Surprisingly, the print-mediated attacks elicited greater attitude-behavior consistency than the video-mediated attacks. That correspondence may be attributable to print's demonstrated capacity to facilitate message comprehension and therefore, issue-relevant message processing (Chaiken & Eagly, 1976), which has been associated with greater attitude-behavior consistency (Cacioppo, Petty, Kao, & Rodriguez, 1986). In other words, the greater cognitive elaboration required to process the print messages may have facilitated the attitude-behavior consistency. Analogous results are evident in studies showing that newspaper use is associated with greater levels of political participation (Eveland & Scheufele,

2000; McLeod, et al., 1996; Pfau, Houston, & Semmler, 2007). Analogous results are evident in studies showing that newspaper use is associated with greater levels of political participation (Eveland & Scheufele, 2000; McLeod, et al., 1996; Pfau, Houston, & Semmler, 2007).

Cognitive elaboration (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which is composed of motivation and ability, may provide a more general explanation for the relationship between experiential processing and attitude-behavior consistency. For example, the attitude-behavior consistency of students who experienced the housing shortage in Regan and Fazio's (1977) study may have been produced by the relevance, as opposed to the concreteness, of their experience. Therefore, future studies of experiential and representational processing should control for relevance across the conditions.

Influence of partisanship on attack effects. The conventional wisdom in political campaigns is that 40% of voters vote Republican, 40% vote Democratic and 20% are persuadable. Strength of partisan identification exerts a strong influence on the decision to vote and for whom to vote (Bartels, 2000; Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Campbell, et al., 1960; Popkin, 1994). This study posited that weak partisans are more persuaded by political attack advertising than strong partisans. None of the hypotheses based on that reasoning were confirmed. Strength of party identification did not interact with exposure to either PSG-sponsored or candidate-sponsored attack advertising. Both candidate support and democratic values were unaffected by the combined influence of partisanship and exposure to attack advertising content. Findings clearly showed main effects for partisanship on candidate support, but those effects did not translate into interactions with exposure to the attacks. Therefore, it seems that

partisanship is a powerful determinant of candidate support, but in this case, it did not influence responses to political attack advertising content from any sponsor.

Effectiveness of Inoculation against Extreme Attack Advertising

Influence of inoculation on phase three candidate support. Inoculation is a demonstrably effective means of preempting campaign negativity (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, Kenski, Nitz, & Sorenson, 1990; Pfau, Park, Holbert, & Cho, 2001). Its blanket of protection extends to candidate support (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988), democratic values and behavioral intentions (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). In the typically unpredictable environment of political campaigns, inoculation mitigates the influence of both anticipated and unanticipated attacks (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988, 1990; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990). The inoculation message strategy's reliable effectiveness has immortalized it in both the pages of academic journals and the practices of political campaigns (Jamieson, 1996; Trent & Friedenberg, 2000; West, 2004).

This study sought to enrich the inoculation construct by demonstrating its ability to protect against both PSG and candidate-sponsored political attacks ads. To that end, it tested both a traditional candidate-centered inoculation message and a broader generic inoculation message. The candidate-specific message warned audiences against the particular influence of candidate-specific attacks, and it bolstered favorable attitudes toward the candidate whom the respondent initially supported. The generic inoculation message provided specific reasons to reject *all* political attack advertisements. Both strategies were tested in print and video. Finally, both strategies were tested against candidate-sponsored and PSG-sponsored attack advertisements.

Six, four-part hypotheses or research questions evaluated the influence of the two inoculation strategies against the two attack conditions. In total, 24 inoculation main effects were analyzed. Generic inoculation's influence was tested against a control for both candidate and PSG-sponsored attacks. Candidate-specific inoculation was also tested against a control for both candidate and PSG-sponsored attacks. And, finally, generic and candidate-sponsored inoculations were evaluated against each other relative to their defense against both candidate and PSG-sponsored attacks. All hypotheses and research questions were evaluated along with media and partisanship with three-way factorial ANOVAs. Not a single main effect was significant.

With the lower threshold of a one-tailed test, two main effects were significant. Compared to generic inoculation, candidate-specific inoculation was a more reliable bulwark against increased intention to vote against the candidate supported in the PSG-sponsored attack messages. On the other hand, that finding was rendered relatively meaningless by the lack of significant differences between either of the inoculation strategies and the control condition. Even though candidate-specific inoculation was superior to generic inoculation, neither inoculation condition was superior to control against PSG-sponsored attacks. A slightly more encouraging marginal effect was uncovered for the influence of candidate-specific inoculation against the control condition. The dependent variable was intention to vote for the targeted candidate. The result was that candidate-specific inoculation predicted a greater intention to vote for the target. Consistent with previous inoculation findings (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, et al., 1990; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001), candidate-specific inoculation was slightly more efficient at protecting support for a candidate from both opposition-candidate and PSG-sponsored

attacks; however, the differences were so marginal and so inconsistent, they were almost meaningless.

None of the hypotheses were strongly confirmed, but the actual influence of inoculation was substantially more interesting when they were revealed by three post-hoc analyses, which revealed their potential for profit in three trends among the null findings. First, inoculation influenced phase-three behavioral candidate support more reliably than it influenced phase-three attitudinal support. Second, video inoculation was associated with more reliable findings than print inoculation. And third, generic inoculation produced more reliable results than candidate-specific inoculation. These patterns were evident when inoculation was pitted against both the candidate and PSG attack conditions. Of course, these patterns were neither hypothesized nor did they account for every significant inoculation outcome. On the other hand, they did suggest a set of post-hoc examinations for the video-mediated generic and candidate-specific inoculation conditions.

The first set examined the potential of video-mediated inoculation to obviate attack advertising's influence. Two sets of independent sample *t*-tests compared video inoculation to the controls on vote intentions at the phase-three attack condition. The attack-sponsorship conditions and partisanship conditions were collapsed to increase statistical power and to isolate the influence of the video-mediated inoculation relative to the control condition. The dependent variables were intention to vote for the targeted candidate and intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the attacks. The first *t*-tests examined the influence of video-mediated generic inoculation and the second *t*-tests examined the influence of video-mediated candidate-specific inoculation. It was expected

that, compared to no inoculation, video inoculation is associated with a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate and a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.

The post-hoc examinations confirmed that video inoculation is an effective agent against attack advertising's influence. Compared to the control condition, generic video-mediated inoculation protected phase-three intention to vote for the targeted candidate (control: $M = 4.56$, $SD = 2.35$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 5.79$, $SD = 1.86$, $N = 48$, $t(80) = 2.75$, $p = .007$) and phase-three intention to vote against the implied beneficiary of the attack (control: $M = 1.51$, $SD = .98$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 1.08$; $SD = .35$, $N = 48$), $t(51) = 2.71$, $p = .01$. At the lower threshold of a one-tailed test, video-mediated candidate-specific inoculation also protected phase-three intention to vote for the targeted candidate (control: $M = 4.56$, $SD = 2.35$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 5.38$, $SD = 5.382$, $N = 40$), $t(81) = 1.70$, $p = .09$), but even at the lower threshold, it did not influence intention to vote for the implied beneficiary (control: $M = 1.51$, $SD = .98$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 1.70$, $SD = 1.52$, $N = 40$), $t(81) = .67$, $p = .50$). Comparable but unreported *t*-tests revealed that printed inoculation was utterly unable to protect candidate attitudes in the face of the attacks. Therefore, video inoculation was the most reliable means of pre-empting the influence of phase-three attacks on candidate support.

Isolating the video inoculation conditions reaffirmed that both candidate-specific (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990) and generic inoculation (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001) is capable of protecting candidate support from political attack advertising's influence; however, these results showed that generic inoculation was the more reliable agent. Generic inoculation appeals have been shown to obviate the influence of soft-

money attack ads (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001), corporate front stealth group attacks (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001) and print news photographs (Pfau, et al., 2006). The practical potential of generic inoculation against political attack advertising is enormous. Candidate campaigns ahead in the polls could use a generic inoculation strategy to protect attitudes from opposition negativity in the waning days of a campaign, when trailing challengers attack most vociferously (Trent & Friedenberg, 2000). Third-party groups that have an interest in reducing the influence of campaign negativity could also benefit from a generic inoculation message strategy. Given the myriad of ways in which televised negativity can mislead (Jamieson, 1996; West, 2004), the electorate may have the most to gain from an inoculation strategy that preempts the influence of all extreme political attack advertising.

Influence of inoculation on attack-phase democratic values. Previous efforts have demonstrated generic inoculation's potential to protect democratic values and activities (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001), but this study did not reproduce those findings. It found that, compared to generic inoculation, candidate-specific inoculation better protects trust in government against PSG-sponsored attacks. It further demonstrated that, compared to candidate-specific inoculation, generic inoculation better protects trust in government against candidate-sponsored attacks. Unfortunately, the relative difference between the generic and candidate-specific inoculation conditions meant little, since there was no overall inoculation effect on democratic values (i.e., inoculation versus control). This finding contradicts those studies that have demonstrated inoculation's capacity to protect democratic values (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001). The difference between those efforts and this one may have been a matter of context. The 2008 presidential contest was

electrifying. It attracted a record number of voters, and in particular, it attracted a record number of young voters. That enthusiasm for the democratic process may have simply rendered the inoculation messages unnecessary.

The Influence of Media on the Inoculation Process

Print inoculation was associated with greater levels of threat than video, although the difference was only significant at the lower threshold of a one-tailed test. This finding contradicted the logic of hypotheses 18h, which posited that video inoculation elicits more threat than print. Still, print's superior capacity to elicit threat confirmed the larger claim that video and print operate through distinct processes. On the other hand, post-hoc tests revealed that neither the video (control: $M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.24$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.10$, $N = 110$, $t(151) = .56$, $p = .58$) nor the print inoculation conditions (control: $M = 2.78$, $SD = 1.21$, $N = 41$; inoculation: $M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.26$, $N = 114$, $t(153) = 1.09$, $p = .28$) differed from the control. This finding was surprising. The preponderance of inoculation research shows that threat is an important means of inducing resistance to persuasion (Compton & Pfau, 2005; Pfau, 1997; Szabo & Pfau, 2002). With the failure of threat, this effort resorted to explaining video inoculation's effects through other process variables. Indeed, substantial research shows that inoculation operates through other mechanisms, like attitude accessibility (Pfau, et al., 2004, 2005), emotion (Pfau, et al., 2008; Pfau, Szabo, et al., 2001), counter-argumentation (Compton & Pfau, 2004) and associative networks (Pfau, et al., 2005). This study did not find any differences between the print and video inoculation conditions on emotion, counter argumentation or associative networks, but it did find

evidence for an inoculation process that was rooted in video's elicitation of attitude strength and accessibility.

Video and print did not directly differ on their capacity to elicit attitude strength or accessibility, but when the video condition was isolated, post-hoc tests showed that it differed from the control condition on both attitude accessibility and attitude confidence. Simple independent sample *t*-tests showed that, with respect to their initial candidate choice, video inoculation elicited greater attitude accessibility than the control condition (control: $M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.71$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.81$, $N = 88$, $t(129) = 1.63$, $p = .10$), and less attitude confidence than the control condition, (control: $M = 3.89$, $SD = .96$, $N = 43$; inoculation: $M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.16$, $N = 88$, $t(129) = 6.49$, $p < .001$).

Furthermore, a two-step hierarchical regression analysis showed that, after controlling for intention to vote for the targeted candidate at phase one ($b = .74$, $SE = .06$, $\beta = .71$, $t(129) = 11.46$, $p < .001$), $R^2 = .5$, $F(1, 129) = 131.34$, $p < .001$, attitude accessibility positively predicted intention to vote for the targeted candidate ($b = .29$, $SE = .08$, $\beta = .24$, $t(128) = 3.56$, $p < .001$), $R^2\Delta = .05$, $F(1, 128) = 77.93$, $p < .001$. A similar regression analysis showed that attitude confidence negatively predicted intention to vote for the targeted candidate ($b = -.42$, $SE = .11$, $\beta = -.25$, $t(128) = 3.89$, $p < .001$), $R^2\Delta = .05$, $F(1, 128) = 80.45$, $p < .001$. In other words, both accessibility and confidence increased resistance to the influence of phase-three attack advertising; although, the direction of that influence required further scrutiny. Accessibility acted as previous research has demonstrated (Pfau, et al., 2004; Pfau, et al., 2003); which is to say, inoculation elicited accessibility and accessibility elicited resistance.

Attitude confidence's role, however, was more complicated. A consensus of inoculation research shows that inoculation elicits confidence and confidence elicits greater resistance to persuasion (Compton & Pfau, 2004; Lin, 2007; Pfau, et al., 2005). This study revealed that confidence took two negative paths to resistance (inoculation was (-) with confidence and confidence was (-) with resistance), as opposed to the two positive paths seen in previous research (inoculation is (+) confidence is (+) with resistance). The effect is the same, but confidence's path in this study was unique. The explanation for this discrepancy could be this study's unique measure of attitude confidence. This 5-item measure of confidence (M. Burgoon, Cohen, Miller, & Montgomery, 1978) had never been used to examine the inoculation process. Rather, inoculation research had measured confidence with a single item asking participants to rate their attitude certainty on a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 means uncertain and 100 means certain (Compton & Pfau, 2004; Lin, 2007; Pfau, et al., 2005).

Additional tests examined the possibility that the M. Burgoon et al. (1978) measure of confidence was a proxy for threat. Within the video-mediated candidate-specific and generic inoculation conditions, a post-hoc correlation analysis revealed that threat and confidence were positively correlated, $r(222) = .20$, $p < .01$. Thus, the two must offer distinct paths of influence. If confidence were a proxy for threat, the variables would have been negatively related; which is to say, more threat would have been associated with less confidence. Instead, more threat was associated with more confidence, which is conceptually contradictory. Since the two variables were positively related, the 5-item confidence measure may represent a distinct path of inoculation's influence. If that is the case, attitude confidence might account for the direct and

unexplained path to resistance that operates independently of threat, counterarguing, certainty and attitude accessibility (Pfau, et al., 2005).

Medium-Same and Medium-Different Inoculation

Medium theory posits that print and video media are associated with distinct ways of knowing (Chesebro, 1984; Meyrowitz, 1985; Postman, 1993). This study tested that claims under a variety of conditions and against a variety of dependent variables. At the inoculation phase, print messages were expected to elicit relatively less affect, less attitude accessibility, less attitude-behavior consistency, fewer source considerations, greater emphasis on message considerations, more counter argumentation and a greater overall level of cognition. Some of these expectations were validated. Many were not, and some operated contrary to expectations. For example, video operated as expected when it was associated with greater source considerations than print, but video operated contrary to expectations when it was associated with less attitude-behavior consistency than print at both phases two and three. Nevertheless, this pattern of results generally confirmed the fundamental proposition of medium theory: print and video persuasion offer different ways of knowing or at least, distinct means of eliciting resistance to attack advertising's influence. Given these distinct processes and outcomes of video and print-mediated inoculation and attack advertising, it was interesting to further examine the impact of switching media in the middle of the inoculation process.

This study examined the relative influence of medium-same and medium-different inoculation. Of course, the inoculation message strategy has been used to convey resistance to persuasion across media (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau, Park, et al., 2001; Pfau, et al., 1990). Printed inoculation messages have conferred resistance to

printed attack messages (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988), video attack messages (Pfau, Park, et al., 2001) and direct mail (Pfau, et al., 1990). Video inoculation has conferred resistance to peer pressure (Pfau, Van Bockern, & Kang, 1992) and printed attack messages (Pfau, et al., 2002). Print and video inoculation messages have even been compared on several dimensions of resistance. This study compared inoculation's effect when the medium carrying the inoculation message was the same as the medium conveying the attack (medium-same) versus when the medium carrying the inoculation message was different from the from the medium conveying the attack medium-different). Given that previous findings showed reliable effects for candidate-specific inoculation and candidate-sponsored attacks (Pfau & Burgoon, 1988; Pfau & Kenski, 1990; Pfau, et al., 1990), this study employed candidate inoculation and candidate attacks across medium-same and medium-different conditions.

The first test of medium-same versus medium-different inoculation compared the effect of print-inoculation to print attack (P-P or medium same) versus print-inoculation to video-attack (P-V or medium different). When print inoculation crossed over to a video attack, inoculation lost its relative potency. Medium same (P-P) conferred more resistance than medium different (P-V) in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate, greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate and lesser intention to vote against the supported candidate. There was no difference between P-P and P-V on favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in the attack message.

The second examination of medium-same versus medium-different inoculation failed to reveal any significant differences. It compared video-inoculation to video-attack (V-V) versus video-inoculation to print-attack (V-P). The trend was not in the predicted

direction. In other words, the medium-different condition (V-P) seemed to provide more resistance than the matched conditions (V-V); however, this difference was merely superficial.

Still, the success of the former hypotheses must be compared to the failure of the latter set. When the inoculation was initiated in print, the difference between the matched and mismatched conditions was reliable, but when inoculation was initiated in video, the differences were non-significant and inconsistent. This problem may be the product of the particular type of processing elicited by video versus print. Further analysis is needed to examine possibility. Another explanation is that these findings were driven by the video and print attacks, as opposed to the inoculations. When inoculation was initiated in print, the matched attack was in print. When inoculation was initiated in video, the matched attack was in video. If the video attack was more effective than the print attack, the video-video condition would naturally appear inferior relative to the print-print condition. This alternative explanation was tested within the no-inoculation condition and between the print and video attacks. More specifically, an independent sample *t*-test compared the print-mediated candidate-sponsored attack to the video-mediated candidate-sponsored attack. If there were no differences between the conditions, it could be assumed the medium-same inoculation treatment was more effective than the medium-different treatment. Indeed, no significant differences were found for favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate (print: $M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.17$, $N = 92$; video: $M = 5.22$, $SD = 1.21$, $N = 86$, $t(176) = .02$, $p = .98$), intention to vote for the supported candidate (print: $M = 5.01$, $SD = 2.06$, $N = 92$; video: $M = 5.28$, $SD = 2.23$, $N = 86$, $t(176) = .81$, $p = .42$) or favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary (print: $M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.32$, $N = 92$;

video: $M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.41$, $N = 86$, $t(176) = .82$, $p = .41$). The only significant difference was marginal. On intention to vote for the candidate supported in the attack, the print-mediated candidate-sponsored attack was marginally more effective than the video-mediated candidate-sponsored attack (video: $M = 1.41$, $SD = 1.13$, $N = 86$; print: $M = 1.72$, $SD = 1.38$, $N = 92$, $t(176) = 1.66$, $p < .10$). Nevertheless, because the *t*-tests did not reveal a more effective video-mediated candidate-sponsored attack condition, the best explanation for the relative superiority of the medium-same (P-P) condition is medium theory's proposition that different media represent distinct epistemologies.

