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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL DISTORTION AND VISUAL "LITERACY" IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING

A Dissertation
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
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Norman, Oklahoma
1997

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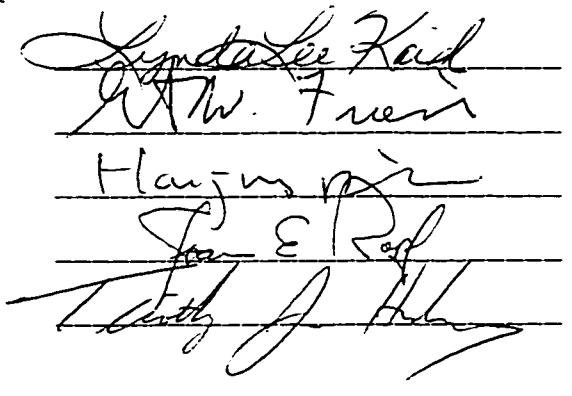
THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL DISTORTION AND VISUAL "LITERACY" IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

BY



Abstract

Differing ethical standards within political communication are explored to determine a basis for questioning the use of video technology and distortion strategies within political advertising. The effects that these modern video and audio distortion technologies might have on the message are addressed by exploring historic and analytic research in relevant fields of study. The study creates and orchestrates an instrument for determining the effect that such "technological distortion" has on the informed electorate, ending with an analysis of the data gathered from a pilot lab study which uses the designed instrument.

This research advances the argument that technology can be used to influence the meaning being drawn by the viewer from the video image. Although using technologically distorted images or not played little significance in initiating differing opinions about the ads themselves, it always played a significant role when judging the candidates featured within the ads. Using distortion made the candidates in the positive ads always seem much more positive and the candidates featured in the negative ads seem much more negative. The sponsor in the negative ads always appeared to be much more positive when distorted images were used to displace his/her opponent.

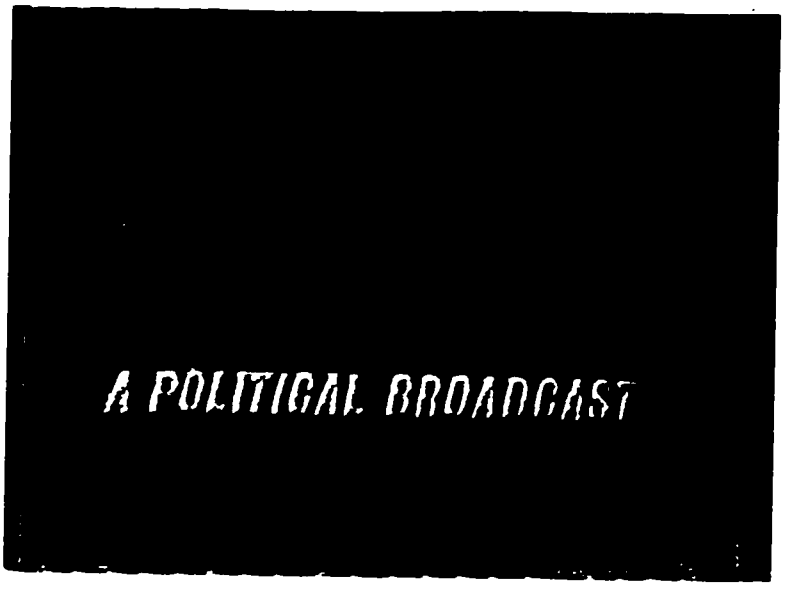
The instrument also incorporates a relatively new field of study, "media literacy," as a way to account for response variance and to determine whether or not the American people are visually

sophisticated enough not to be duped by the "tricks of technology" now at the disposal of political communicators. The more video "literate" the respondents are, the more "immune" they are assumed to be to the positive or negative influence that the distorted ads are intended to have. In other words, a higher "literacy" score should correspond to a lower respondent evaluation for the positive ads and a higher evaluation for the negative ads. This highly publicized and sustained notion was not supported by this study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

On October 28, 1968, eight days before the general elections, one of the most controversial political ads to date appeared on national television in the United States. It followed the direction that political advertising was beginning to take (Grove, 1988; Kaughan, 1984; Martz, Warner, Fineman, Clift, & Starr, 1988; Slater, 1990; Taylor, 1989). Sponsored by Republican presidential candidate, Richard M. Nixon, the ad focused on his opponent, Hubert Humphrey. It proved pivotal in creating the first landslide victory of its kind in history, "a negative landslide." Even though the winning margin seemed small (with George Wallace running as a significant Independent candidate) 28 percent of the Democratic voters "turned against the whole set of Democratic policy and leadership of the previous four years" (White, 1969, p. 462).

Through the use of montage film editing, Humphrey's image was filmically linked to negative pictures of the social ills and unrest of the time. Enhancing this connection, close-up pictures of Humphrey were distorted in various ways using "special effects" techniques. During the ad, his image was flip-flopped back and forth, girated, and split into three "mirrored" images. An upbeat rendition of "Hot Time in the Old Time Tonight" underscored the ad and distorted into chaotic "noise" each time Humphrey's picture appeared on screen (Jamieson, 1992b, pp. 245-246). On the following pages this ad is presented frame-by-frame.


A POLITICAL BROADCAST





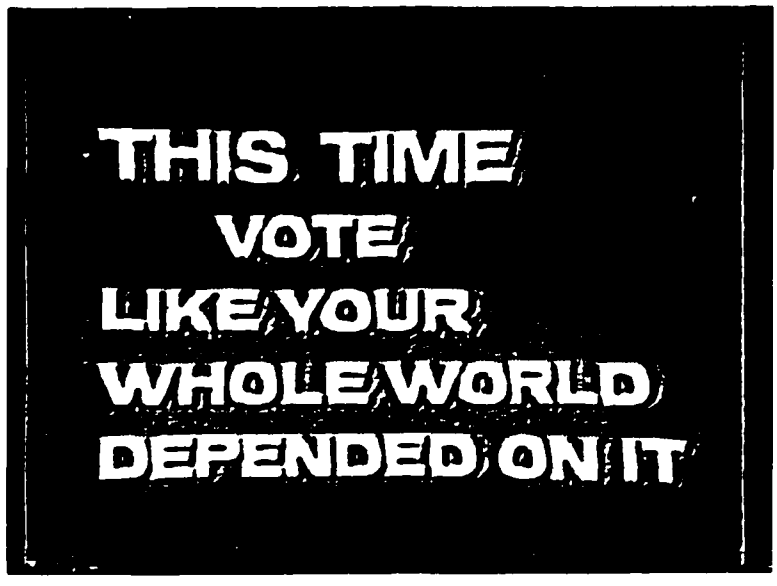












Although the use of negative advertising had appeared in previous campaigns, the overwhelming success of this ad campaign by the Nixon campaign in 1968 spurred many political candidates and consultants to begin incorporating the ploy within their campaigns (Grove, 1988; Martz, Warner, Fineman, Clift,

& Starr, 1988; Taylor, 1989). Since then, there has been much concern about the yearly increase in the percentage of negative ads used within the political arena across (Angell, 1988; Berke, 1990; Devlin, 1993; Kaid, 1981). Of equal concern is the affordability of new video technologies which have the capacity to alter or "distort" an image or sound in order to add overt (and in many cases, subtle) negative comment to the artifice (Kaid, 1991b; Massaris, 1990). Recently, the percentage of such video negative tactics used within regional campaigns has risen substantially (KARE 11 News, 1994; MacNeil & Lehrer, 1994; Mungo, 1994).

Some critics have attacked these tactics, claiming that they confuse the democratic process of an informed electorate (Jamieson, 1986; Messaris, 1990; Rose, 1983; Spero, 1980). Some liken them to the propaganda techniques which Hitler used to mesmerize the German citizens and lead them astray in the late 1930's (Larsen, 1995; McLuhan, 1964; Wilson, 1995). Since political ads have become the main source of candidate information for the general American populace (Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, 1985), some believe they should be held accountable to a higher degree of ethical scrutiny than commercial advertisements (Berke, 1990; Devlin, 1993; Kaid. 1981).

Others claim that the American people are too smart to be duped by such techniques, and that using them only causes either a "boomerang" effect (Hamilton, Hunter, & Boster, 1993; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) or desensitization effect (Comstock, Chaffee, Katzman, McCombs, & Roberts, 1978, pp. 376 & 377; MacNeil &

Lehrer, 1994) that fosters a negative attitude toward the candidate sponsoring the ads. In any case, negative ad tactics are perceived as successful (Jamieson, 1992b) and, thus, "neophyte political media specialists" have increased the use of them over the years (Spero, 1980, p. 136).

The technological distortion of mass media channels has often been considered an ethical problem (Gladney, 1991; Harris, 1991; Martin, 1991; Reaves, 1987; Spero, 1980; Tomlinson, 1987). The accusation is that deliberate distortions of audio and video channels can leave the viewer with false image and issue impressions in either a positive or negative direction. A political "actor" lacking on-screen television competence can be made to appear as a dynamically forceful and relevant "protagonist" through the use of technology (e.g., editing, special effects, etc.), while the image of an opponent with dynamic TV presence may be technically manipulated in a negative manner to appear to be an inept "antagonist" (Stephenson, 1967). Jamieson (1992a) terms this "recontextualizing" as televised "reframing," and considers it the most powerful tool for campaigning in modern political history (p. 40).