Limitations

Any large-scale endeavor teaches lessons in the language of hindsight. This study is no different. Hindsight has suggested three limitations and areas for improvement. This section describes those limitations and opportunities. First, it discusses the limitations inherent in Baron & Kenny's (1986) procedure for testing indirect effects. Second, it reviews the large number of null findings, especially in the attack conditions. Finally, it discusses the significantly skewed variables and possible transformations that might be employed in secondary analyses of this data.

Initially, this study over relied on Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation procedure to examine the indirect effects associated with the relative processes of print and video-mediated influence. Hayes (2010) has observed several problems with the mediation procedure used in this study. Firstly, the procedure unnecessarily requires a direct effect, when logic dictates that effects can be entirely indirect. Hayes also reported that Baron and Kenny's (1986) use of the Sobel (1982) test for indirect effects is misguided; since, it maintains the nearly impossible assumption that the indirect effect is

normally distributed. The better alternative to Sobel is an iterative bootstrapping procedure combined with a confidence-interval test for significance (Hayes, 2010). In a post-Baron and Kenny (1986) world, tests of indirect effects will be more powerful, less restrictive and accomplished with a bootstrapping procedure.

The second limitation of this study was evident in the preponderance of null or weak findings, especially in the attack conditions. Those null results might be explained by an overzealous pursuit of mundane realism. Not only were the ads embedded in entertaining content, which could be distracting; they were sandwiched between commercial breaks, which prevented any serial position effects. Future efforts to demonstrate the influence of extreme attack advertising should expose subjects to ads that are isolated from the distractions of an actual viewing environment. Once effects are established within an internally valid context, the next step could be to test those ads in a more mundane environment.

A third and important concern was the lack of normality within many of the dependent variables, as displayed in Table 4b. According to the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), transformations were attempted on the three most significantly skewed variables: intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the political attack, negative emotion for the target of the political attack and intention to vote for the target of the political attack. In all but one case, the transformations failed in their mission to correct the skew; but even then, the corrected skew came at the cost of significant kurtosis. Table 15 displays the transformations discussed in this section.

Implications

At least four implications of this study are worth reiterating. First, PSG-sponsored ads are more negative and more personal than ads sponsored by more accountable organizations, like the candidate's campaigns and FEC-compliant PACs. Second, highly personal and negative attacks work as intended when their sponsors are highly credible. Third, video-mediated generic inoculation appeals can obviate the influence of extremely negative political attack advertising. And fourth, video and print media convey distinct ways of knowing.

The greater negativity of PSG-sponsored ads should be considered with respect to the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) and the Supreme Court's recent decision to permit more soft money into political campaigns (i.e., *Citizens United v. FEC*). Although the BCRA sought to limit the role of soft money in political campaigns, it merely diverted it from political parties to less accountable institutions (e.g., PSGs). Furthermore, that lack of accountability inhibits another stated goal of the BCRA, which was to limit the negativity in political campaigns. Soft money now finances the least accountable and most extreme forms of negativity. Interestingly, this study provided evidence to suggest that political negativity is contagious. Future research needs to test a *negativity contagion hypothesis*. Furthermore, legislators should be made aware that the *Citizens United* decision could exacerbate the trend toward more negativity by allowing an unlimited amount of soft money into federal campaigns.

This study's findings also suggest that credible sources are the key to the success of highly personal and highly negative political attacks. Source factors consistently suppressed the impact of both candidate and PSG-sponsored extreme attacks. When those

factors were removed, the ads had their intended effect. Practitioners should be interested in further research that develops axiomatic ratios between negativity and factors influencing credibility, so that the influence of extreme negativity could be reliably predicted.

Campaigns and practitioners can also take comfort knowing that video-mediated generic-inoculation appeals can defend against the influence of extreme political attacks. Generic appeals are more efficient than specific appeals, since their lack of specificity can better cope with the inherent volatility of political campaigns. In the late stages of a campaign, candidates or organizations interested in stabilizing the electorate's attitudes might use generic inoculation ads to obviate any successful last-minute insurgencies.

Medium theorists are another beneficiary of this study's findings. In both expected and unexpected ways, this study demonstrated that print and video exercise their influence through distinct processes. Video's influence was indirectly routed through source considerations and print was associated with greater attitude-behavior consistency than video. Finally, the central theoretical proposition of this dissertation was confirmed by the relative superiority of medium-same (P-P) versus medium-different (P-V) inoculation. This finding both confirms the proposition that media are epistemic, and it offers practitioners another dimension on which they can predict the success of an inoculation message.

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TABLES

Table 1

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*The Country I Love*	6/20
Obama	*Dignity*	6/30
Obama	*New Energy*	7/8
Obama	*America's Leadership*	7/15
Obama	*Changing World*	7/17
Obama	*Old Politics General*	7/28
Obama	*New Energy Rev*	7/30
Obama	*Low Road*	8/1
Obama	*Low Road Rev*	8/4
Obama	*Pocket*	8/5
Obama	*Hands*	8/9
Obama	*Backyard*	8/11
Obama	*Fix the Economy Rev*	8/13
Obama	*Free Sticker 1 15*	8/13
Obama	*Embrace*	8/13
Obama	*Book*	8/13
Obama	*Fix the Economy*	8/13
Obama	*Free Sticker 2 15*	8/14

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*Punch*	8/14
Obama	*Three Bedroom Ranch*	8/16
Obama	*Three Times*	8/19
Obama	*Never*	8/20
Obama	*Dangerous*	8/21
Obama	*Seven*	8/22
Obama	*Out of Touch*	8/25
Obama	*Ayers Response*	8/25
Obama	*Don't Know Much*	8/26
Obama	*Revitalize*	8/30
Obama	*Obama Scranton*	8/31
Obama	*Same*	8/31
Obama	*No Change*	9/3
Obama	*Keep You Safe*	9/7
Obama	*Ensure Opportunity*	9/7
Obama	*No Maverick*	9/9
Obama	*Bush Economics*	9/9
Obama	*Shaky Economy*	9/9
Obama	*Scranton (Rev)*	9/9

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*No Third Term*	9/10
Obama	*Still*	9/12
Obama	*Real Change*	9/12
Obama	*It's Over*	9/12
Obama	*Burden*	9/15
Obama	*Honor*	9/15
Obama	*Sold Us Out*	9/16
Obama	*Social Security*	9/16
Obama	*Alternative*	9/16
Obama	*Protect Obama: Protect Infants*	9/17
Obama	*Real Change 120*	9/18
Obama	*Need Education*	9/21
Obama	*Foreign Vehicles MI*	9/23
Obama	*A Stronger Economy*	9/25
Obama	*Vote OH*	9/25
Obama	*Healthcare Reform*	9/29
Obama	*Mother General*	9/30
Obama	*Same Path 120*	9/30
Obama	*Risk*	9/30

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*Tax Healthcare*	10/1
Obama	*Spending Spree*	10/1
Obama	*Can't Explain*	10/4
Obama	*Troop Funding*	10/6
Obama	*Floridians Hurting*	10/7
Obama	*Grandfather 60*	10/7
Obama	*Outrageous*	10/8
Obama	*On Your Side*	10/8
Obama	*Unravel*	10/8
Obama	*Biden Appoint*	10/9
Obama	*The Subject*	10/9
Obama	*Work Hard NV*	10/9
Obama	*Barney Smith*	10/10
Obama	*Lose*	10/10
Obama	*Mills*	10/10
Obama	*Vote PA*	10/10
Obama	*Vote WI*	10/10
Obama	*Vote NC*	10/10
Obama	*Vote MI*	10/10

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*Tested*	10/10
Obama	*What Kind*	10/10
Obama	*Taketh*	10/11
Obama	*Vote IN*	10/13
Obama	*Vote VA*	10/13
Obama	*Vote CO*	10/13
Obama	*Vote FL*	10/13
Obama	*Coin*	10/13
Obama	*Worried About*	10/14
Obama	*We Can General*	10/15
Obama	*Vote NV*	10/15
Obama	*Vote NV*	10/15
Obama	*Absolute Lie*	10/15
Obama	*Medicare*	10/16
Obama	*Golden Years*	10/16
Obama	*Looking Out For*	10/17
Obama	*90 Percent*	10/17
Obama	*Michigan Hurting*	10/17
Obama	*What I Believe*	10/17

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
Obama	*Strikeland*	10/18
Obama	*Education General Rev*	10/20
Obama	*Erratic*	10/20
Obama	*American People*	10/21
Obama	*Try This*	10/24
Obama	*American People PA*	10/24
Obama	*American Dream*	10/26
Obama	*Defining Moment 120*	10/26
Obama	*Pennsylvania Hurting*	10/27
Obama	*Audio Tapes*	10/29
Obama	*McCain Own Words*	10/29
Obama	*McCain Say Anything*	10/31
Obama	*Look Behind*	11/2
Obama	*Something Happening*	11/2
McCain	*624787*	3/31
McCain	*Ready*	4/4
McCain	*Ignite*	4/16
McCain	*Healthcare*	5/1
McCain	*McCain: Health Solutions*	5/2

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
McCain	*A Better Way*	5/12
McCain	*Leading*	5/15
McCain	*Accountable*	5/15
McCain	*Safe*	6/6
McCain	*Global*	6/17
McCain	*Purpose*	6/26
McCain	*Love 60*	7/8
McCain	*God's Children*	7/11
McCain	*Troop Funding*	7/19
McCain	*Pump*	7/21
McCain	*Troops*	7/26
McCain	*Celeb*	7/30
McCain	*Broken*	8/5
McCain	*Family*	8/6
McCain	*Painful*	8/8
McCain	*Taxman*	8/15
McCain	*Maybe*	8/18
McCain	*Higher*	8/22
McCain	*Housing Problem*	8/22

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
McCain	*Passed Over*	8/25
McCain	*Joe Biden on Barack Obama*	8/25
McCain	*Debra*	8/25
McCain	*Expensive Plans*	9/1
McCain	*Recovery MI*	9/3
McCain	*Recovery OH*	9/3
McCain	*Alaska Maverick*	9/3
McCain	*Original Maverick*	9/8
McCain	*Temple*	9/8
McCain	*Disrespectful*	9/10
McCain	*Education*	9/10
McCain	*Foundation*	9/18
McCain	*Foundation*	9/18
McCain	*Michigan Jobs*	9/19
McCain	*Overseas*	9/19
McCain	*New Mexico Jobs*	9/19
McCain	*Ohio Jobs*	9/19
McCain	*Advice*	9/20
McCain	*Jim Johnson*	9/21

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
McCain	*Chicago Machine*	9/24
McCain	*Chicago Machine*	9/24
McCain	*Mum*	9/24
McCain	*Promise*	9/29
McCain	*Rein 60*	10/1
McCain	*Week*	10/2
McCain	*Tax Cutter*	10/3
McCain	*Dangerous*	10/6
McCain	*Hypo*	10/7
McCain	*Folks*	10/8
McCain	*Ambition*	10/10
McCain	*Unethical*	10/14
McCain	*Fight 60*	10/16
McCain	*Fight*	10/17
McCain	*Joe the Plumber*	10/21
McCain	*Listen to Biden*	10/25
McCain	*Voter Alert*	10/26
McCain	*Voter Alert*	10/26
McCain	*Jeb Bush*	11/1

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
Candidate		
McCain	*Jeb Bush*	11/3
McCain	*Special*	11/3
McCain	*Your Choice*	11/3
PSGs		
Healthcare for America Now	*Magic 8 Balls*	7/8
Vets for Freedom	*Finish the Job*	7/9
Vets for Freedom	*Four Months for Victory*	7/18
Let Freedom Ring	*Both Ways Barack*	7/22
Let Freedom Ring	*Both Ways Barack Rev*	7/23
American Issues Project	*Know Enough 60*	8/21
PowerPAC	*What Matters*	8/21
American Issues Project	*Know Enough 60 Rev*	8/27
Vets for Freedom	*I Am the Surge*	8/27
Vets for Freedom	*Re-Enlistment*	9/3
Born Alive Truth.org	*Gianna*	9/16
RightChange.com	*Bungee*	9/16
Vets for Freedom	*Patraeus vs. Obama*	9/16
Defenders of Wildlife	*Brutal 60*	9/21
RightChange.com	*Fine Print*	9/29

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
PSGs		
Vets for Freedom	*Skipped*	9/30
Defenders of Wildlife	*Savagery*	10/1
RightChange.com	*Fought Reform*	10/3
RightChange.com	*Fighting*	10/3
American Issues Project	*What Happened*	10/8
RightChange.com	*Angry*	10/9
Employee Freedom Action Committee	*George McGovern Union Vote 60*	10/12
Let Freedom Ring	*Card Check 60*	10/13
Let Freedom Ring	*Energy 60*	10/13
Let Freedom Ring	*Energy Common Sense*	10/13
Let Freedom Ring	*Card Check Common Sense 60*	10/13
Employee Freedom Action Committee	*Lost Jobs Union*	10/15
Let Freedom Ring	*Part of the Problem*	10/20
Let Freedom Ring	*Income Taxes*	10/20
Defenders of Wildlife	*Polar Bear*	10/21
Let Freedom Ring	*Taxing Businesses*	10/21
Let Freedom Ring	*Mad Mike 60*	10/22
Let Freedom Ring	*Chicken Button*	10/23
Let Freedom Ring	*Mad Mike*	10/23

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
PSGs		
Let Freedom Ring	*Punished*	10/23
Let Freedom Ring	*Friend of Latinos Sp 60*	10/24
Campaign Money Watch	*McCain Gamble*	10/28
Healthcare for America Now	*McCain Cancer*	10/28
Let Freedom Ring	*Dick Patten*	10/28
Let Freedom Ring	*Robert Carlstrom 60*	10/28
Let Freedom Ring	*Frank Gaffney 60*	10/29
Let Freedom Ring	*Judicial Choices 60*	10/30
RightChange.com	*Crisis*	11/1
Let Freedom Ring	*Thank You Economy*	11/2
FEC-compliant Groups		
AFL-CIO	*Not Now*	7/10
Friends of the Earth	*Trillions More*	4/16
Service Employees International Union	*Fill Up Obama*	4/17
DNC	*Better Off*	4/22
Progressive Media USA	*Out of Touch*	4/23
Service Employees International Union	*Feeling the Pain*	4/29
Service Employees International Union	*Feeling the Pain OH*	4/29
Service Employees International Union	*Biggest Worries*	4/29

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
Service Employees International Union	*Iraq Future*	4/30
DNC	*100 Years*	4/30
MoveOn.Org	*Mission Accomplished*	5/1
Service Employees International Union	*Iraq Future Rev*	5/1
MoveOn.Org	*Obamacan*	5/13
MoveOn.Org	*Obamacan.Rev*	5/16
VoteVets	*McCain GI Bill*	5/21
MoveOn.Org	*Fire Charlile Black*	5/23
MoveOn.Org	*Bush-McCain Challenge*	5/28
Coalition Against Anti-Christian Rhetoric	*Obama Godlike*	6/2
MoveOn.Org	*John Cusak*	6/13
MoveOn.Org	*Not Alex*	6/18
RNC	*Balance*	7/6
Strong American Schools	*This Boy's Future*	7/14
Planned Parenthood	*McCain Birth Control*	7/16
MoveOn.Org	*Timeline*	7/18
Citizens United	*Hype*	7/21
BET	*Voting Rap 60*	7/25
VoteVets	*Freedom*	7/25

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
MoveOn.Org	*Hope*	7/30
MoveOn.Org	*Gimmick*	8/5
Matthew 25 Network	*Families*	8/16
MoveOn.Org	*Pocket*	8/21
Denver Group	*Declaration*	8/22
Health Care First	*Falling through the Cracks*	8/23
One Campaign	*Matt Damon*	8/24
RNC	*Right*	8/26
Planned Parenthood	*Sex Ed*	9/2
DNC	*More*	9/4
DNC	*Vote*	9/9
Service Employees International Union	*McCain Economics*	9/12
Vitae Society	*What Was I Thinking*	9/15
MoveOn.Org	*My Friend*	9/18
UFCW	*McCain Wal-Mart*	9/18
Brave New PAC	*McCain Medical Records*	9/25
One Campaign	*Just One Question*	9/25
MoveOn.Org	*My Friend's Mess*	9/27
RNC	*Worse*	9/29

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
CA Nurses Association	*One Heartbeat Away*	10/1
Committee for Truth in Politics	*Protect Infants*	10/2
Judicial Confirmation Network	*Chose 60*	10/2
Planned Parenthood	*Heartless*	10/2
ph for America	*Sermon on the Mount*	10/4
Foundation for Life	*Weakest Members*	10/6
Service Employees International Union	*Worried Sick*	10/6
United Auto Workers	*Nicole Lowe*	10/7
United Auto Workers	*Joel Blatchford*	10/7
VoteVets	*Jason Bensley*	10/8
RNC	*Trillion*	10/8
Bring Ohio Back	*Beer Gut*	10/9
Committee for Truth in Politics	*Early Release*	10/9
RNC	*Chicago Way*	10/10
Bring Ohio Back	*Nuts*	10/11
Our Country Deserves Better	*Most Liberal*	10/13
Our Country Deserves Better	*Different Values*	10/13
Our Country Deserves Better	*Shameful 60*	10/14
Afscme	*Fixed Income*	10/16

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
RNC	*Chair*	10/16
Afscme	*Tough Votes*	10/17
Denver Group	*Used Car*	10/17
National Republican Trust	*Licenses*	10/17
Denver Group	*Judgment*	10/18
Denver Group	*Good Idea*	10/18
MoveOn.Org	*Moose*	10/20
Republican Jewish Coalition	*Concerned about Obama*	10/20
Progressive Future	*Reagan*	10/21
Tim D'Annunzio	*Obama Tax*	10/21
Our Country Deserves Better	*Patriotism Problem 60*	10/22
Our Country Deserves Better	*Sarah's a Fighter 60*	10/22
Our Country Deserves Better	*Wrong for MI*	10/22
Our Country Deserves Better	*Ayers Wright Kilpatrick 60*	10/23
Trust in Small Business	*Obama Sununu Small Business*	10/25
RNC	*RNC Listen to Biden*	10/25
RNC	*RNC Storm*	10/25
National Republican Trust	*Social Security for Illegals*	10/26
Planned Parenthood	*Worse for Women*	10/26

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
Trust in Small Business	*Obama McConell Small Business*	10/26
Bring Ohio Back	*Wrecking Ball*	10/27
Winning Message Action Fund	*Mug Shot*	10/28
National Rifle Association	*Chuck Norris*	10/29
National Pro-Life Alliance	*Obama-Udall Abortion 60*	10/30
RNC	*RNC Virginia*	10/30
National Pro-Life Alliance	*Obama-Hagen Abortion 60*	10/31
Service Employees International Union	*Meghan Cofield*	10/31
RNC	*Your Choice*	10/31
MoveOn.Org	*John Weiler*	11/1
PA Republican Party	*Obama Consider This*	11/1
Progressive Future	*What's Wrong 60*	11/1
truthandhope.org	*Someone Who Cares*	11/1
RNC	*Joe the Plumber*	11/1
Common Sense Issues	*Baby Human Rights*	11/2
Family Research Council	*Draw the Line*	11/2
Missouri Right to Life	*Jill Stanek 60*	11/2
truthandhope.org	*Conservative Area*	11/2
truthandhope.org	*Gun Lover 60*	11/2

Table 1 cont.