In political communication, greatest concern centers around video technology's ability to alter or enhance "reality" and confuse the rational decision-making process of the informed electorate. Held suspect are five categories which Kaid (1991a) terms "'tricks of technology:" (1) editing techniques, (2) special effects, (3) visual imagery/dramatizations, (4) computerized alteration techniques, and (5) subliminal techniques" (p. 153).

For the past several years, Kaid (1992, 1993a) has headed a National Science Foundation task force to analyze the content of the political ads located in The University of Oklahoma's Political Commercial Archive. From 1952 through 1992, an average of 15% (312) of 2,107 sample spots have been coded as ethically suspect in their use of technology (Kaid, 1992). The average increases to 42% (100 out of 240 sample spots) for advertisements coded from the 1992 primary and general election campaigns for president (Kaid, 1993a). It should be noted that televised ads account for up to "70% of what Americans hear and see of political campaigns today" (Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, 1985, p. 54). Television's role in the political system plays the dominant role in communication between candidates and voters (Berke, 1990; Devlin, 1993; Kaid, 1981).

Many recent studies have focused on the influence that political advertising has on the public. Johnston (1990) places the concerns of these studies in four major categories: (1) "political advertising's influence on voter's perceptions of the candidates" and their issues (Cundy, 1986; Meadow & Sigelman, 1982), (2) "interest in the campaign" (Garramone, 1983), (3) "knowledge about campaign issues" (Garramone, 1983), and (4) "final vote decision" (Faber & Storey, 1984; Nowlan & Moutray, 1984) (p. 333). Ever-increasingly sophisticated technology, such as digitalization (discussed later in this paper), increases the concern over its potential abuse in the democratic process. "Tricks of technology" that distort "reality" for voters in all four of the above categories have already been used in many political campaigns

(Angell, 1988; Kaid, 1993b; Sheridan, 1990). Most of the ethically suspect technology within political advertising has been found to be used within negative ads (Kaid, 1992, 1993a).

The overwhelming success of negative ads has led to their increased popularity and to an ethical controversy over their legitimacy (Grove, 1988; Martz, Warner, Fineman, Clift, & Starr, 1988; Taylor, 1989). "There is no universally accepted definition of negative advertisements," but most would agree that they basically are "opponent-focused" rather than "candidate-focused" and concern negative issue and/or image characteristics (Kaid, 1991b, p. 157).

Again, the ethical concern of negative advertising lies in the question of whether or not it serves a purpose in creating an informed electorate. Toner (1990) and Slater (1990) suggest that these ads help the voter to "compare" and "contrast" a candidate's strengths and weaknesses. The other view is that negative advertising is merely "dirty politics" that undermines voter confidence and participation (Tarrance, 1980).

The flip side of this controversy is the positive ad that uses technical distortion to make a candidate appear in an exaggerated positive light. Over the past few years, there has been a substantial increase in the use of technological "tricks" in such ads. The abuse potential is that the ads may contain "false, misleading, distorted, or incomplete information" about the candidates as well (Kaid, 1991a, p. 158).

Take, for example, the mass media propaganda techniques that Hitler's minister of propaganda, Dr. Joseph Goebbels, used in

Leni Riefenstahl's films of the 1930s in an effort to take control of Germany and neighboring countries. They are "structured and emotionally appealing," persuading the viewers "to form conclusions that are not necessarily part of the intellectual process" (Bone & Johnson, 1991, p. 36). It is considered the most destructive use of video manipulation in history, used to endorse "Hitler and his reign of terror" (Wilson, 1995, p. 268).

"To understand the power of an Adolf Hitler, it helps to see and hear his speeches on film rather than simply read them. With the maniac glare, gesticulations, and 'special effects'," such as editing in "live" audience reactions of jubilation and absolute support and extremely "low-angle" filming, the trappings of "son et lumiere" make the "aura of evil around this man" suddenly appealing and "palatable" (Billingsley, 1989, p. 69).

Hitler was not unaware of the power he held in his propaganda campaign. He spelled out the importance of video manipulation and how he planned to use it in his book, Mein Kampf, written years earlier in 1925:

> The great masses' receptive ability is only very limited, their understanding is small, but their forgetfullness is great. As a consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda has to limit itself only to a very few points and to use them like slogans until even the very last man is able to imagine what is intended by such a word. As soon as one sacrifices this basic principle and tries to become versatile, the effect will fritter away, as the masses are neither able to digest the material

> offered or retain it. Thus the result is weakened and finally eliminated (Hitler, 1943, p. 234).