Presidential Campaign Advertising: 2008 General Election Phase

Sponsor	Title	Air Date
FEC-compliant Groups		
truthandhope.org	*Joe the Plumber*	11/2
RNC	*Surgeon*	11/2
truthandhope.org	*Keith Howell 60*	11/3
RNC	*Charlie Crist*	11/3
RNC	*Jeb Bush*	11/3
National Republican Trust	*Preacher of Hate*	11/4
RNC	*Served*	11/4

Table 2

Coding Instructions: Functional Theory of Campaign Discourse

Functional Theme(s)

General Definition: *A theme is a distinct idea, claim or argument. A single theme can extend from one phrase to an entire paragraph.*

0 No Function Present

General Definition: The t*heme does not provide a reason to vote for or against a candidate or a political party and by extension, a candidate.*

1 Functional Theme: Acclaim

General Definition: *Themes that portray the sponsoring candidate or the candidate's political party in a favorable light.*

2 Functional Theme: Attack

General Definition: *Themes that portray the opposing candidate or opposing candidate's political party in an unfavorable light.*

3 Functional Theme: Defense

General Definition: *Themes that explicitly respond to a prior attack on the candidate or the candidate's political party.*

Topic

1 Topic: Policy

General Definition: *Policy utterances, often called "issues," concern problems facing the nation and proposals for alleviating those problems.*

2 Topic: Character

General Definition: *Character comments address the qualifications and / or personalities of the candidates.*

Additional Function Rules

1. Treat appeals to support a specific policy as an attack.

2. Themes that consist of only solicitations (e.g., vote for the candidate, volunteer, donate money or visit a web page) are not functions. A function is a reason to support or oppose a candidate.

Table 2 cont.

Coding Instructions: Functional Theory of Campaign Discourse

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3. Hypothetical speculation on a candidate's issue position(s), issue awareness or character is an attack, since it is designed to create doubt about a candidate's desirability.

4. Consider functions within the context of their surrounding themes.

5. Attacks against the opposing political party or candidates from the opposing party are considered attacks, even if those attacks don't mention a presidential candidate.

6. Acclaims of a political party or candidates from that party are considered acclaims, even if those acclaims don't mention a presidential candidate.

Additional Topic Rules

1 .References to campaign tactics that do not directly implicate policy past deeds, future plans or general goals are character-personal qualities attacks.

2. Attacking a candidate's policy advisors is essentially the same as attacking a candidate's policy positions, as opposed to merely attacking candidates.

Summary Codes

Theme		**Topic**	
0	**No Function**	**1**	**Policy**
1	**Acclaim**	**2**	**Character**
2	**Attack**		
3	**Defense**		

Table 3

Cohen's Kappa Reliability Statistics for Analysis of 2008 Presidential Campaign Advertising

Coder Pairs	Function	Topic
2 and 3	.94	.81
2 and 4	.93	.68
2 and 5	.98	.73
3 and 4	.89	.71
3 and 5	.91	.65
4 and 5	.89	.71
Average Reliability	.92	.71

Table 4a

Dependent Variables Employed at Three Data Analytic Stages

Attack Phase Attack Outcomes	Inoculation Phase Inoculation Processes	Attack Phase Inoculation Outcomes
Targeted Candidate global evaluation positive emotion vote intention	Threat Amount of Counterarguing Associative Networks number of nodes / links strength valence affective content cognitive content	Targeted Candidate global evaluation positive emotion vote intention
Implied Beneficiary global evaluation positive emotion vote intention		Implied Beneficiary global evaluation negative emotion vote intention
Democracy trust efficacy	Targeted Candidate global evaluation positive emotion vote intention	Democracy trust efficacy
Sponsor of Attack credibility relational communication	Implied Beneficiary global evaluation vote intention	Sponsor credibility relational communication
Attack Message global evaluation	Sponsor of Inoculation credibility relational communication	Partisanship
Partisanship		
Attitude-Behavior Consistency evaluation of candidate vote intention	Attitude-Behavior Consistency evaluation of candidate vote intention	

Table 4b

Reliability and Normality of Examined Variables

Measurement	*N*	α	skew	kurtosis
Inoculation Phase: Inoculation Sponsor				
Inoculation Sponsor: Relational Communication	354	.94	-3.73**	2.26
Inoculation Sponsor: Credibility	354	.91	.99	-2.01
Inoculation Phase: Inoculation Processes				
Counterarguing	339	NA	7.02**	1.55
Threat	354	.93	2.16	-1.69
Negative Advertising: Evaluation	354	.92	6.63**	3.53**
Negative Advertising: Attitudinal Confidence	354	.92	-1.59	-2.60*
Associative Network: Links	353	NA	6.39**	2.89*
Associative Network: Nodes	354	NA	7.68**	5.30**
Associative Networks: Rate	354	NA	-2.64*	-1.11
Associative Networks: Affective Content	346	NA	4.44**	-.58
Associative Network: Cognitive Content	346	NA	4.86**	1.40
08 Election: Attitude Access	354	92.03	.45	-4.84
Inoculation Phase: Supported Candidate				
Supported Candidate: Positive Affect	354	.92	3.02*	2.54
Supported Candidate: Evaluation	354	.92	-2.73*	-1.38
Supported Candidate: Vote Intention	354	NA	-8.25**	.36
Supported Candidate: Attitude Confidence	354	.91	2.97*	-1.86

*$p < .01$. **$p < .001$

Table 4b cont.

Reliability and Normality of Examined Variables

Measurement	*N*	α	skew	kurtosis
Supported Candidate: Attitude Access	354	.92	-.57	-4.55**
Inoculation Phase: Opposed Candidate				
Opposed Candidate: Evaluation	354	.95	-.57	-1.98
Opposed Candidate: Vote Intention	351	NA	15.72**	10.31**
Opposed Candidate: Attitude Confidence	354	.94	1.75	-3.39**
Opposed Candidate: Attitudinal Access	354	.93	3.74**	-3.89**
Attack Phase: Attack Sponsor				
Sponsor Relational Communication	354	.95	3.04*	-2.42
Sponsor Credibility	354	.95	1.74	-1.76
PSG Relational	174	.97	.79	-2.28
PSG Credibility	174	.97	.44	-1.25
Candidate Relational	226	.95	2.75*	-1.94
Candidate Credibility	226	.94	1.97	-1.61
Attack Phase: Supported Candidate				
Supported Candidate: Evaluation	354	.97	-3.57**	-.33
Supported Candidate: Negative Emotion	354	.95	12.66**	8.93**
Supported Candidate: Vote Intention	354	NA	-7.41**	-1.32
Attack Phase: Opposed Candidate				
Opposed Candidate: Evaluation	354	.96	.99	-2.54
Opposed Candidate: Positive Emotions	354	.92	6.84**	-.42

*$p < .01$. **$p < .001$

Table 4b cont.

Reliability and Normality of Examined Variables

Measurement	*N*	α	skew	kurtosis
Opposed Candidate: Vote Intention	350	NA	15.55**	11.09**
Attack Phase: Democratic Attitudes				
Democratic Efficacy	354	.76	.04	-2.94*
Trust in American Government	354	.75	-.44	-1.19
Attack Phase: Attack Arguments				
Attack Advertising Arguments: Evaluation	354	.97	1.48	-1.36

*$p < .01$. **$p < .001$

Table 5a

2008 General Election Advertising: Candidate versus PSG by Acclaim versus Attack

Sponsor	Acclaim	Attack	Total	X^2 (p) V
Candidates	437 (49.4%)	523 (50.6%)	960	46.94 ($p < .001$) $V = .21$
PSG	24 (17.9%)	110 (82.1%)	134	

Table 5b

2008 General Election Advertising: FEC versus PSG by Acclaim versus Attack

Sponsor	Acclaim	Attack	Total	X^2 (p) V
PSG	24 (17.9%)	110 (82.1%)	134	3.79 (p = .05) V =.09
FEC	89 (26.4%)	248 (73.6%)	337	

Table 5c

2008 General Election Attack Advertising: Policy versus Character

Sponsor	Policy	versus	Character	Total	X^2 (p) V
Candidates	335 (69%)		151 (31%)	486	29.13 ($p < .001$)
PSG	50 (46%)		60 (55%)	110	$V = .19$
FEC	134 (54%)		114 (46%)	248	

Table 6a

Attack Phase: Perceptions of Sponsor Credibility (H3)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	0.83	1	0.83	0.61	0.44	0.0080
Media	5.31	1	5.31	3.91	0.05	0.0490
Partisan	16.87	1	16.87	12.44	0.01	0.1406
Attack * Media	0.93	1	0.93	0.68	0.41	0.0089
Attack * Partisan	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.92	0.0001
Media * Partisan	0.47	1	0.47	0.35	0.56	0.0046
Attack * Partisan* Media	2.05	1	2.05	1.51	0.22	0.0195
Error	103.05	76	1.36			
Total	130.69	83				

Table 6b

Attack Phase: Global Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary (H4a, H5a, H6a, H11a and RQ4a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	0.12	2	0.06	0.04	0.96	0.0007
Media	0.67	1	0.67	0.42	0.52	0.0036
Partisan	42.56	1	42.56	27.04	0.01	0.1864
Attack * Media	0.91	2	0.45	0.29	0.75	0.0049
Attack * Partisan	0.62	2	0.31	0.20	0.82	0.0033
Media * Partisan	0.60	1	0.60	0.38	0.54	0.0032
Attack * Partisan* Media	0.32	2	0.16	0.10	0.90	0.0017
Error	185.69	118	1.57			
Total	231.21	129				

Table 6c

Attack Phase: Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (H4b, H5b, H6b, H11b and RQ4b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	2.21	2	1.11	1.08	0.34	0.0181
Media	4.01	1	4.01	3.93	0.05	0.0322
Partisan	14.25	1	14.25	13.97	0.01	0.1058
Attack * Media	1.94	2	0.97	0.95	0.39	0.0159
Attack * Partisan	2.01	2	1.00	0.98	0.38	0.0164
Media * Partisan	2.11	1	2.11	2.06	0.15	0.0172
Attack * Partisan* Media	0.98	2	0.49	0.48	0.62	0.0081
Error	120.37	118	1.02			
Total	149.40	129				

Table 6d

Attack Phase: Global Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (H4c, H5c, H6c, H11c and RQ4c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	2.74	2	1.37	1.17	0.31	0.0194
Media	0.55	1	0.55	0.47	0.49	0.0040
Partisan	44.63	1	44.63	38.01	0.01	0.2437
Attack * Media	3.68	2	1.84	1.57	0.21	0.0259
Attack * Partisan	1.88	2	0.94	0.80	0.45	0.0134
Media * Partisan	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.92	0.0001
Attack * Partisan* Media	1.44	2	0.72	0.61	0.54	0.0103
Error	138.53	118	1.17			
Total	192.58	129				

Table 6e

Attack Phase: Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (H4d, H5d, H6d, H11d and RQ4d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	6.77	2	3.38	0.90	0.41	0.0150
Media	2.12	1	2.12	0.56	0.45	0.0047
Partisan	108.98	1	108.98	28.91	0.01	0.1968
Attack * Media	11.18	2	5.59	1.48	0.23	0.0245
Attack * Partisan	3.16	2	1.58	0.42	0.66	0.0071
Media * Partisan	0.99	1	0.99	0.26	0.61	0.0022
Attack * Partisan* Media	11.05	2	5.52	1.47	0.24	0.0242
Error	444.83	118	3.77			
Total	599.88	129				

Table 6f

Attack Phase: Democratic Political Efficacy (H7a RQ2a, RQ3a and RQ5a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	5.04	2	2.52	1.17	0.31	0.0195
Media	1.39	1	1.39	0.65	0.42	0.0055
Partisan	3.92	1	3.92	1.82	0.18	0.0152
Attack * Media	2.43	2	1.22	0.56	0.57	0.0095
Attack * Partisan	0.07	2	0.04	0.02	0.98	0.0003
Media * Partisan	0.20	1	0.20	0.09	0.76	0.0008
Attack * Partisan * Media	0.83	2	0.41	0.19	0.83	0.0033
Error	254.00	118	2.15			
Total	267.93	129				

Table 6g

Attack Phase: Candidate Sponsorship on Trust of American Government (H7b, RQ2b, RQ3b and RQ5b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Attack	2.89	2	1.44	1.42	0.25	0.0235
Media	3.06	1	3.06	3.02	0.08	0.0249
Partisan	1.15	1	1.15	1.14	0.29	0.0095
Attack * Media	3.95	2	1.97	1.94	0.15	0.0319
Attack * Partisan	0.79	2	0.40	0.39	0.68	0.0066
Media * Partisan	0.04	1	0.04	0.04	0.85	0.0003
Attack * Partisan* Media	1.34	2	0.67	0.66	0.52	0.0111
Error	119.86	118	1.02			
Total	134.55	129				

Table 6h

Attack Phase: Positive Emotional Response to the Implied Beneficiary of the Attack (H9a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Partisan	30.71	1	30.71	9.19	0.00	0.10
Media	0.04	1	0.04	0.01	0.92	0.00
Media * Partisan	0.69	1	0.69	0.21	0.65	0.00
Error	267.40	80	3.34			
Total	299.61	83				

Table 6i

Attack Phase: Negative Emotional Response to the Implied Beneficiary of the Attack (H9b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Partisan	43.80	1	43.80	11.13	0.00	0.12
Media	0.02	1	0.02	0.00	0.95	0.00
Media * Partisan	2.12	1	2.12	0.54	0.46	0.01
Error	314.79	80	3.93			
Total	361.91	83				

Table 7a

Attack Phase: Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of Targeted Candidate (H12a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.17	1	0.17	0.15	0.70	0.0018
Media	2.16	1	2.16	1.87	0.17	0.0226
Partisan	16.88	1	16.88	14.65	0.01	0.1532
Inoculation * Media	0.13	1	0.13	0.11	0.74	0.0014
Inoculation * Partisan	1.86	1	1.86	1.62	0.21	0.0196
Media * Partisan	1.76	1	1.76	1.53	0.22	0.0185
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.94	0.0001
Error	93.32	81	1.15			
Total	119.46	88				

Table 7b

Attack Phase: Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (H12b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	10.04	1	10.04	3.45	0.07	0.0408
Media	0.56	1	0.56	0.19	0.66	0.0024
Partisan	39.61	1	39.61	13.61	0.01	0.1438
Inoculation * Media	10.81	1	10.81	3.71	0.06	0.0438
Inoculation * Partisan	7.52	1	7.52	2.58	0.11	0.0309
Media * Partisan	1.38	1	1.38	0.47	0.49	0.0058
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	1.34	1	1.34	0.46	0.50	0.0056
Error	235.82	81	2.91			
Total	334.11	88				

Table 7c

Attack Phase: Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of Implied Beneficiary (H12c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.07	1	0.07	0.06	0.80	0.0008
Media	0.26	1	0.26	0.23	0.63	0.0029
Partisan	42.62	1	42.62	38.09	0.01	0.3199
Inoculation * Media	1.43	1	1.43	1.28	0.26	0.0155
Inoculation * Partisan	0.05	1	0.05	0.04	0.83	0.0005
Media * Partisan	0.67	1	0.67	0.60	0.44	0.0073
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.38	1	0.38	0.34	0.56	0.0042
Error	90.62	81	1.12			
Total	138.04	88				

Table 7d

Attack Phase: Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (H12d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	2.89	1	2.89	2.98	0.09	0.0354
Media	4.34	1	4.34	4.47	0.04	0.0522
Partisan	5.00	1	5.00	5.15	0.03	0.0598
Inoculation * Media	0.03	1	0.03	0.03	0.86	0.0004
Inoculation * Partisan	0.27	1	0.27	0.28	0.60	0.0034
Media * Partisan	2.43	1	2.43	2.50	0.12	0.0299
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.05	1	0.05	0.05	0.82	0.0006
Error	78.66	81	0.97			
Total	94.18	88				

Table 8a

Attack Phase: Candidate Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (H13a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.05	1	0.05	0.04	.85	0.0005
Media	1.44	1	1.44	1.08	.30	0.0146
Partisan	18.48	1	18.48	13.81	.01	0.1591
Inoculation * Media	0.02	1	0.02	0.02	.89	0.0002
Inoculation * Partisan	0.71	1	0.71	0.53	.47	0.0073
Media * Partisan	0.66	1	0.66	0.50	.48	0.0067
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.13	1	0.13	0.09	.76	0.0013
Error	97.68	73	1.34			
Total	119.50	80				

Table 8b

Attack Phase: Candidate Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (H13b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.31	1	0.31	0.10	0.75	0.0014
Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.95	0.0000
Partisan	89.69	1	89.69	28.73	0.01	0.2824
Inoculation * Media	15.15	1	15.15	4.85	0.03	0.0623
Inoculation * Partisan	0.96	1	0.96	0.31	0.58	0.0042
Media * Partisan	0.15	1	0.15	0.05	0.82	0.0007
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	6.67	1	6.67	2.14	0.15	0.0284
Error	227.88	73	3.12			
Total	351.51	80				

Table 8c

Attack Phase: Candidate Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary (H13c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.43	1	0.43	0.42	0.52	0.0057
Media	6.02	1	6.02	5.83	0.02	0.0739
Partisan	45.26	1	45.26	43.80	0.01	0.3750
Inoculation * Media	0.72	1	0.72	0.70	0.41	0.0095
Inoculation * Partisan	0.65	1	0.65	0.62	0.43	0.0085
Media * Partisan	0.64	1	0.64	0.62	0.43	0.0084
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.97	1	0.97	0.94	0.34	0.0127
Error	75.44	73	1.03			
Total	123.41	80				

Table 8d

Attack Phase: Candidate Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (H13d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	1.66	1	1.66	1.39	0.24	0.0144
Media	1.43	1	1.43	1.20	0.28	0.0157
Partisan	6.28	1	6.28	5.25	0.02	0.0654
Inoculation * Media	0.38	1	0.38	.31	0.58	0.0042
Inoculation * Partisan	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.92	0.0002
Media * Partisan	0.04	1	0.04	0.04	0.85	0.0004
Inoculation * Media *Partisan	0.94	1	0.94	0.77	0.38	0.0105
Error	89.11	73	1.22			
Total	99.51	80				

Table 9a

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (RQ6a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.03	1	0.03	0.03	0.87	0.0004
Media	2.51	1	2.51	2.35	0.13	0.0293
Partisan	9.65	1	9.65	9.06	0.01	0.1041
Inoculation * Media	0.03	1	0.03	0.03	0.86	0.0004
Inoculation * Partisan	0.20	1	0.20	0.19	0.66	0.0024
Media * Partisan	0.84	1	0.84	0.79	0.38	0.0100
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.20	1	0.20	0.19	0.67	0.0024
Error	83.14	78	1.07			
Total	97.52	85				

Table 9b

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (RQ6b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	6.21	1	6.21	2.40	0.13	0.0298
Media	10.80	1	10.80	4.17	0.04	0.0507
Partisan	50.45	1	50.45	19.47	0.01	0.1997
Inoculation * Media	0.68	1	0.68	0.26	0.61	0.0034
Inoculation * Partisan	13.43	1	13.43	5.18	0.03	0.0623
Media * Partisan	2.33	1	2.33	0.90	0.35	0.0114
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	2.37	1	2.37	0.92	0.34	0.0116
Error	202.16	78	2.59			
Total	278.37	85				

Table 9c

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary (RQ6c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.17	1	0.17	0.22	0.64	0.0028
Media	1.88	1	1.88	2.36	0.13	0.0294
Partisan	51.09	1	51.09	64.24	0.01	0.4516
Inoculation * Media	4.13	1	4.13	5.20	0.03	0.0625
Inoculation * Partisan	0.37	1	0.37	0.47	0.49	0.0060
Media * Partisan	0.05	1	0.05	0.06	0.80	0.0008
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	2.61	1	2.61	3.28	0.07	0.0404
Error	62.03	78	0.80			
Total	115.64	85				

Table 9d

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - PSG Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (RQ6d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.22	1	0.22	0.28	0.60	0.0036
Media	2.33	1	2.33	3.01	0.09	0.0372
Partisan	4.53	1	4.53	5.85	0.02	0.0698
Inoculation * Media	0.44	1	0.44	0.57	0.45	0.0072
Inoculation * Partisan	0.22	1	0.22	0.28	0.60	0.0036
Media * Partisan	0.26	1	0.26	0.33	0.57	0.0043
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	1.48	1	1.48	1.91	0.17	0.0239
Error	60.34	78	0.77			
Total	69.41	85				

Table 10a

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (H14a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	1.20	1	1.20	0.98	0.33	0.0121
Media	1.27	1	1.27	1.03	0.31	0.0127
Partisan	12.74	1	12.74	10.32	0.01	0.1143
Inoculation * Media	2.77	1	2.77	2.24	0.14	0.0273
Inoculation * Partisan	0.36	1	0.36	0.29	0.59	0.0036
Media * Partisan	2.26	1	2.26	1.83	0.18	0.0224
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	1.15	1	1.15	0.94	0.34	0.0116
Error	98.74	80	1.23			
Total	118.85	87				

Table 10b

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (H14b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	1.37	1	1.37	0.32	0.58	0.0039
Media	0.80	1	0.80	0.18	0.67	0.0023
Partisan	69.54	1	69.54	15.96	0.01	0.1663
Inoculation * Media	1.19	1	1.19	0.27	0.60	0.0034
Inoculation * Partisan	3.20	1	3.20	0.73	0.39	0.0091
Media * Partisan	0.24	1	0.24	0.06	0.81	0.0007
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	.001	1	0.01	0.00	0.97	0.0000
Error	348.59	80	4.36			
Total	425.04	87				

Table 10c

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary (H14c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.99	1	0.99	0.53	0.47	0.0066
Media	0.00	1	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.0000
Partisan	13.55	1	13.55	7.30	0.01	0.0836
Inoculation * Media	0.06	1	0.06	0.03	0.85	0.0004
Inoculation * Partisan	1.58	1	1.58	0.85	0.36	0.0105
Media * Partisan	0.30	1	0.30	0.16	0.69	0.0020
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.95	0.0001
Error	148.60	80	1.86			
Total	164.38	87				

Table 10d

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (H14d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.10	1	0.10	0.10	0.75	0.0013
Media	3.53	1	3.53	3.77	0.06	0.0450
Partisan	11.80	1	11.80	12.59	0.01	0.1360
Inoculation * Media	3.02	1	3.02	3.22	0.08	0.0387
Inoculation * Partisan	1.58	1	1.58	1.69	0.20	0.0207
Media * Partisan	0.87	1	0.87	0.93	0.34	0.0114
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.62	1	0.62	0.66	0.42	0.0082
Error	74.94	80	0.94			
Total	97.99	87				

Table 11a

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (H15a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	1.19	1	1.19	1.24	0.27	0.0154
Media	6.25	1	6.25	6.52	0.01	0.0763
Partisan	20.53	1	20.53	21.43	0.01	0.2134
Inoculation * Media	0.07	1	0.07	0.07	0.79	0.0009
Inoculation * Partisan	0.16	1	0.16	0.17	0.68	0.0021
Media * Partisan	0.36	1	0.36	0.38	0.54	0.0048
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	1.06	1	1.06	1.10	0.30	0.0138
Error	75.69	79	0.96			
Total	105.91	86				

Table 11b

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (H15b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	11.68	1	11.68	3.00	0.09	0.0365
Media	3.53	1	3.53	0.90	0.34	0.0113
Partisan	57.67	1	57.67	14.79	0.01	0.1577
Inoculation * Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.97	0.0000
Inoculation * Partisan	5.98	1	5.98	1.53	0.22	0.0190
Media * Partisan	2.63	1	2.63	0.67	0.41	0.0085
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	4.73	1	4.73	1.21	0.27	0.0151
Error	307.98	79	3.90			
Total	396.41	86				

Table 11c

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Implied Beneficiary (H15c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.19	1	0.19	0.11	0.74	0.0014
Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.95	0.0000
Partisan	17.38	1	17.38	9.89	0.01	0.1113
Inoculation * Media	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.89	0.0002
Inoculation * Partisan	0.53	1	0.53	0.30	0.58	0.0038
Media * Partisan	0.07	1	0.07	0.04	0.84	0.0005
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.89	0.0002
Error	138.77	79	1.76			
Total	157.97	86				

Table 11d

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Implied Beneficiary (H15d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	1.56	1	1.56	2.35	0.13	0.0296
Media	0.23	1	0.23	0.34	0.56	0.0044
Partisan	4.82	1	4.82	7.24	0.01	0.0859
Inoculation * Media	0.38	1	0.38	0.57	0.45	0.0074
Inoculation * Partisan	5.84	1	5.84	8.76	0.01	0.1022
Media * Partisan	0.12	1	0.12	0.18	0.67	0.0023
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.04	1	0.04	0.06	0.80	0.0008
Error	51.29	77	0.67			
Total	66.25	84				

Table 12a

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Targeted Candidate (RQ7a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.99	0.0001
Media	0.79	1	0.79	0.73	0.40	0.0087
Partisan	17.05	1	17.05	15.61	0.01	0.1583
Inoculation * Media	2.10	1	2.10	1.93	0.17	0.0227
Inoculation * Partisan	1.08	1	1.08	0.99	0.32	0.0118
Media * Partisan	0.23	1	0.23	0.21	0.64	0.0026
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	4.81	1	4.81	4.40	0.04	0.0503
Error	90.67	83	1.09			
Total	118.84	90				

Table 12b

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to Vote for the Targeted Candidate (RQ7b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	5.59	1	5.59	1.61	0.21	0.0191
Media	0.70	1	0.70	0.20	0.65	0.0024
Partisan	37.20	1	37.20	10.73	0.01	0.1145
Inoculation * Media	1.08	1	1.08	0.31	0.58	0.0038
Inoculation * Partisan	0.50	1	0.50	0.14	0.71	0.0017
Media * Partisan	3.13	1	3.13	0.90	0.34	0.0108
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	4.88	1	4.88	1.41	0.24	0.0167
Error	287.72	83	3.47			
Total	340.02	90				

Table 12c

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Evaluation of the Attack's Sponsor (RQ7c)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	2.22	1	2.22	1.23	0.27	0.0146
Media	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.90	0.0002
Partisan	9.37	1	9.37	5.18	0.03	0.0587
Inoculation * Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.95	0.0000
Inoculation * Partisan	0.30	1	0.30	0.16	0.69	0.0020
Media * Partisan	0.14	1	0.14	0.08	0.78	0.0009
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.08	1	0.08	0.04	0.84	0.0005
Error	150.24	83	1.81			
Total	162.15	90				

Table 12d

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Candidate Attack Influence on Intention to vote for the Attack's Sponsor (RQ7d)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.98	1	0.98	1.51	0.22	0.0184
Media	1.65	1	1.65	2.56	0.11	0.0306
Partisan	1.01	1	1.01	1.56	0.22	0.0189
Inoculation * Media	5.92	1	5.92	9.17	0.01	0.1017
Inoculation * Partisan	1.52	1	1.52	2.36	0.13	0.0283
Media * Partisan	1.37	1	1.37	2.12	0.15	0.0255
Inoculation * Partisan* Media	0.36	1	0.36	0.55	0.46	0.0068
Error	52.35	81	0.65			
Total	65.47	88				

Table 13a

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Trust in American Government (H16a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.15	1	0.15	0.14	0.71	0.0008
Attack	0.27	1	0.27	0.25	0.62	0.0016
Partisanship	0.23	1	0.23	0.21	0.65	0.0013
Inoculation * Attack	3.94	1	3.94	3.61	0.06	0.0221
Inoculation * Partisanship	0.64	1	0.64	0.59	0.44	0.0037
Attack by Partisanship	1.14	1	1.14	1.05	0.31	0.0065
Inoculation * Attack * Partisanship	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.94	0.0000
Error	174.23	160	1.09			
Total	180.19	167				

Table 13b

Inoculation Phase: Candidate Inoculation - Democratic Political Efficacy (H16b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	4.11	1	4.11	1.97	0.16	0.0121
Attack	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	0.95	0.0000
Partisanship	3.74	1	3.74	1.79	0.18	0.0111
Inoculation * Attack	2.25	1	2.25	1.07	0.30	0.0067
Inoculation * Partisanship	0.29	1	0.29	0.14	0.71	0.0009
Attack by Partisanship	0.40	1	0.40	0.19	0.66	0.0012
Inoculation * Attack * Partisanship	0.09	1	0.09	0.04	0.84	0.0003
Error	334.44	160	2.09			
Total	343.84	167				

Table 13c

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Trust in American Government (RQ8a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	0.01	1	0.01	0.00	.99	0.0001
Attack	0.15	1	0.15	0.12	0.73	0.0007
Partisanship	3.67	1	3.67	2.93	0.09	0.0171
Inoculation * Attack	4.79	1	4.79	3.83	0.05	0.0222
Inoculation * Partisanship	0.37	1	0.37	0.29	0.59	0.0017
Attack by Partisanship	0.80	1	0.80	0.64	0.42	0.0038
Inoculation * Attack * Partisanship	0.02	1	0.02	0.01	0.91	0.0001
Error	211.63	169	1.25			
Total	221.99	176				

Table 13d

Inoculation Phase: Candidate versus Generic Inoculation - Democratic Political Efficacy (RQ8b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Inoculation	2.59	1	2.59	1.15	0.28	0.0068
Attack	0.36	1	0.36	0.16	0.69	0.0009
Partisanship	11.98	1	11.98	5.33	0.02	0.0306
Inoculation * Attack	1.09	1	1.09	0.48	0.49	0.0028
Inoculation * Partisanship	4.09	1	4.09	1.82	0.18	0.0106
Attack by Partisanship	3.46	1	3.46	1.54	0.22	0.0090
Inoculation * Attack * Partisanship	0.83	1	0.83	0.37	0.55	0.0022
Error	380.08	169	2.25			
Total	407.41	176				

Table 14a

P2 Video versus Print Inoculation: Sponsor Credibility (H17a)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Media	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.93	0.0001
Inoculation	1.11	1	1.11	0.92	0.34	0.0041
Media * Inoculation	0.15	1	0.15	0.12	0.73	0.0006
Error	266.73	220	1.21			
Total	267.99	223				

Table 14b

P2 Video versus Print Inoculation: Sponsor Relational Communication (H17b)

Condition	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*p*	η^2
Media	0.70	1	0.70	0.76	0.39	0.0034
Inoculation	0.68	1	0.68	0.73	0.39	0.0033
Media * Inoculation	0.36	1	0.36	0.39	0.53	0.0018
Error	204.86	220	0.93			
Total	206.89	223				

Table 15

Transformations of the Most Skewed and Kurtototic Variables

Measurement	skew	kurtosis
Inoculation Phase		
Attack Phase: Vote for Implied Beneficiary		
original	15.55**	11.09**
base 10 log	15.10	10.88
square root	13.12	5.57
fractional (1/X)	-11.07	0.99
Attack Phase: Negative Emotion for Target		
original	12.66**	8.93**
base 10 log	-16.00	17.50
square root	-20.69	32.69
fractional (1/X)	36.70	114.60
Attack Phase: Vote for Target		
original	-7.41**	-1.32**
base 10 log	2.84	-5.61
square root	4.93	-3.87
fractional (1/X)	-0.32	-7.13

FIGURES

Figure 1a – 1c

Attack Phase: Intervening Processes of Advertising's Influence on Intention to Vote for the Target (H8a-H8c)

Figure 1a

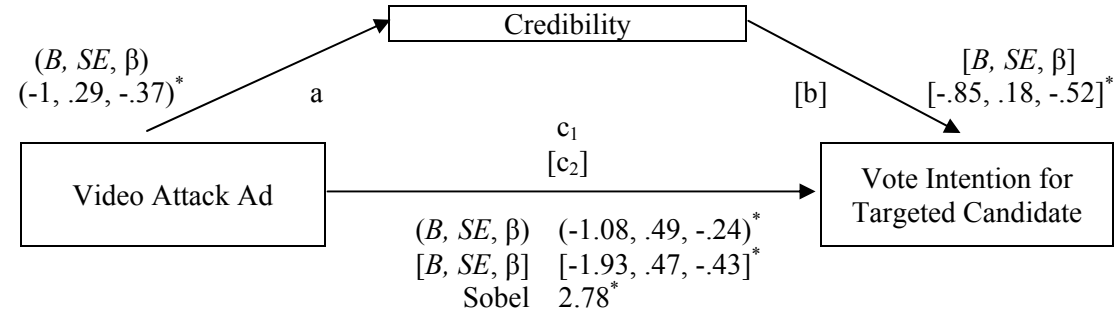


Figure 1b

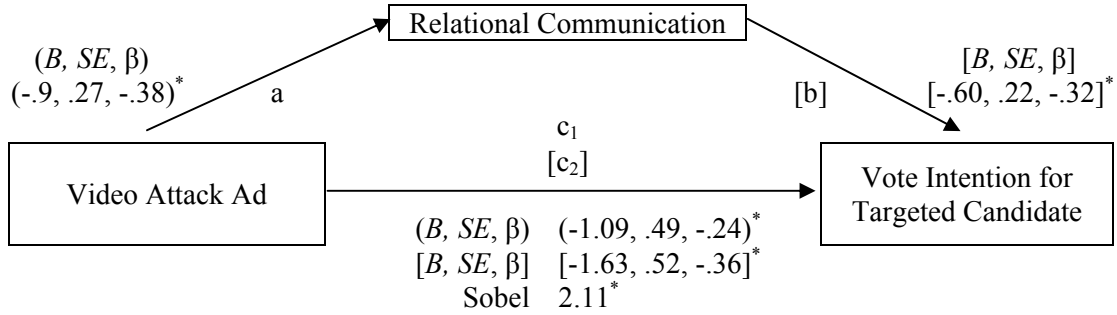
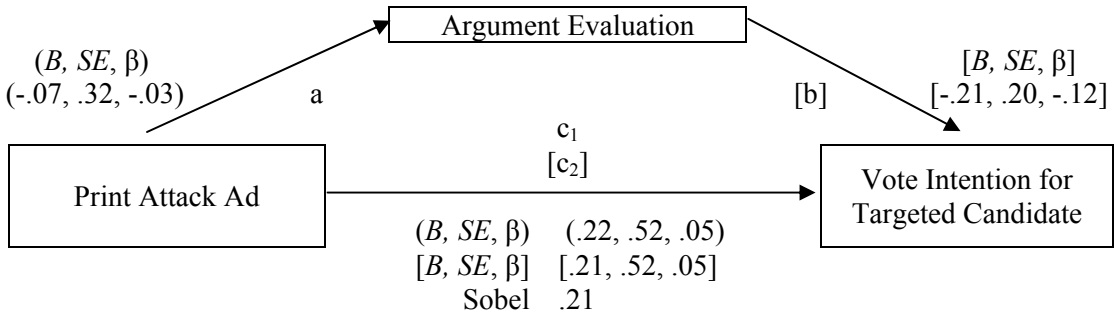