It is clear that Hitler's intentions were deliberate. He carefully planned his campaign with the awareness of the persuasive power of visual manipulation and deception. As a means to an end, he felt ethically justified in his own mind in his attempt to save Germany (the end) at any cost (the means) from economic collapse. He felt his intentions were good and, thus, honorable (Thompson & Bordwell, 1994).

Ethical responsibility "is not a matter of good intention only; it is based upon honest and knowledgeable handling of subject matter" (Winterowd, 1965, p. 8). The major test of ethicality is "truth versus falsity" (Kaid 1991a). Johannesen (1990) categorizes ethical communication behavior as the conscious choice of: (a) right or wrong, (b) subject to potential behavioral effects, and (c) a means to an end. "Standards such as honesty, promise-keeping, truthfulness, fairness, and humaneness usually are used in making ethical judgments of rightness or wrongness of communication goals" (p. 1).

Adhering to traditional beliefs, it is argued that political communication should be created to inform voters. "If voters are to make rational choices about leaders and policy issues, they must have access to information that is true and accurate, unambiguous, unclouded by emotion, and, therefore, enhances, rather than undermines, the decision-making process" (Kaid, 1991a, p. 146). Some analysts argue that this is not possible in political advertising. They feel that television's inclination toward dramatic

visual imagery is hazardous to political communication, contributing to unethical advertising outcomes (Spero, 1980). Others argue that such dramatizations only help focus voter attention on candidate issues and qualifications. Messaris (1990) raises serious concerns about this disposition, suggesting that the use of video technology achieves imagery that is "just not true." The uses of such unreasoned televised political discourse are "frequent enough and have demonstrated sufficiently misleading applications to warrant attention" (Kaid, 1993a, p. 6).

Communication ethicality takes into account the degree to which a communicator "intentionally" uses particular content or techniques. Use of "ethically questionable tactics" seems to merit the "harshest condemnation." "Undoubtedly, the person who sets out 'deliberately to deceive others' by means of improper reasoning is morally culpable" (Rescher, 1977, p. 78).

Basic elements of communication ethical analysis consist of "a 'communicator,' with particular 'motives,' attempting to achieve a specific 'end' result with a specific 'audience' by employing ('intentionally or unintentionally') communicative 'means' or techniques to influence that audience" (Johannesen, 1990, p. 8). The analysis of visual elements and presentation styles of televised political advertisements has become increasingly prevalent in the study of their "persuasive appeals and messages." The "straight-foward approach" contrasts the "slickly-packaged approach" in Shyles's (1984) study of issue and image ads. Researchers have become more sensitive to these components as variables that influence "the context of campaigns or the candidates' positions as

incumbent or challenger" (p. 418). Johnston (1990), as well as Kaid and Davidson (1986), identify the need to include "the 'videostyle' of candidates in terms of verbal content, nonverbal content, and film/video production techniques" (p. 334).

This project explores differing ethical standards within political communication and advertising to determine "common-ground" criteria for questioning the ethical use of video technology and distortion strategies. It addresses the effect that these modern video distortion technologies have on the message; exploring historic research in relevant fields of study. Finally, it will attempt to create and utilize an instrument for determining the effect that such "technological distortion" has on the electorate, ending with an analysis of the data gathered from a pilot lab study which uses the instrument. The instrument incorporates a relatively new field of study, "media literacy," as a way to account for response variance and to determine whether or not the American people are sophisticated enough not to be duped by the "tricks of technology" now at the disposal of political communicators.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Whatever form public communication takes, mutual trust and confidence are viewed as the foundations on which American representative democracy functions. Public confidence in reliable information, "accurate data and highly probable conclusions," from the media in the United States is a goal "being less and less attained" (Johannesen, 1990, p. 24). American citizens increasingly complain about "managed news" and a "credibility gap . . . in communication from the government, political candidates, news media, and advertisers" (p. 24). Statements and claims made at one point in time too often prove to be "inoperative" later on. A substantial portion of government communication and campaign persuasion is perceived by the populus as untrue, "gross hyperbole," and dismissed without scrutiny or analysis (p. 25).

Ethics and Political Communication

"This deep distrust of government, and the word of the government, has altered traditional political relationships in America. It has shattered the bond of confidence between the government and the people. And it has diminished our confidence in ourselves and in our ability to overcome the problems that confront us" (Wise, 1973, p. 18). Human communication on all levels becomes "poisoned" and undermined. "Trust in sources is a necessary condition for verbal communication. Insofar as this trust is lost, language itself is undermined. Without willingness to believe on the part of the receiver, the source's language loses its integrity, and people become divided and alienated" (Sproule,

1980, p. 282). As a result, alienation from the "system" and polarization of attitudes increase.