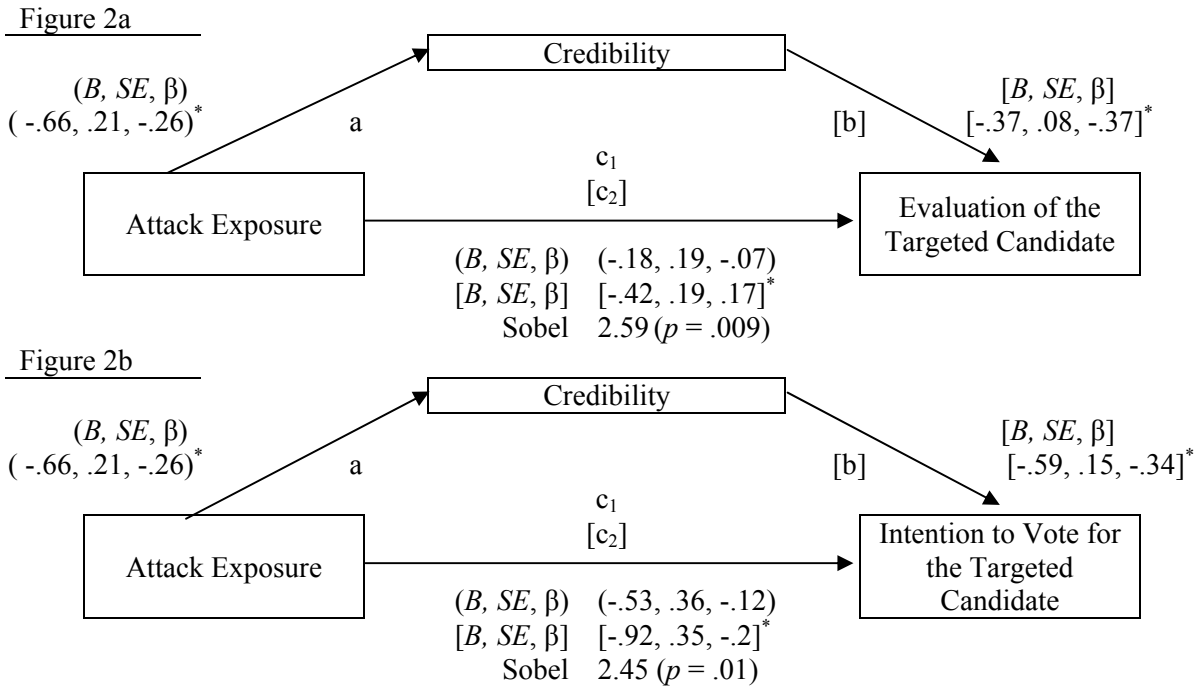
Figure 1c



Note. All regression analyses controlled for strength of party identification in step one. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{\#}p < .10$.

Figure 2a –2b

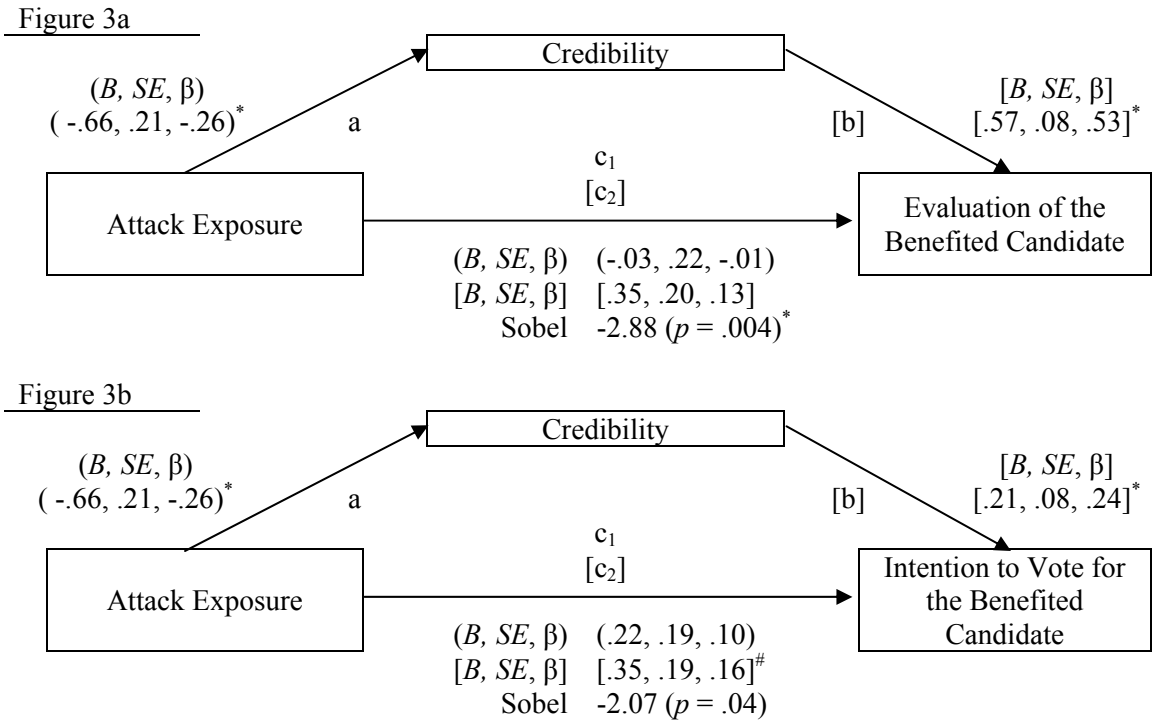
Attack Phase: Post-Hoc Analysis of the Process of Advertising's Influence on Hypothesized Outcomes



Note. All regression analyses controlled for media and strength of partisan identification in step one. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{\#}p < .10$.

Figure 3a – 3b

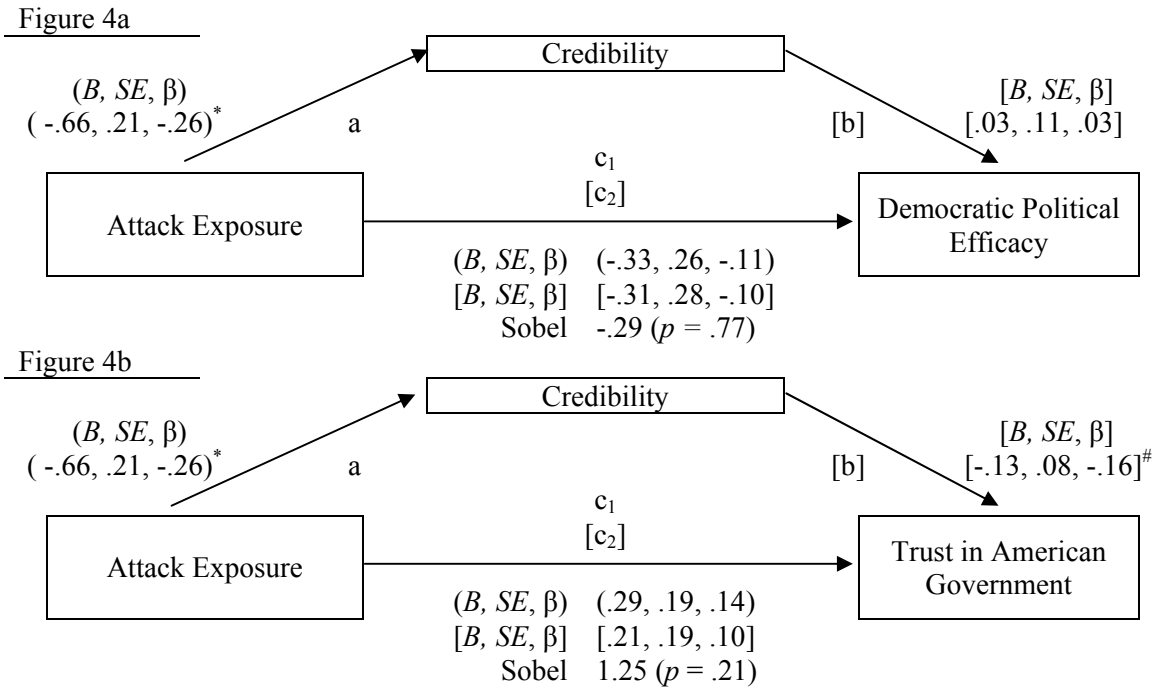
Attack Phase: Post-Hoc Analysis of the Process of Advertising's Influence on Hypothesized Outcomes



Note. All regression analyses controlled for media and strength of partisan identification in step one. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{\#}p < .10$.

Figure 4a – 4b

Attack Phase: Post-Hoc Analysis of the Process of Advertising's Influence on Hypothesized Outcomes



Note. All regression analyses controlled for media and strength of partisan identification in step one. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{\#}p < .10$.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Assignment Worksheets and Cell Counts

Pro-Obama: Assignment Work Sheet for Both Phase One and Inoculation Phase

Print Pro-Obama									
	Print Candidate Inoculation			Print Generic Inoculation			Print – No Inoculation		
Print PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video Pro-Obama									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Video Generic Inoculation			Video – No Inoculation		
Video PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video versus Print Pro-Obama									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Print Candidate Inoculation					
Video McCain-Sponsored Attack				weak	moderate	strong			
Print McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong						

Pro-McCain: Assignment Work Sheet for Both Phase One and Inoculation Phase

Print Pro-McCain									
	Print Candidate Inoculation			Print Generic Inoculation			Print – No Inoculation		
Print PSG-Sponsored Attack	low	medium	high	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print Obama-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video Pro-McCain									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Video Generic Inoculation			Video – No Inoculation		
Video PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video Obama-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video versus Print Pro-McCain									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Print Candidate Inoculation					
Video Obama-Sponsored Attack				weak	moderate	strong			
Print Obama-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong						

Appendix 1 cont.

Assignment Worksheets and Cell Counts

Pro-Obama: Assignment Work Sheet for Both Phase One and Inoculation Phase

Print Pro-Obama									
	Print Candidate Inoculation			Print Generic Inoculation			Print – No Inoculation		
Print PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video Pro-Obama									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Video Generic Inoculation			Video – No Inoculation		
Video PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video versus Print Pro-Obama									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Print Candidate Inoculation					
Video McCain-Sponsored Attack				weak	moderate	strong			
Print McCain-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong						

Pro-McCain: Assignment Work Sheet for Both Phase One and Inoculation Phase

Print Pro-McCain									
	Print Candidate Inoculation			Print Generic Inoculation			Print – No Inoculation		
Print PSG-Sponsored Attack	low	medium	high	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print Obama-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Print No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video Pro-McCain									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Video Generic Inoculation			Video – No Inoculation		
Video PSG-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video Obama-Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong	weak	moderate	strong
Video No Attack							weak	moderate	strong
Video versus Print Pro-McCain									
	Video Candidate Inoculation			Print Candidate Inoculation					
Video Obama Sponsored Attack				weak	moderate	strong			
Print Obama Sponsored Attack	weak	moderate	strong						

Appendix 1 cont.

Assignment Worksheets and Cell Counts

All: Number of Respondents per Cell

Print Inoculation			
	Print Candidate Inoculation	Print Generic Inoculation	Print – No Inoculation
Print PSG-Sponsored Attack	21	22	18
Print Candidate-Sponsored Attack	23	23	23
Print No Attack			21
Video Inoculation			
	Video Candidate Inoculation	Video Generic Inoculation	Video – No Inoculation
Video PSG-Sponsored Attack	20	23	24
Video Candidate-Sponsored Attack	22	23	19
Video No Attack			25
Video versus Print Inoculation			
	Video Candidate Inoculation	Print Candidate Inoculation	
Video Candidate-Sponsored Attack		25	
Print Candidate-Sponsored Attack	22		

Appendix 2

Phase-One Instrument

PHASE ONE QUESTIONNAIRE

Researchers in the Department of Communication at the University of South Dakota want to learn more about how people process media content and how they understand media personalities. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this study. We ask that you read each set of instructions carefully and respond to each of the survey items as accurately as possible.

Questions in Phase 1 are designed to provide necessary information about your current views of television content and some television personalities. All of your responses in this study will be treated confidentially. But, we need some information so we can match up the questionnaires you complete during each of the three sessions, and so that we can inform your instructor about your participation in the study. For items on department, course number and instructor, we want to know which course/instructor we should inform about your participation in this study. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

1. YOUR NAME: _____, _____, _____
   (last name) (first name) (middle)
2. DEPARTMENT: _____.
3. COURSE NUMBER (for extra credit): _____.
4. INSTRUCTOR (for extra credit): _____.
5. DAY AND DATE: _____, _____.

SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

The following items are designed to assess your social and demographic situation. Please work quickly but accurately.

1. Your Gender? (circle only one) Male Female

About how many people live in your home community or the community where lived most before your 18th birthday (please circle only one)?

2.

Less than 1,000	Between 1,001 and 30,000	Between 30,001 and 100,000	Between 100,001 and 250,000	More than 250,000

3. How would you characterize your home community or the community where you lived most before your 18th birthday (please circle only one)?

Rural Town Small City Big City Suburb

4. How many brothers and sisters lived with you and your parents until your 18th birthday (please circle only one)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 More than 7

5. Please write in your religious affiliation, if any.

_____

6. About how many public and/or private schools did you attend before your 18th birthday (please circle only one)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 More than 7

7. Please estimate your immediate families approximate annual income (circle only one):

Less than $30,000	Between $30,001 and $50,000	Between $50,001 and $80,000	Between $80,001 and $100,000	More than $100,001

CONSUMER ATTITUDES

The following items are designed to assess your social role as a consumer. Please read each of the statements and then circle a number, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the statement. Please work quickly but accurately.

1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars and clothes.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

3. I don't place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

4. The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

5. I like to own things that impress people.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

6. I don't pay much attention to the material objects that other people own.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

7. I usually buy only the things I need.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

8. I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

9. The things I own aren't all that important to me.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

10. I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

11. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

12. I like a lot of luxury in my life.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

13. I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

14. I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

15. My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

16. I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

17. I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

18. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

TELEVISION VIEWING BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES

The following items are designed to assess your television viewing behavior and attitudes toward television. Please work quickly but accurately.

1. On an average ***WEEKDAY***, about how many hours per day do you watch television programming (please circle only one)?

Less than 1 hour	About 1 hour	About 2 hours	About 3 hours	About 4 hours	About 5 hours	More than 5 hours

2. On an average ***WEEKEND*** day, about how many hours per day do you watch television programming (please circle only one)?

Less than 1 hour	About 1 hour	About 2 hours	About 3 hours	About 4 hours	About 5 hours	More than 5 hours

3. About how many hours per ***WEEK*** do you watch television (please circle only one)?

Less than 7 hours	About 7 hours	About 14 hours	About 21 hours	About 28 hours	About 35 hours	More than 35 hours

Read each of the statements and then circle a number, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the statement.

1. Watching television is one of the most important things I do each day.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

2. If the television set wasn't working, I would really miss it.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

3. Watching television is very important in my life.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

4. I could easily do without television for several days.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

5. I would feel lost without television to watch.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

COMMERCIAL VIEWING BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES

1. About how much attention do you pay to television commercials?

No attention	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	A lot of attention

Read each of the statements and then circle a number, where 1 means strong disagreement and 7 means strong agreement with the statement.

1. Watching television commercials is one of the most important things I do each day.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

2. If I couldn't watch television commercials I would really miss them.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

3. Watching television commercials is very important in my life.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

4. I could easily do without television commercials for several days.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

5. I would feel lost without television commercials to watch.

Strongly disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly agree

RESPONSES TO FAVORITE TELEVISION PERSONALITIES

What is your favorite type of television programming? Your favorite type of television programming might consist of dramatic series (like, *Grey's Anatomy* or *The Sopranos*), professional sports (like, Golf or Football), news and information (like, Fox News or CNN), television situation comedies (like, *Scrubs*) or whatever. Please record your favorite type of television programming in the blank provided.

1. _____

The next items assess your thoughts and feelings about the personalities that populate your favorite television programming that you just listed. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement that best describes your response to the statement.

1. I feel sorry for the people on my favorite television programs when they make a mistake.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. The people on my favorite television programs make me feel comfortable, as if I'm with old friends.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. I see the people on my favorite television programs as natural, down-to-earth people.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. I look forward to watching the people on my favorite television programs when they are on television.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. If the people on my favorite television programs appeared on another television program, I would watch that program.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. When the people on my favorite television programs appear, they seem to understand the kinds of things that I want to know.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. If there were a story about the people on my favorite television programs in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. I miss seeing the people on my favorite television programs when they are not on television.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. I would like to meet the people on my favorite television programs in person.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
10. I find the people on my favorite television programs to be attractive.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

PERSONAL PERCEPTIONS OF TELEVISED PERSONS AND PERSONALITIES

On the items below, please indicate your feelings about the people and personalities who appear on your favorite type of television programs. Circle the number that best represents your feelings. Numbers "1" and "7" mean a *very strong feeling*. Numbers "2" and "6" mean a *strong feeling*. Numbers "3" and "5" mean a *fairly weak feeling*. Number "4" means that you are *undecided* or *don't know*. Please work quickly. There are no right or wrong answers.

1.	Don't think like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Think like me
2.	From social class similar to mine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	From social class different than mine
3.	Behave like me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Don't behave like me
4.	Economic situation different than mine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Economic situation like mine
5.	Similar to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Different from me
6.	Status like mine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Status different from mine
7.	Unlike me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Like me
8.	Background different than mine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Background similar to mine

RESPONSES TO CURRENT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

We would also like to know about your responses to specific television personalities. As you know, the television world contains many types of television personalities. Those personalities range from fictional cartoon characters to non-fictional persons, like professional athletes and politicians. Although some respondents might be asked about other types of personalities, you will be asked to report your thoughts and feelings about: the 2008 presidential candidates.

1. Initially, we would like to know which of the presidential candidates you most favor. Please circle one of the following options.

Democratic Candidate John McCain (R) Undecided

RESPONSES TO JOHN MCCAIN

The next items assess your thoughts about John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to John McCain's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intention to behaviorally support John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you are willing to engage in the following behaviors. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to John McCain's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of John McCain.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. I will go to the polls and vote for John McCain on Election Day.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to the John McCain's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the issue statement.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items assess how much you think and talk about John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about John McCain's presidential campaign?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss John McCain's presidential campaign with friends, family members, or others?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

RESPONSES TO BARACK OBAMA

The next items assess your thoughts about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 7 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intentions to behaviorally support Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

3. I will go to the polls and vote for Barack Obama on Election Day.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items assess how much you think and talk about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about Barack Obama's presidential campaign?
Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss Barack Obama's presidential campaign with friends, family members, or others?
Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

GENERAL POLITICAL VIEWS

The next items are designed to measure your general political impressions.

How important is this presidential election to you?

1.	Unimportant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Important
2.	Of no concern	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Of much concern
3.	Irrelevant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Relevant
4.	Means nothing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Means a lot
5.	Doesn't matter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Matters
6.	Insignificant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Significant

1. We would like to know your political party affiliation. Please circle one of the following options (circle only one).
Republican Democrat Independent Non-affiliated

2. If your political party affiliation is Republican or Democrat, how strong is your political party affiliation? Please circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means no affiliation and 7 means strong affiliation.

No affiliation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strong party affiliation

Appendix 3

Illustrative Phase-Two Instrument (Inoculation Phase / Control Condition)

PHASE TWO QUESTIONNAIRE: PINM
(No Print Inoculation Against Attacks on McCain)

We appreciate your continued participation in this study of how people process media content and media personalities. Please read instructions at the start of each section of this booklet, do what is asked, and complete the survey items in each section as quickly but as accurately as possible.

After you complete this questionnaire, please report back to the main desk for further instructions.

All of your responses in this study will be treated confidentially. But, we need some information so we can match up the questionnaires you complete during each of the three sessions, and so that we can inform your instructor about your participation in the study. For items concerning department, course number and instructor, we want to know which course/instructor we should inform about your participation in this study. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

1. YOUR NAME: _____ (last name), _____ (first name), _____ (middle)
2. DEPARTMENT: _____.
3. COURSE NUMBER (for extra credit): _____.
4. INSTRUCTOR (for extra credit): _____.

5. Your Gender? (circle only one) Male Female

6. DAY AND DATE: _____, _____.

Before you begin filling in the survey, you will read a segment of typical magazine content, which is followed by exercises and scales. Please read the entire magazine segment carefully.

PLEASE CAREFULLY READ THE ENTIRE MAGAZINE SEGMENT, INCLUDING THE ADVERTISEMENTS. DO NOT TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE OF THE SURVEY UNTIL FINISHED READING THE MAGAZINE SEGMENT

****** READ MAGAZINE SEGMENT NOW ******

RESPONSES TO JOHN MCCAIN

Despite your position on John McCain's presidential campaign, please respond to the possibility that you may come into contact with arguments contrary to your position that are so persuasive that they may cause you to rethink your position on John McCain's presidential campaign. I find this possibility:

1.	Safe	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dangerous
2.	Non-threatening	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Threatening
3.	Calm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Anxious
4.	Unintimidating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intimidating
5.	Not Harmful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Harmful
6.	Not Risky	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Risky

The next items assess your thoughts about John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to John McCain's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intention to behaviorally support John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you are willing to engage in the following behaviors. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to John McCain's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of John McCain.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

3. I will go to the polls and vote for John McCain on Election Day.
Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to John McCain.

1.	Unsure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sure
2.	Not Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Confident
3.	Uncertain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Certain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right

The next items assess how much you think and talk about John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about John McCain's presidential campaign?
Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss John McCain's presidential campaign with friends, family members?
Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

Now, think about your position on John McCain's presidential campaign. In this section, we want you to complete four tasks.

First, in the spaces on the left, which are labeled First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth, IDENTIFY AS MANY ARGUMENTS AS YOU CAN (THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS) THAT ARE CONTRARY TO YOUR POSITION ON JOHN MCCAIN'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN (that are opposite of how you think or feel);

Second, to the right of each argument following the letters A, B, C, D, and E, LIST AS MANY POTENTIAL ANSWERS AS YOU CAN TO EACH OF THOSE ARGUMENTS (what you would tell a person with that thought or feeling to convince them that they are wrong). Please write clearly.

Third, we have included a scale under each of the arguments contrary to your position on the John McCain's presidential campaign. Those scales are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5. Circle a number between 1 and 7, which indicates your opinion of the strength of that argument, where 1 means a "weak argument", and 7 means "a strong argument."

ARGUMENTS CONTRARY TO JOHN MCCAIN	POTENTIAL ANSWERS TO THOSE ARGUMENTS	
First Argument:	A. _____	A-1. ___
	B. _____	B-1. ___
	C. _____	C-1. ___
1. Rating of this argument:	D. _____	D-1. ___
Weak 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strong	E. _____	E-1. ___
Second Argument:	A. _____	A-2. ___
	B. _____	B-2. ___
	C. _____	C-2. ___
2. Rating of this argument:	D. _____	D-2. ___
Weak 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strong	E. _____	E-2. ___
Third Argument:	A. _____	A-3. ___
	B. _____	B-3. ___
	C. _____	C-3. ___
3. Rating of this argument:	D. _____	D-3. ___
Weak 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strong	E. _____	E-3. ___
Fourth Argument:	A. _____	A-4. ___
	B. _____	B-4. ___
	C. _____	C-4. ___
4. Rating of this argument:	D. _____	D-4. ___
Weak 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strong	E. _____	E-4. ___
Fifth Argument:	A. _____	A-5. ___
	B. _____	B-5. ___
	C. _____	C-5. ___
5. Rating of this argument:	D. _____	D-5. ___
Weak 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strong	E. _____	E-5. ___

Fourth, go back to each of the potential answers (the items you entered after the letters) and rate each from 1 (weak) to 7 (strong) in terms of how strongly you feel about it. Write your numerical rating in the numbered space that follows each answer.

RESPONSES TO POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING AGAINST JOHN MCCAIN

The next items are designed to assess your feelings about political attack advertising against John McCain. Please circle the number that best matches your feelings about political attack advertising against John McCain, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your thoughts about political attack advertising against John McCain. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to political attack advertising against John McCain.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to political attack advertising against John McCain.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to political attack advertising against John McCain on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to political attack advertising against John McCain. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to political attack advertising against John McCain.

1.	Unsure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sure
2.	Not Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Confident
3.	Uncertain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Certain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right

RESPONSES TO POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING

The next items are designed to assess your feelings about political attack advertising. Please circle the number that best matches your feelings about political attack advertising, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your thoughts about political attack advertising. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to political attack advertising.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to political attack advertising.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to political attack advertising on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to political attack advertising. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to political attack advertising.

1.	Unsure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sure
2.	Not Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Confident
3.	Uncertain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Certain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right

GENERAL POLITICAL VIEWS

The next items assess how much you think and talk about presidential politics. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about the issue of presidential politics?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss with friends, family members, or others the issue of presidential politics?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

RESPONSES TO CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE

The next items assess your response to Citizens for an Informed Electorate. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement that best describes your response to Citizens for an Informed Electorate.

1. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate communicated a sense of warmth.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed enthusiastic in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed interested in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed involved in the communication.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate made me feel that they were similar to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed friendly to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate acted as if they would like to get to know me better.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed like the kind of people who would be willing to listen to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate seemed sincere in communicating to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
10. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate communicated a sense of honesty.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
11. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate appeared to care whether or not I liked them.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

12. The Citizens for an Informed Electorate appeared interested in communicating with me.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items continue to assess your response to the Citizens for an Informed Electorate. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to Citizens for an Informed Electorate.

1.	Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intelligent
2.	Unqualified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Qualified
3.	Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
4.	Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unselfish
5.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
6.	Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Honest

RESPONSES TO BARACK OBAMA

The next items assess your thoughts about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjective opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intentions to behaviorally support Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. I will go to the polls and vote for Barack Obama on Election Day.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Unsure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sure
2.	Not Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Confident
3.	Uncertain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Certain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right

The next items assess how much you think and talk about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about Barack Obama's presidential campaign?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss Barack Obama's presidential campaign with friends, family members, or others?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

YOU ARE ALMOST DONE. PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY BOOKLET TO THE RESEARCHER AND ANY COMMUNICATION MATERIALS TO THE RESEARCHER, WHO WILL PROVIDE ANOTHER QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOU TO USE IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE FINAL TASK OF THIS PHASE OF THE STUDY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

This section concerns your thoughts and feelings about JOHN MCCAIN. You will build a concept map that captures your thoughts and feelings about JOHN MCCAIN. We will show you how to build a concept map and then we will ask you build a concept map about JOHN MCCAIN.

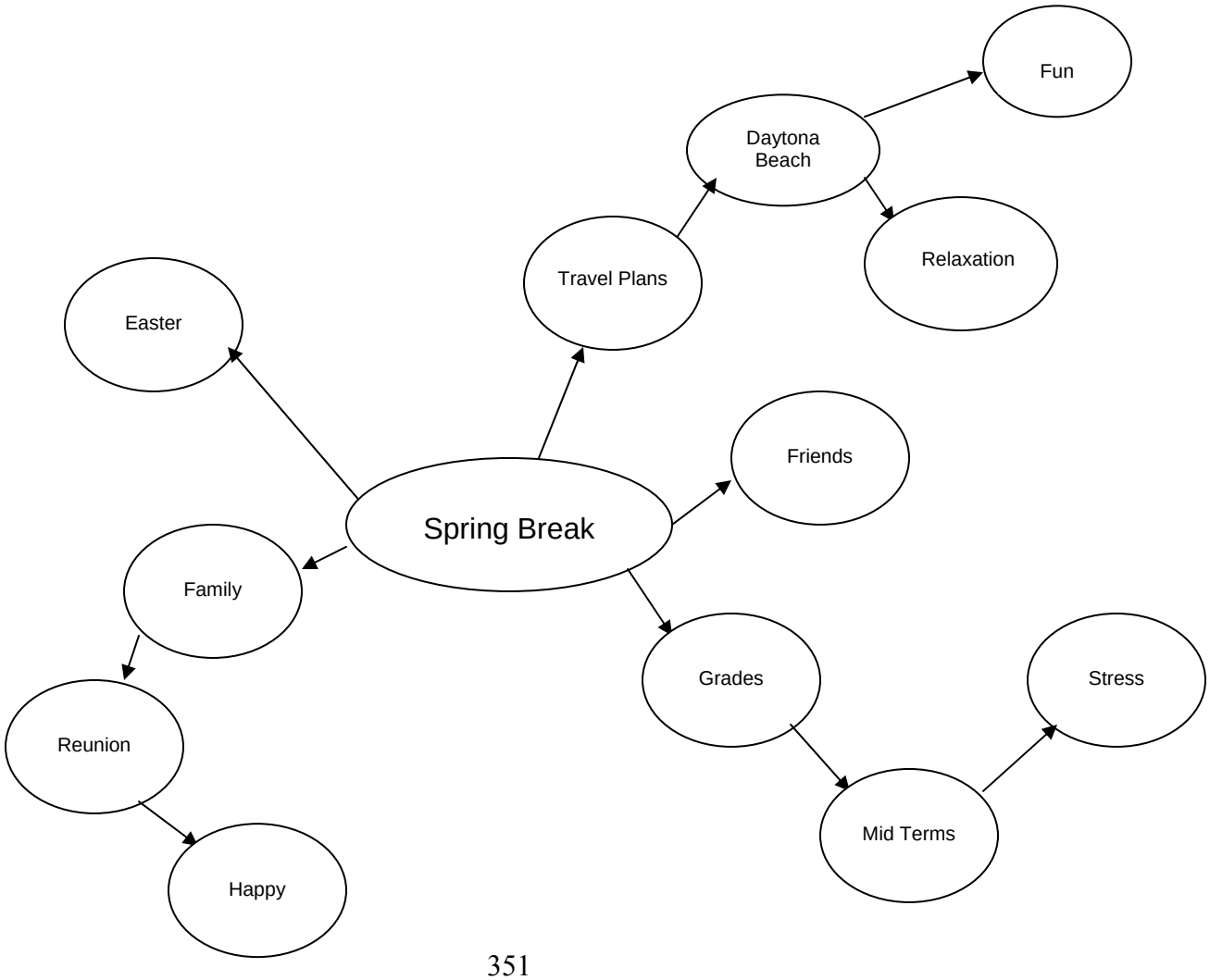
How to build a concept map: An Example.

To build a concept map, you will write down on a piece of paper anything that comes to mind when you think about a topic and circle it—there are no correct or incorrect answers. Your thoughts and feelings are arranged around a concept node. In the map below, a student mapped his/her thoughts and feelings about Spring Break.

Around the concept node Spring Break, the student jotted down thoughts and feelings in the form of words or short phrases. Often times, these thoughts or feelings triggered other thoughts and feelings that the student linked together by drawing a line to connect them.

In the example below, the student's thoughts branched from Spring Break to travel plans, to Daytona Beach, to fun and relaxation. In addition, the concept of Spring Break also shows a line of connection to family, reunion and happy.

Keep in mind that everyone's concept map will be different.



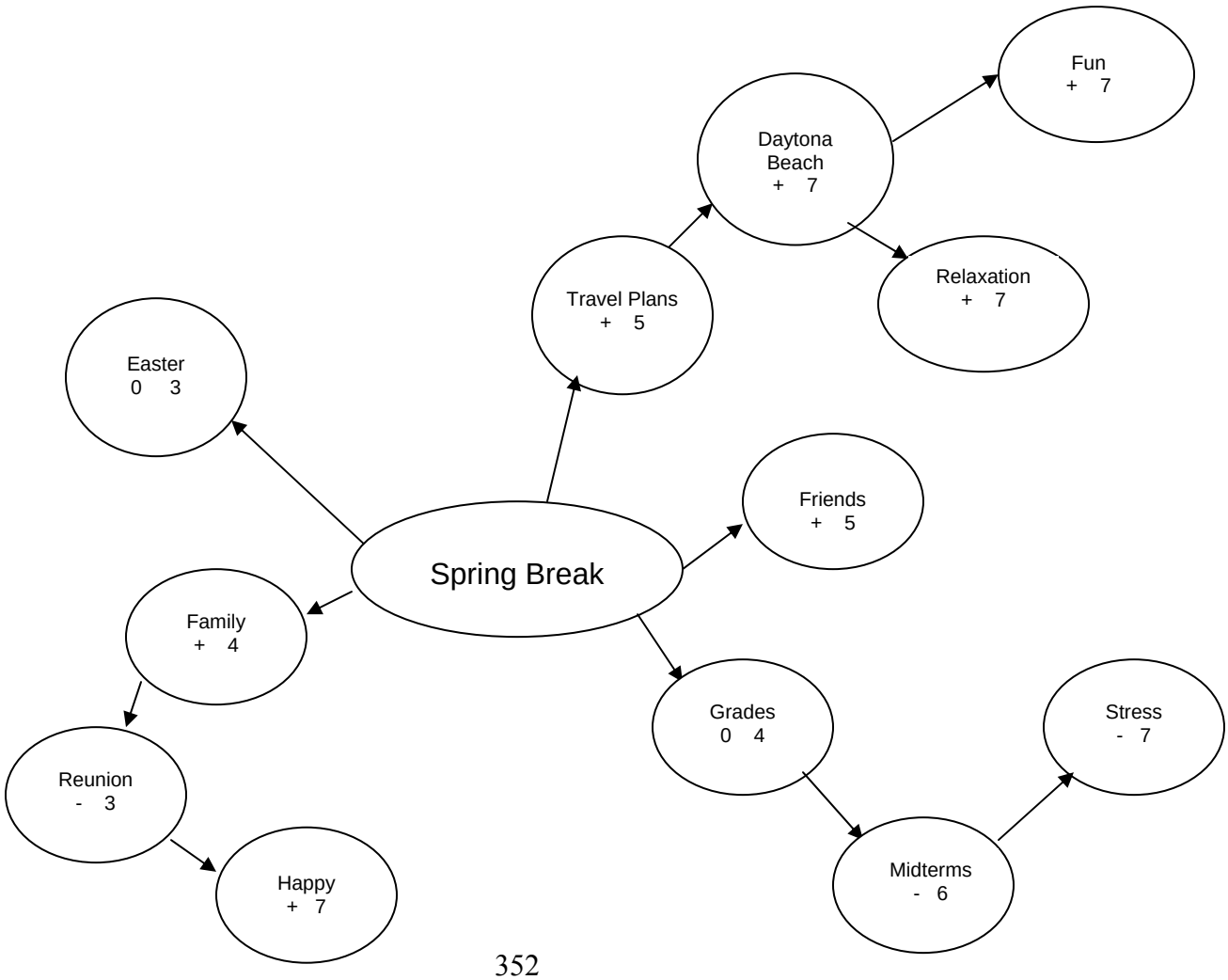
We also want to know your evaluations of the thoughts and feelings you entered on the map. Evaluate each thought or feeling as being positive, negative or neutral.