"Today there is a tendency to disbelieve the government even when it is telling the truth" (Wise, 1973, p. 345). Traditional democratic process dictates that one should reject a message only after close scrutiny and evaluation, and not before. The communicator should be presumed "ethically innocent" until proven guilty (Johannesen, 1990, p. 26). Communication tactics which undermine the functioning of the American representative democracy are thought by many to be highly to at least moderately ethically suspect.

The democratic process of decision making in the United States rests on the acquisition of "accurate and trustworthy information." It is rooted in the requisites of vigorous public debate and responsible functioning of the system. Messages are to be judged for "adequacy of information, diversity of viewpoints, and knowledge of potential strengths, weaknesses, and effects of alternative choices," and especially for motivation or intent (Johannesen, 1990, pp. 24 & 25). These requirements have been stressed in several of the political perspectives developed by critical political analysts concerning responsible communication within the American system.

Ethical judgments of human behavior focus on the rightness or wrongness of a conscious "means" choice that the "actor" makes to meet his/her end result or goal. Communicative actions are normally judged in degree by their potency, the significant immediate or long-term effect they have on other humans. In

human communication, ethical value standards of right and wrong are based primarily on the degree of "honesty, truthfulness, fairness, and humaneness" motivated or intended by the originator. Thus, potential ethical issues arise when human behavior involves a conscious "means" to an "end" choice, has a significant impact on others, and when it can be measured by a standard of right and wrong (Wellman, 1975, p. 285).

An age-old question arises between the relevance of what people do versus what they ought to be doing in their physical and symbolic efforts (Pritchard & Morgan, 1989). In the context of the ethics of modern advertising (as well as all other communication), conflicting views arise. Levitt (1958) feels that it is presumptuous and perhaps unethical to attempt to judge the motives and ethics of others, since ethical judgments are a matter of personal preference of what is obvious. Since unethical communication practices are so obvious to all, the effect of their use is at most minimal and they become "ethically irrelevant" (p. 92).

On the other hand, Rokeach (1973) and Means (1969) believe that man (and woman) is separated from other animals by his (or her) ability to reason and distinguish between right and wrong which makes him (or her) "homo ethicus, man the maker of ethical judgments" (Means, 1969, p. 12). Nilsen (1974) feels that human beings are very aware of their shortcomings between their "genuine beliefs, intentions, and aspirations" and "their applications." But, "however aware we may be of our actual . . . level of achievement . . . our ideals provide an ultimate goal, a sense of direction, a general orientation, by which to guide

conduct" (p. 15). Whether evaluated internally by participants in a communicative transaction or externally by critics, or whether judged by differing ethical standards or by those who choose to ignore ethical standards entirely, Johannesen (1990) strongly recommends that "if for no other than the pragmatic reason of enhancing chances of success, the communicator would do well to consider the ethical criteria held by his or her audience" (p. 3).

Most modern scholars agree (Barnlund, 1962; Miller, 1969; Winterowd, 1965, 1968) that "rhetoric always has taken and traditionally must take ethics into account." "Ethical responsibility, however, is not a matter of good intentions only; it is based upon an honest and knowledgeable handling of subject matter" (Winterowd, 1968, pp. 8 & 9) "that will protect and promote the healthiest communication behavior" (Barnlund, 1962, p. 198). They also maintain the idea to some degree that language cannot ever be entirely "neutral" (Berlo, 1960; Burke, 1966; Patton & Giffin, 1974; Weaver, 1971). "There is reason to believe that all use of language has a persuasive dimension, that one cannot communicate at all without some attempt to persuade, in one way or another" (Berlo, 1960, p. 9; Larson, 1995). "It is ridiculous to consider language a neutral medium of exchange. Specific words are selected for our use because they do affect behavior" (Patton & Griffin, 1974, p. 1313).

The ethical issue raised in this dimension of human communication is stated by Johannesen (1990), "To what degree is it ethical for communicators to alter their ideas and proposals in order to adapt to the needs, capacities, desires, and expectations of

an audience" (p. 5)? In this case, does the communicative "means" (technically distorted video) chosen justify the "end," the resultant effect it has on audience behavior? This should be taken into consideration even if the communicator is merely adapting what he or she has to say to what will captivate and sway the audience, regardless of his or her personal convictions. Other questions arise in such cases. Can technological distortion be considered a form of rhetoric? If so, how much latitude should there be given for misinformation and lying within political advertising?