Use (+) for positive (-) negative, and (0) for neutral. *Make your marks clear and place them to the left of the word(s) within the circle.*

Next, we want to know the strength of each thought or feeling on a scale of 1-7, where 1 means VERY WEAK and 7 means VERY STRONG. Indicate how strong you feel about each thought or feeling. *Place a number from 1-7 to the right of the word within each circle*.

In the example below, the student's thoughts branched from Spring Break to travel plans, to Daytona Beach, to fun and relaxation, which were all considered to possess very strong and positive feelings. In addition, the concept of Spring Break also shows a line of connection to family and reunion. The family contact was positively evaluated but the idea of the reunion was not. However, the idea of being happy is a strong positive feeling. Also notice the thought of Easter was a neutral idea with minimal strength.

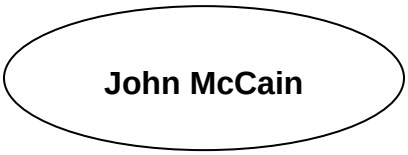
Now you are ready to complete your concept map about the issue in question. Turn the page and begin, When you are finished make sure your concept nodes, numbers and signs are clear to read.



COMPLETE YOUR OWN CONCEPT MAP ON JOHN MCCAIN'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY.

We want to understand what individuals think about, and how they organize information about John McCain's presidential campaign. All of your thoughts and feelings are helpful, and again there are no correct or incorrect answers. Circle each thought you include. It may be helpful to think for a moment about the topic before adding your entries onto the map.
IMPORTANT: Please ***PRINT*** and make sure your writing is clear. When your thoughts or feelings trigger other thoughts or feelings please connect the circles by placing a line to connect, or link, the entries as illustrated in the example.

Next, go back to each thought/feeling and (1) evaluate it as positive, negative, or neutral and (2) indicate its strength on a scale from 1-7 where 1 means very weak and 7 indicates very strong.



Appendix 4

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

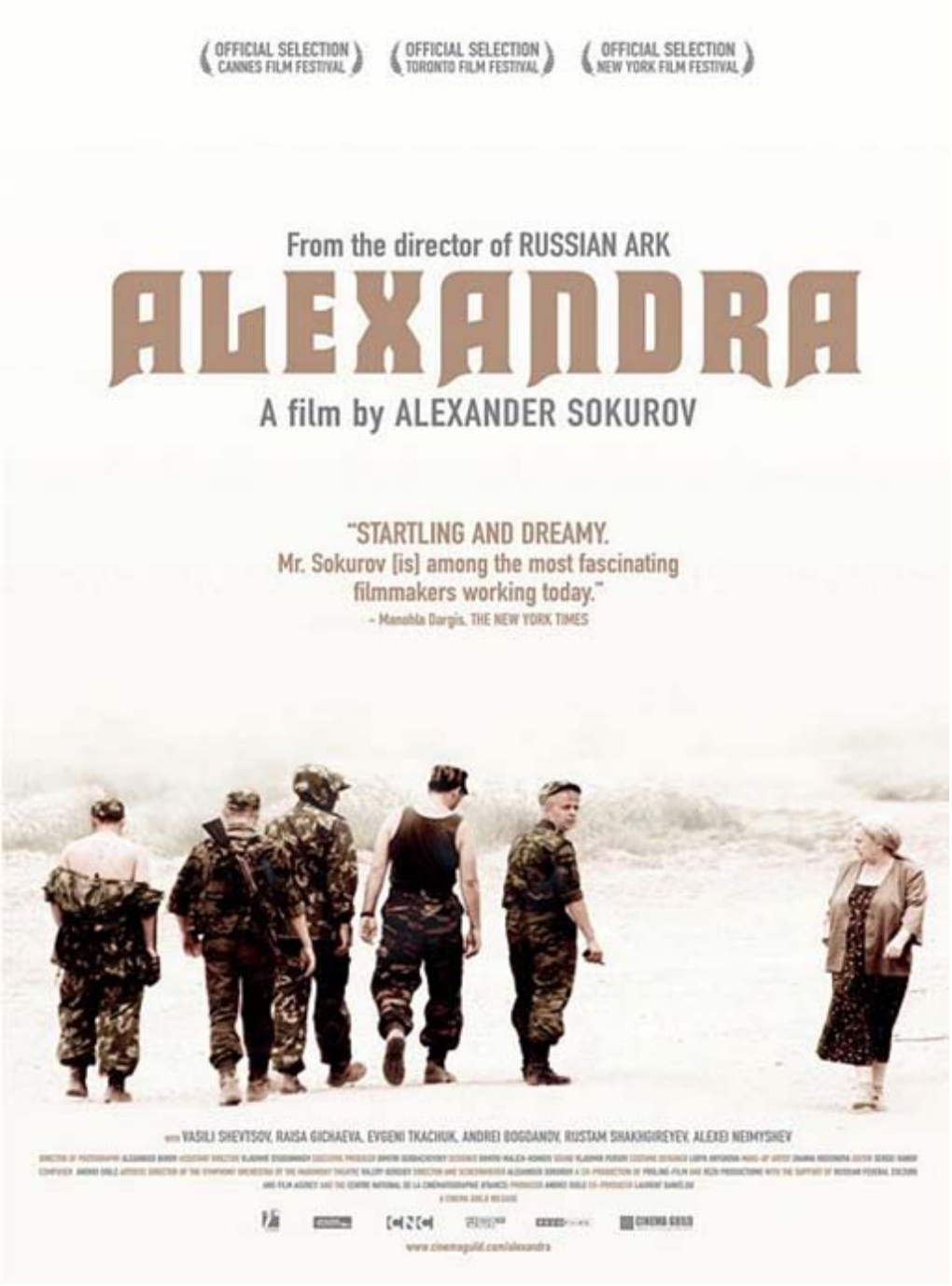
Inoculation Phase: Control One



Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Control Two



Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation: McCain Supporter and Taxes



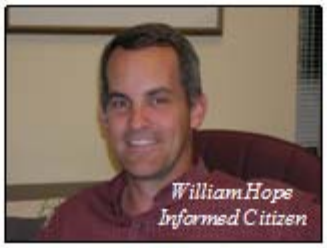
This Man Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT MCCAIN'S PLAN FOR TAX FAIRNESS

John McCain offers tax fairness to grow our economy. Yet, as this election approaches, you can expect Barack Obama and his supporters to say that McCain's tax plan hurts average Americans. Such outrageous appeals have worked all too often in the past. We are Citizens for an Informed Electorate and we want you to know the truth.

THE TRUTH

McCain would provide a federal gas tax holiday, which would benefit all Americans.



THE TRUTH

McCain would provide tax credits to companies that hire new employees, lower taxes to keep jobs in America and cut capital gains taxes to promote economic investment.



THE TRUTH

McCain's tax plan would even ban taxes on the Internet, which is an engine of economic growth and prosperity. You should be an informed citizen, and you should know the truth.



"Don't be fooled by the misleading attacks. McCain's tax plan would help average Americans."

Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation: McCain Supporter and Energy



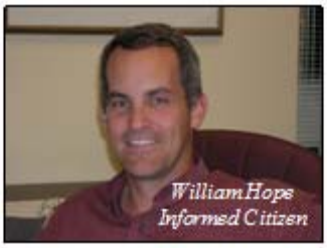
This Man Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT MCCAIN'S PLAN FOR ENERGY SECURITY

John McCain will lower gas prices and reduce dependence on foreign oil. Even so, the Democrats and Barack Obama will launch a barrage of political attack ads that say McCain doesn't offer real energy solutions. Such dirty campaign tactics have worked all too often in the past. We are Citizens for an Informed Electorate and we want you to know the truth.

THE TRUTH

McCain's commitment to expanding America's domestic oil resources will relieve families struggling with high fuel costs.



THE TRUTH

McCain marshals tax credits and billions to promote 150 mile per gallon cars, clean coal technology and renewable energies, like wind and solar power.



THE TRUTH

Inaction by Washington Democrats, like Barack Obama, created this fuel crisis. As a United States Senator, Obama has consistently opposed a gas tax holiday for hard working Americans.



"When the Democrats and Barack Obama attack, you should be an informed citizen."
Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation: Obama Supporter and Taxes



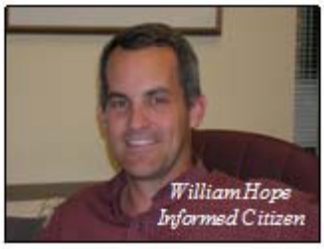
This Man Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT OBAMA'S PLAN FOR TAX FAIRNESS

Barack Obama offers tax fairness to grow our economy. Yet, as this election approaches, you can expect John McCain and his supporters to say that Obama's tax plan hurts average Americans. Such outrageous appeals have worked all too often. We are Citizens for an Informed Electorate and we want you to know the truth.

THE TRUTH

Obama would cut taxes on 99% of small business owners, reduce their capital gains taxes to zero and give them a tax credit for providing health insurance to their employees.



THE TRUTH

Obama would reduce taxes on Americans making less than $250 thousand per year.



THE TRUTH

Obama's tax plan even eliminates income taxes for seniors making less than $50,000 per year. You should be an informed citizen, and you should know the truth.



"Don't be fooled by the misleading attacks. Obama's tax plan helps all Americans"

Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation: Obama Supporter and Energy



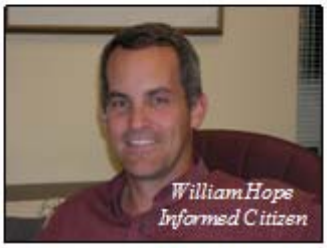
This Man Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT OBAMA'S PLAN FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

Barack Obama will lower gas prices and reduce dependence on foreign oil. Even so, the Republicans and John McCain will launch a barrage of political attack ads that say Obama doesn't offer real energy solutions. Such dirty campaign tactics have worked all too often in the past. We are Citizens for an Informed Electorate and we want you to know the truth

THE TRUTH

Obama provides an immediate $1000 tax credit for families struggling with high fuel costs.



THE TRUTH

Obama marshals $150 billion to promote, clean coal technology, 150 mile per gallon cars and renewable energies, like wind and solar power.



THE TRUTH

Inaction by Washington politicians, like John McCain, created this fuel crisis. As a United States Senator, McCain even voted against increasing fuel efficiency.



"When John McCain and the Republicans attack, be an informed citizen."

Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation: One



These Men Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING

As a responsible and informed citizen, you've probably given some thought to the 2008 presidential candidates. Undoubtedly, you've chosen to support either McCain or Obama. Yet, as the election approaches, you will encounter a barrage of negative political ads that might cause you to change your mind. Citizens for an Informed Electorate wants you to know the truth about political attack advertising.

THE TRUTH

Political attack ads are not truthful. Factcheck.org regularly finds false and misleading claims in political advertising.



THE TRUTH

Political attack ads are emotional. Harvard researcher Ted Brader revealed that political spots use music, color and stark visuals to induce fear and anger.



THE TRUTH

Political attack ads are effective. Researchers at Stanford University observed that political attack ads discourage democratic participation.



"You should be an informed citizen. Don't be fooled by emotional and misleading attacks."

Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 4 cont.

Inoculation Phase: Experimental Materials

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation: Two



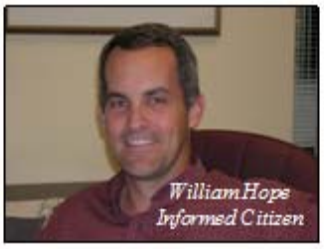
These Men Will Be Attacked!

THE TRUTH ABOUT POLITICAL ATTACK ADVERTISING

Like many good citizens, you've probably given some thought to the 2008 presidential candidates. Certainly, you're leaning toward either McCain or Obama. Yet, as the election approaches, hundreds of negative political ads will attack your choice. These attacks could change your mind, and, in the close elections, they have often turned the tide. Citizens for an Informed Electorate want you to know the real truth about political attack advertising.

THE TRUTH

Political attack ads are misleading. Kathleen Hall Jamieson reports that, in the last two decades, presidential attack ads have become substantially less honest.



THE TRUTH

Political attack ads are unfair. The Truth in Political Advertising Project finds that nearly every political ad contains inaccurate, unfair or irrelevant claims.



THE TRUTH

You too should be an informed citizen, and you should know the real truth behind negative political advertising.



"This presidential election season, beware of unfair and misleading political attack advertising."
Citizens for an Informed Electorate, 2008

CITIZENS FOR AN INFORMED ELECTORATE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS AD. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE

Appendix 5

Links to Inoculation-Phase and Attack-Phase Videos

Inoculation Phase: Generic Inoculation Videos	
Generic One	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjkNMJayDYU
Generic Two	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgZsKDhiWxA
Inoculation Phase: Candidate-Specific Inoculation Videos	
Against McCain's Attacks on Obama (Taxes)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JhMzkStoPMU
Against McCain's Attacks on Obama (Energy)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQEN32_hufQ
Against Obama's Attacks on McCain (Taxes)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyxUgyDBzeg
Against Obama's Attacks on McCain (Energy)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JP57d-wDFCg
Attack-Phase Candidate-Sponsored Attack Advertising Videos	
McCain Attack against Obama (Both Ways)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyaeamTvftA
McCain Attack against Obama (Ayers)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tev_YfGsZ4
Obama Attack against McCain (Charlie Black)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf2OgpNAABY
Obama Attack against McCain (Bush)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYO8IZQKeXQ
Attack-Phase PSG-Sponsored Attack Advertising Videos	
PSG Attack against Obama (Both Ways)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9oFobEs09o
PSG Attack against Obama (Ayers)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQrVn_JzVCM
PSG Attack against McCain (Charlie Black)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=geMOp8Xs17A
PSG Attack against McCain (Bush)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbIeTKfWER4
Attack-Phase Video Content: Scrubs and Mundane Commercials	
Scrubs and Commercials	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBgsFskTPz4

Appendix 6

Illustrative Phase-Three Instrument (Attack Phase / Control Condition)

PHASE THREE QUESTIONNAIRE: VANO
(No Video Attack Against Obama)

We appreciate your continued participation in this study of how people process media content and media personalities. Please read instructions at the start of each section of this booklet, do what is asked, and complete the survey items in each section as quickly but as accurately as possible.

After you complete this questionnaire, please report back to the main desk for further instructions.

All of your responses in this study will be treated confidentially. But, we need some information so we can match up the questionnaires you complete during each of the three sessions, and so that we can inform your instructor about your participation in the study. For items concerning department, course number and instructor, we want to know which course/instructor we should inform about your participation in this study. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

1. YOUR NAME: _____, _____, _____
   (last name) (first name) (middle)
2. DEPARTMENT: _____.
3. COURSE NUMBER (for extra credit): _____.
4. INSTRUCTOR (for extra credit): _____.

5. Your Gender? (circle only one) Male Female

6. DAY AND DATE: _____, _____.

Before you begin filling in the survey, you will watch a segment of typical television programming, which is followed by exercises and scales. Please watch the television segment carefully.

At this time, place the DVD provided by the researcher into one of the provided portable DVD players. Please use the headphones provided by the researcher. Place the survey instrument and writing utensil aside and give your undivided attention to the video. When you are ready to watch the television content, press play on the portable DVD player. Feel free to approach the researcher with any questions.

DO NOT TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE UNTIL FINISHED
VIEWING THE VIDEO PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE COMMERCIALS

***** WATCH TELEVISION SEGMENT NOW ******

RESPONSES TO BARACK OBAMA

The following items assess your thoughts about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about Barack Obama's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 7 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intentions to behaviorally support Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of Barack Obama's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. I will go to the polls and vote for Barack Obama on Election Day.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to Barack Obama's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items assess how much you think and talk about Barack Obama's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about Barack Obama's presidential campaign?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss Barack Obama's presidential campaign with friends, family members, or others?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

RESPONSES TO JOHN MCCAIN

The next items assess your thoughts about John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to John McCain's presidential campaign.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items assess your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign. Please circle the number that best indicates your feelings about John McCain's presidential campaign, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your intention to behaviorally support John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you are willing to engage in the following behaviors. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I will contribute money to John McCain's presidential campaign.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. I will volunteer my time on behalf of John McCain.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. I will go to the polls and vote for John McCain on Election Day.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to the John McCain's presidential campaign.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to John McCain's presidential campaign. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to John McCain.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items assess how much you think and talk about John McCain's presidential campaign. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 indicates "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about John McCain's presidential campaign?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss John McCain's presidential campaign with friends, family members?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

RESPONSES TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The next items are designed to assess your feelings about American Democracy. Please circle the number that best matches your feelings about American Democracy, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your thoughts about American Democracy. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to American Democracy.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to American Democracy.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to American Democracy on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to American Democracy. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to American Democracy.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items assess how much you think and talk about American democracy. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means "rarely" and 7 means "often".

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about the issue of American democracy?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss with friends, family members, or others the issue of American democracy?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

GENERAL POLITICAL VIEWS

The next items assess how much you think and talk about presidential politics. We want to know the extent to which you engage in the following activities. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means “rarely” and 7 means “often”.

1. Compared to other issues, how often do you think about the issue of presidential politics?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often
2. Compared to other issues, how often do you discuss with friends, family members, or others the issue of presidential politics?
   Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Often

The next items measure your more specific views of government. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means strong disagreement and 7 means strong agreement with the following statements.

1. I can always trust the government in Washington to do what is right.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. The government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves. It is NOT run for the benefit of all the people.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. The government wastes a lot of money we pay in taxes.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. Quite a few of the people running the government are crooked.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. People like me don't have any say about what the government does.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. Public officials don't care much what people like me think.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. The government pays attention to what the people think when it decides what to do.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. Having elections makes the government pay attention to what the people think.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC POLITICAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST BARACK OBAMA

The next items are designed to assess your feelings about the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers. Please circle the number that best matches your feelings about the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your thoughts about the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the argument that Barack Obama supports known terrorist William Ayers.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

The next items are designed to assess your feelings about the argument that **Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper**. Please circle the number that best matches your feelings about the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper, where 0 means "none of this feeling" and 6 means "a great deal of this feeling."

1.	Irritated	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Annoyed	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Angry	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Cheerful	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Happy	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Content	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The next items assess your thoughts about the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper.

1.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
2.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
3.	Unfavorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Favorable
4.	Unacceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Acceptable
5.	Wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Right
6.	Foolish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wise

The next items are designed to measure the confidence of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper.

1. Estimate the certainty of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents no certainty and 100 indicates absolute certainty: _____.

The following items assess the certainty of your responses to the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the argument that Barack Obama is worse than a flip flopper.

1.	Sure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unsure
2.	Confident	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Confident
3.	Certain	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uncertain
4.	Negative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Positive
5.	Right	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Wrong

RESPONSES TO AMERICAN ISSUES PROJECT

The next items assess your response to the American Issues Project's advertising against Barack Obama. Please indicate to what extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means strong disagreement and 7 means strong agreement with the following statements. .

1. The American Issues Project communicated a sense of warmth.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. The American Issues Project seemed enthusiastic in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. The American Issues Project seemed interested in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. The American Issues Project seemed involved in the communication.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. The American Issues Project made me feel that they were similar to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. The American Issues Project seemed friendly to me
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. The American Issues Project acted as if they would like to get to know me better.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. The American Issues Project seemed like the kind of people who would be willing to listen to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. The American Issues Project seemed sincere in communicating to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
10. The American Issues Project communicated a sense of honesty.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
11. The American Issues Project appeared to care whether or not I liked them.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
12. The American Issues Project appeared interested in communicating with me.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items continue to assess your response to the American Issues Project's advertising against Barack Obama. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to the American Issues Project's advertising against Barack Obama.

1.	Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intelligent
2.	Unqualified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Qualified
3.	Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
4.	Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unselfish
5.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
6.	Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Honest

RESPONSES TO LET FREEDOM RING POLITICAL ACTION FUND

The next items assess your response to the Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund's advertising against Barack Obama. Please indicate to what extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means strong disagreement and 7 means strong agreement with the following statements.

1. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund communicated a sense of warmth.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

2. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed enthusiastic in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed interested in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed involved in the communication.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund made me feel that they were similar to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed friendly to me
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund acted as if they would like to get to know me better.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed like the kind of people who would be willing to listen to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund seemed sincere in communicating to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
10. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund communicated a sense of honesty.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
11. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund appeared to care whether or not I liked them.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
12. The Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund appeared interested in communicating with me.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items continue to assess your response to Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund's advertising against Barack Obama. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to Let Freedom Ring Political Action Fund's advertising against Barack Obama.

1.	Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intelligent
2.	Unqualified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Qualified
3.	Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
4.	Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unselfish
5.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
6.	Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Honest

RESPONSES TO JOHN MCCAIN'S COMMUNICATION ABOUT BARACK OBAMA

The next items assess your response to McCain 08's advertising about Barack Obama. Please indicate to what extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with each of the statements below. Read each of the statements and then circle a number (between 1 and 7), where 1 means strong disagreement and 7 means strong agreement with the following statements.

1. McCain communicated a sense of warmth.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
2. McCain seemed enthusiastic in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
3. McCain seemed interested in communicating with me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
4. McCain seemed involved in the communication.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
5. McCain made me feel that they were similar to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
6. McCain seemed friendly to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
7. McCain acted as if they would like to get to know me better.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
8. McCain seemed like the kind of people who would be willing to listen to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
9. McCain seemed sincere in communicating to me.
   Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
10. McCain communicated a sense of honesty.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
11. McCain appeared to care whether or not I liked them.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree
12. McCain appeared interested in communicating with me.
    Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly agree

The next items continue to assess your response to the McCain's advertising about Barack Obama. The items consist of pairs of adjective opposites. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 separate each of the pairs of adjective opposites. Read each of the adjectives opposite pairs, and then circle a number that best describes your response to McCain's advertising about Barack Obama.

1.	Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Intelligent
2.	Unqualified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Qualified
3.	Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
4.	Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unselfish
5.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
6.	Dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Honest

YOU HAVE NOW COMPLETED YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY. PLEASE RETURN YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE AND COMMUNICATION MATERIALS TO THE PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR, AND, AT THAT TIME, AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

Appendix 7

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

Attack Phase: Control One



Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

Attack Phase: Control Two



Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

McCain Sponsored Attack against Obama (Both Ways)



Both Ways Barack

People are saying that Senator Obama's recent changes of position have made him a flip-flopper.

He's not! Flip-floppers only hold one position at a time.

Senator Obama is different: he holds two positions at the same time.

Both ways on banning handguns.

Both ways on public campaign financing.

Both ways on NAFTA.

And now, both ways on withdrawing from Iraq. He wants to have them all, both ways.

*He's "**Both Ways Barack**." Worse than a flip-flopper.*

McCAIN
JOHNMCCAIN.COM

PAID FOR BY JOHN MCCAIN 2008. JOHN MCCAIN 2008 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF THIS ADVERTISMENT.

Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

McCain Sponsored Attack against Obama (Ayers)



Why is this Democrat friends with a terrorist?

Beyond the speeches, how much do you know about Barack Obama? What does he really believe?

Consider this: United 93 never hit the Capitol on 9/11.

But the Capitol was bombed thirty years before—by an American terrorist group called Weather Underground that declared "war" on the U.S.—targeting the Capitol, the Pentagon, Police Stations, and more.

One of the group's leaders, William Ayers, admits to the bombings proudly saying later: "We didn't do enough."

But Barack Obama is friends with Ayers, defending him as quote "respectable" and "mainstream".

Obama's political career was launched in Ayers' home. And the two served together on a left-wing board.

Why would Barack Obama be friends with someone who bombed the Capitol...and is proud of it?

Do you know enough to elect Barack Obama?

McCAIN
JOHNMCCAIN.COM

PAID FOR BY MCCAIN FOR AMERICA 2008

Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

PSG-Sponsored Attack against Obama (Both Ways)



Both Ways Barack

People are saying that Senator Obama's recent changes of position have made him a flip-flopper.

He's not! Flip-floppers only hold one position at a time.

Senator Obama is different: he holds two positions at the same time.

Both ways on banning handguns. Both ways on public campaign financing. Both ways on NAFTA.

And now, both ways on withdrawing from Iraq. He wants to have them all, both ways.

He's "Both Ways Barack." Worse than a flip-flopper.

LET FREEDOM RING

COMMON SENSE THINKING

PAID FOR BY LET FREEDOM RING. NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE. LET FREEDOM RING IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF THIS ADVERTISMENT..

Appendix7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

PSG-Sponsored Attack against Obama (Ayers)



Why is Obama friends with a terrorist?

Beyond the speeches, how much do you know about Barack Obama? What does he really believe?

Consider this: United 93 never hit the Capitol on 9/11.

But the Capitol was bombed thirty years before—by an American terrorist group called Weather Underground that declared "war" on the U.S.—targeting the Capitol, the Pentagon, Police Stations, and more.

One of the group's leaders, William Ayers, admits to the bombings proudly saying later: "We didn't do enough."

Some members of the group Ayers founded even went on to kill police.

But Barack Obama is friends with Ayers, defending him as quote "respectable" and "mainstream".

Obama's political career was launched in Ayers' home. And the two served together on a left-wing board.

Why would Barack Obama be friends with someone who bombed the Capitol...and is proud of it?

Do you know enough to elect Barack Obama?

AMERICAN ISSUES PROJECT

PAID FOR BY AMERICAN ISSUES PROJECT. NOT AUTHORIZED BY ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATE'S COMMITTEE.

Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

PSG-Sponsored Attack against McCain (Charlie Black)

Tell John McCain to FIRE Charlie Black!



John McCain says we're fighting in Iraq to plant the "seeds of democracy," but the firm of his "chief political advisor" Charlie Black made millions lobbying for the world's worst tyrants.



Ferdinand Marcos	Mobutu	Jonas Sivimbi
Ferdinand Marcos who executed thousands of his own citizens in the Philippines.	Zaire's Mobutu, who publicly hanged his opponents and looted his country's vast mineral wealth.	Rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, a mass murderer, who covered Angola with land mines.



BLACK SAYS HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.

APPROVED BY BARACK OBAMA.
PAID FOR BY OBAMA USA.

Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

Obama Sponsored Attack against McCain (Bush)



Where does John McCain stand on the issues?

IRAQ	McSAME AS BUSH	A trillion dollars in Iraq over the next ten years.
Oil companies get tax breaks while we pay at the pump.	McSAME AS BUSH	ENERGY
HEALTH CARE	McSAME AS BUSH	Absolutely no plan for universal health care.
A millionaire who is for tax cuts for millionaires.	McSAME AS BUSH	TAXES

We need a new direction. Not the McSame ol' thing.

PAID FOR BY OBAMA FOR USA 08. OBAMA FOR USA 08 IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF THIS AD.

Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

PSG-Sponsored Attack against McCain (Charlie Black)



Appendix 7 cont.

Attack Phase: Print Attack Advertisements

PSG-Sponsored Attack against McCain (Bush)



Where does John McCain stand on the issues?

IRAQ	McSAME AS BUSH	A trillion dollars in Iraq over the next ten years.
Oil companies get tax breaks while we pay at the pump.	McSAME AS BUSH	ENERGY
HEALTH CARE	McSAME AS BUSH	Absolutely no plan for universal health care.
A millionaire who is for tax cuts for millionaires.	McSAME AS BUSH	TAXES

We need a new direction. Not the McSame ol' thing.

PAID FOR BY CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND AMERICA. NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY CANDIDATE OR CANDIDATES' COMMITTEE. CAMPAIGN TO DEFEND AMERICA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONTENT OF THIS AD.

Appendix 8

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
Y	**H1a:** PSG-sponsored political advertising is more negative than candidate-sponsored political advertising.
Y	**H1b:** PSG-sponsored political advertising is more negative than FEC-sanctioned political advertising.
Y	**H2a:** Candidate-sponsored political attack advertising is more policy focused than character focused.
Y	**H2b:** PSG-sponsored political attack advertising is more character focused than policy focused.
Policy Focused	**RQ1:** Is FEC-sanctioned political attack advertising more policy focused than character focused?
Y	**H3**: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the sponsor's credibility than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.
N	**H4a**: PSG-sponsored attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of its implied beneficiary than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.
N	**H4b**: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.
N	**H4c**: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.
N	**H4d**: PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate than candidate-sponsored political attack advertising.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**H5a**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising backfires against the sponsoring candidate by eliciting a less favorable evaluation of the attack's implied beneficiary.
N	**H5b**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising backfires against the sponsoring candidate by eliciting a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.
N	**H5c**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising also harms the targeted candidate by eliciting a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
N	**H5d**: Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising also harms the targeted candidate by eliciting a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H6a**: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary.
N	**H6b**: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary.
N	**H6c**: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
N	**H6d**: Compared to no political attack advertising, PSG-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**H7a:** Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits less democratic political efficacy.
N	**H7b:** Compared to no political attack advertising, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits less trust of American government.
No Influence	**RQ2a**: Compared to no political attack advertising, what is the influence of PSG-sponsored political attack advertising on democratic political efficacy?
No Influence	**RQ2b**: Compared to no attack advertising, what is the influence of PSG-sponsored political attack advertising on trust in American government?
Y	**H8a:** Evaluation of the sponsor's credibility intervenes in the relationship between video- mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
Y	**H8b:** Evaluation of the sponsor's relational communication intervenes in the relationship between video-mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H8c:** Argument evaluation intervenes in the relationship between print-mediated political attack advertising and intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H9a:** Compared to exposure to print-mediated attack advertising, video-mediated attack advertising elicits greater positive affect toward the supported candidate.
N	**H9b:** Compared to exposure to print-mediated attack advertising, video-mediated attack advertising elicits greater negative affect toward the targeted candidate.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**H10a:** Compared to print-mediated political attack advertising, video-mediated political attack advertising elicits greater attitude-behavior consistency with respect to evaluation of the initially supported candidate and vote intention.
N	**H10b:** Compared to print-mediated political attack advertising, video-mediated political attack advertising elicits greater attitude-behavior consistency with respect to evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and vote intention.
N	**H11a:** Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a more favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary for non-partisans than for partisans.
N	**H11b:** Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a greater intention to vote for the implied beneficiary for non-partisans than for partisans.
N	**H11c:** Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a less favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate for non-partisans than for partisans.
N	**H11d:** Compared to the control condition, candidate-sponsored political attack advertising elicits a lesser intention to vote for the targeted candidate for non-partisans than for partisans.
No Difference	**RQ3a:** How does candidate-sponsored political attack advertising influence democratic political efficacy for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ3b:** How does candidate-sponsored political attack advertising influence trust of American government for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ4a:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence evaluations of the implied beneficiary for non-partisans versus partisans?

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
No Difference	**RQ4b:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence intention to vote for the implied beneficiary for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ4c:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored attack advertising influence evaluations of the targeted candidate for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ4d:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence intention to vote for the targeted candidate for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ5a:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence democratic political efficacy for non-partisans versus partisans?
No Difference	**RQ5b:** Compared to the control condition, how does PSG-sponsored political attack advertising influence trust in American government for non-partisans versus partisans?
N	**H12a:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
weak support in video – no support in print	**H12b:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H12c:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
Y	**H12d:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation against all political attack advertising elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.
N	**H13a:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
confirmed in video – not confirmed in print	**H13b:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H13c**: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.
N	**H13d:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to PSG-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.
No Difference	**RQ6a**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?
No Difference	**RQ6b**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?
video generic is more effective than generic print	**RQ6c**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in PSG-sponsored political attack advertising?

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**RQ6d**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the candidate supported in PSG- sponsored political attack advertising?
N	**H14a:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
N	**H14b:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.
N	**H14c**: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.
Y generic video superior to generic print	**H14d:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, generic inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.
N	**H15a:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate.
Y	**H15b:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**H15c**: Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a less favorable evaluation of the supported candidate.
Y within weak partisans: candidate better than control	**H15d:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to candidate-sponsored political attack advertising in terms of a lesser intention to vote for the supported candidate.
video: candidate-strong partisans better than generic- weak print: candidate-strong better than generic-weak	**RQ7a**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a more favorable evaluation of the candidate targeted in candidate-sponsored political attack advertising?
No Difference	**RQ7b**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a greater intention to vote for the candidate targeted in candidate -sponsored political attack advertising?
No Difference	**RQ7c**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a less favorable evaluation of the candidate supported in candidate -sponsored political attack advertising?
No Difference	**RQ7d**: Do generic and candidate-specific inoculation differ with respect to their ability to elicit a lesser intention to vote for the candidate supported in candidate - sponsored political attack advertising?
N within candidate attack: control better than candidate inoculation	**H16a:** Compared to the inoculation-control condition, candidate-specific inoculation elicits greater resistance to political attack advertising in terms of greater trust in American government.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
PSG attack: candidate better than generic inoculation candidate attack: generic better than candidate inoculation	**RQ8a:** Do generic and candidate-specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their protection of trust in American government?
No Difference	**RQ8b:** Do generic and candidate-specific inoculations against political attack advertising differ with respect to their protection of democratic political efficacy?
N	**H17a:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's source credibility.
N	**H17b:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits a more favorable evaluation of the inoculation sponsor's relational communication.
N	**H18a:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase positive affect for the initially supported candidate.
N	**H18b:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more affective associative network content about the initially supported candidate.
N print elicited more threat than video	**H18c:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video inoculation elicits more threat in the process of resistance to political attack advertising.
N	**H18d:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits less counter argumentation against potential attacks on the initially supported candidate.
N	**H18e:** Compared to video-mediated inoculation, print-mediated inoculation elicits more cognitive associative network content.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
N	**H18f:** Compared to video-mediated inoculation, print-mediated inoculation elicits a less favorable evaluation of political attack advertising.
N	**H18g:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits greater phase-two attitudinal confidence regarding the initially supported candidate.
N	**H18h:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitudinal confidence regarding the evaluation of the political attack advertising.
N print tended to elicit more attitude-behavior consistency	**H18i:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially supported candidate and intention to vote for that candidate.
N both print and video elicited attitude – behavior consistency	**H18j:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more inoculation-phase attitude-behavior consistency between evaluation of the initially opposed candidate and intention to vote against that candidate.
N	**H18k:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the 2008 general election.
N	**H18l:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two attitude accessibility with respect to the initially-supported candidate.
N	**H18m:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more phase-two associative network content regarding the initially-supported candidate.
Y	**H18n:** Compared to print-mediated inoculation, video-mediated inoculation elicits more strongly accessible associative network content regarding the initially-supported candidate.

Appendix 8 cont.

Summary Results

Outcome	Hypotheses and Research Questions
Y	**H19a:** In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.
Y	**H19b:** In terms of a greater intention to vote for the targeted candidate, printed inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.
N	**H19c:** In terms of a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the attack, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to print-mediated attacks than to video-mediated attacks.
Y	**H19d:** In terms of lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the attack, print-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to printed attacks than to video-mediated attacks.
N	**H20a:** In terms of a more favorable evaluation of the targeted candidate, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.
N	**H20b:** In terms of a greater intention to the vote for the targeted candidate, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.
N	**H20c:** In terms of a less favorable evaluation of the implied beneficiary of the political attack, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated attacks than to printed attacks.
N	**H20d:** In terms of a lesser intention to vote for the implied beneficiary of the political attack, video-mediated inoculation confers more resistance to video-mediated political attacks than to printed attacks.