The first of these questions will be addressed later. As for misinformation and lying, contemporary humanistic scholars believe that in a free society such as the United States, no "ironclad" rules can be set. Yet, maximizing freedom seems to maximize responsibility even though Szasz (1977) observes that "people like freedom because it gives them mastery over things and people. They dislike responsibility because it constrains them from satisfying their wants" (p. xiii). There exists through history an "increasing human effort to maximize freedom and minimize responsibility" (p. xiii). It becomes a "double-edged sword" swinging between the dual aspects of the same phenomenon: between the freedom of options and the obligation of responsibility. He assumes that a consciousness of good and evil exists in the "heart" of each human being and that when faced with a decision, it is a matter of choice between the two. Szasz (1977) also contends that using freedom to do good brings with it "exhilaration," while using it for "evil" results in the unpleasantness

of "guilt," thus, the former is most often the behavior of choice (p. xiii).

Phelan (1980) equates responsibility with ethics in the "freedom of communication." Although he opposes federally regulated enforcement of ethical standards in the media, he admits to many "deceitful" and "degrading" practices within public discourse. Rather than censorship, he promotes an "internalized, naturally felt, culturally sustained sense of right and wrong to override individual opportunism" (p. 20). Just how is unclear. He also suggests a proverbial "double-edged sword" philosophy between "social values of justice, equality, and democratic rule and the mass media values of diversity, regionalism, access, and high quality . . . applied through cultural pressures . . . to influence the media" in the right direction (p. 25). Responsible communication then becomes an obligation for both the "sender and receiver" to exercise "thoughtful and deliberate judgment . . . to carefully analyze claims, soundly assess probable consequences, and conscientiously weigh relevant values" (Johannesen, 1990, p. 6).

Rescher (1977) introduces the variable of intentionality for judging the ethicality of a given communication transaction. He analyzes the use of both content and techniques as factors in judging the "dubiousness" of communication behavior. Unintentional use of questionable tactics or sloppy preparation, although inexcusable, are far less negative than setting out "deliberately to deceive others by means of improper reasoning" (p. 80). He defines such behavior as "morally culpable" and suggests careful scrutiny of "evidence and reasoning" in

"argumentative and persuasive" situations before presenting it to others. He implies that the content as well as the techniques used can be dubious. In any event, if it exists, audience members should be educated to defend themselves against such dubious communication methods, whether intentional or unintentional.

It is on this front that the ethical battle for using technological distortion in political communication may be waged. There are questions yet to be answered. Does distorting the channel of communication throught technology have the capacity to distort the "encoding" and "decoding" process of the message (Dominick, 1996, p. 7) (see Appendix A)? And does this, in turn, have the potential to distort the "truth" of the message? Johannesen (1990) contends that government officials are obligated to communicate an "accurate and clear representation of their ideas to the public." Techniques used to "obscure" or confuse the issues or save their image, even if unintentional, are "ethically irresponsible" (p. 7).

One dominant criticism about political advertising is that it concentrates on "images" rather than on "issues." Image concerns are presumed to be predominantly "emotional" in nature, while issues are considered to be "logical." It stands to reason then, that decisive communication between a candidate and the electorate is linked to issue-oriented information. Thus, concentrating on images rather than on issues, leads to emotional rather than "rational" choices. The common distinction between the two is "that 'image' applies to candidate personality and/or qualifications, while 'issue' refers to information about policy positions and/or

topics of public concern" (Kaid, 1991a, pp. 147 & 148). In this context, neither is mutually exclusive of the other.

The majority of political media specialists advocate that the most effective appeal to voters is an emotional one (Kaid & Davidson, 1986; Kern 1989; Koughan, 1984; Perloff & Kinsey, 1990; Sabato, 1981; Schwartz, 1973). Although many political ads use an emotional emphasisrather than focussing on "solid policy information" (Kaid, 1991a, p. 148), they often make "serious, issue-oriented points" and actually do carry with them a high degree of issue information (Diamond & Bates, 1984, p. 311). Whether or not they carry enough information for adequate decision-making is not a question of ethics, but of quantity (Patterson & McClure, 1976).

On the other hand, when an image ad concentrates on "fear tactics" or "unthinking allegiance" (as in the case of Hitler) and stirs viewers to "set aside reason," it is a "violation of democratic ethics" (Haiman, 1958, p. 388). It is not so clear-cut when "valid issues," such as abortion rights or gun control, "have strong emotional content." Often "the melding of emotion with issue content in such cases is not necessarily unethical" (Kaid, 1991, p. 149).

Few would defend personal attacks on a candidate's ethnicity, gender, age, and the like, while other image concerns may be considered valid within the democratic process. For instance, a candidate's "fitness for office" may be determining factors within his/her morality code, honesty, competency, and other related characteristics (Anderson, 1989; Miller, Wattenberg, & Malanchuk, 1985).

Jamieson (1992b), in agreement with Oreskes and Toner (1990), points out that 30-second and 60-second political spots may oversimplify these characteristics, either pro or con. The time constraints of advertising force ads to focus on "statements," whereas in the past candidates had time to present "statement and proof" arguments. This may reduce the electorate's ability to judge rationally complex topics (Mitroff & Bennis, 1989). It may "invite a debate that will wallow in shallowness, distortion, half-truths, and false inferences" (Taylor, 1989, p. A14).

The capacity for video technicians to edit unrelated images together and/or visually alter them makes this criticism more credible. Consider a candidate producing an ad telling voters that his/her opponent has been dishonest. The text is made up of a series of statements about him/her. No proof is offered and no source is given, yet the nose on a picture of the opponent appears to grow longer with each statement. This is accompanied each time with a "stretching" sound effect (Campbell, 1990).

Without a derogatory word, the ad's sponsor has time enough (even within a 10-second spot) to use quotes from his/her opponent and visually call him/her a liar using the Pinnochio nose effect. For those not paying attention, attention is drawn to it by the unusual sound effect. The time it would take to say this within the text is virtually eliminated.

Could this be considered a case of oversimplification and distortion? The entire unsupported "issue" message in this ad is carried within the distortion of the opponent's "image," whether or not the statement "read" by the audience is true or false.

Modern technology has made it easier to oversimplify information and say a lot more in a shorter period of time in a manner which defies accountablility (until research may prove otherwise). Take, for example, the visual hyperbole found within the "Pinnochio" ads. In such cases, a technologically distorted image of the opponent visually encodes the "liar issue" information which is to be decoded as such by the audience members. It is here where political media specialists may be tempted with a fair amount of legal safety to present short-circuited "issue" statements through "image" distortion without having to devulge informational sources or proof. Unethical intent would be hard to prove in such cases, leaving the door open to potential abuse.

Wayne Booth (1974) analyzes the sincerity of the intent of a message and its ethicality separately. There are cases where a sincere communicator may knowingly utilize unethical communication practices. In any case, the most difficult variables to determine in ethical communication studies are sincerity and intent. "Sincerity is more difficult to check and easier to fake than logicality or consistency, and its presence does not, after all, guarantee very much about the speaker's case" as unethical as it may be (Adolf Hitler being a prime example) (p. 157).

Communicators guilty of unethical intent are likely to also hide and lie about their ill-intentions to the best of their abilities (Ludwig, 1965). If the author chooses not to disclose his/her intent, there may be no other means to test the ethicality of suspect subject matter, but to judge it by logical intuition or to

design a tool that would place it under the scrutiny of empirical analysis, as this study proposes to initiate.

Much concern has arisen about the integrity of communication in the United States and the world. Edmund Pincoff (1975) equates personal responsibility with the condition of self respect. A world in which communication responsibilities are not honored "would be a world in which it would be increasingly difficult and finally impossible to" communicate (p. 5). "Responsibility for what we say, then, is also responsibility for the integrity of" whatever language is used (p. 6). In this case, as the Pinnochio ad example suggests, it may even be particular distortions of the video image. Respect for language "is essential if there is to be any growth in a society or in the human race. . . . To misuse it is to show contempt for man" (Hammarskjold, 1964, p. 112).

Johannesen (1990) suggests probing some basic elements when making an ethical analysis of political mass communication:

(1) the "communicator,"
(2) his or her "motives,"
(3) the specific "end" sought,
(4) the target "audience,"
(5) "intentional" or "unintentional" communication "means" or "techniques,"
(6) "primary" roles of the participants,
(7) verbal and nonverbal "message,"
(8) audience "effect,"
(9) "situational" factors, and

(10) "ethical context of value standards held by the audience, the communicator, and society at large" (pp. 8 & 9).

He also suggests that "the quality of judgment of communication ethics usually would be improved (1) by specifying exactly what ethical criteria, standard, or perspectives we are applying, (2) by justifying the reasonableness and relevancy of these standards, and (3) by indicating in what respects the communication evaluated succeeds or fails in measuring up to the standards" (p. 9).

In 1980, when Spero wrote his book, The Duping of the American Voter, evaluating American political television commercials, the NBC Network set in place a set of stipulations known as "Broadcast Standards for Television." Executives used them to judge the ethical standards of ads submitted by potential sponsors. At that time, nearly one-half of the 48,000 commercials submitted to the network violated or failed to satisfy one or more of these stipulations and were not aired.

Spero lists 18 typical violations in material submitted for approval:

1. No satisfactory evidence of the integrity of the advertiser.
2. Product or service unavailable.
3. Lack of evidence to support their claims and to authenticate their demonstrations.
4. Taste of presentation unacceptable.
5. Competitors not fairly and properly identified.

6. Competitors discredited, disparaged, or unfairly attacked.

7. Commercial claims invalid because market conditions on which the original claim was based no longer prevail.

8. Testimonials do not honestly reflect in spirit and content the sentiments of the individual represented.

9. Claims and statements made in a testimonial, including subjective evaluations of testifiers, are not supportable by facts or not free of misleading implications.

10. Claims or representations have the capacity to deceive, mislead, or misrepresent.

11. Claims unfairly attack competitors, competing products, or other industries, professions, or institutions.

12. Unqualified references to the safety of the product, if package, label, or insert contains a caution or if the normal use of the product presents a possible hazard.

13. The use of "bait and switch" tactics which feature goods or services not intended for sale but designed to lure the public into purchasing higher-priced substitutes.

14. Misuse of distress signals.

15. Scare approach and presentation with the capacity to induce fear.

16. Interpersonal acts of violence and antisocial behavior or other dramatic devices inconsistent with prevailing standards of taste and propriety.

17. Damaging stereotyping.

18. Unsupported or exaggerated promises of employment or earnings (pp. 5-6).

For the purpose of analyzing specific questionable ads throughout his book, Spero (1980) uses these as ethical criteria. In judging several politically televised campaigns ads, most fail the test on several points, especially those containing technologically distorted imagery and/or suspect editing juxtaposition.

Kaid establishes a similar set of "Major Ethical Concerns" in her 1991a chapter, "Ethical Dimensions of Political Advertising." It consists of several categories on which to judge the ethnicity of a political ad:

(1) Buying Access to Voters -- well-financed voices may drown out the underfinanced viewpoints.

(2) Issues or Images/Logic or Emotion -- as mentioned earlier, it concentrates more on "images" than on "issues" and image concerns are inherently "emotional" in contrast with issues, which are "logical."

(3) Oversimplification of Political Argumentation -- spot commercials tend to oversimplify political issues, debasing and trivializing the democratic process.

(4) Failure to Disclose Information -- how far a source must go in disclosing information to a receiver. Three of the most common problems deal with: (a) disclosure of the source of a communication, (b) providing adequate or complete information, and (c) ambiguity and/or inconsistency of political messages.

(5) Tricks of Technology -- as also mentioned earlier, concern about the use of technology to create false or misleading impressions (pp. 146 - 154).

The ethical criteria developed in the preceding studies (Johannesen, 1990; Kaid, 1991a; Spero, 1980) become a blueprint for designing an audience response questionnaire relating the use of technologically distorted video channels to specific audience effect. They should be taken into account when designing any instrument which probes ethically questionable communication intentions or techniques.

In judging the correctness of the persuasion techniques found in political advertising, as well as government news and commercial advertiser communications, the critical perspectives are as diverse as the world's history, cultures, governments, religions, and individuals. Analysts seeking to establish a set of ethical standards by which to regulate and evaluate the rightness or wrongness in specific political communication have found themselves using one of these diversities as a basic viewpoint from which to draw their judgments (Johannesen, 1990). "The quality of judgment of communication ethics usually would be improved (1) by 'specifying exactly' what ethical criteria, standards or perspectives we are applying, (2) by justifying the 'reasonableness' and 'relevancy' of these standards, and (3) by indicating in what respects the communication evaluated 'succeeds' or 'fails in measuring up' to the standards" (Johannesen, 1990, pp. 8 & 9). It appears that most viewpoints concerning ethical political communication contain pervasive "common-ground" criteria.

Terms such as fair, accurate, and trustworthy consistently emerge. Truthfulness, freedom from error, and crediblility seem to be the standards when it comes to judging political communication ethics.

Technological Distortion of Media Channels

Using these ideals as ethical standards, the question becomes whether or not the use of suspect "tricks of technology" within particular political communication has the potential to undermine the accuracy and truthfulness of its message. The use of technology takes on many forms in the five areas of concern mentioned earlier: "(1) editing techiques, (2) special effects, (3) visual imagery/dramatizations, (4) computerized alteration techniques, and (5) subliminal techniques" (Kaid, 1991a, p. 153).

At this point, it becomes necessary to identify, define, and categorize these technologies and methods. One must realize since video taping or filming an event in itself distorts the "reality" of the event by reducing a 3-dimensional scene into 2-dimensions and by only framing part of the given scene and leaving out the rest, research is begun by studying distortions within a distortion (Thompson, 1993). The following is an historical overview of the art of video editing and distortion techniques. It is done to develop the definitions of terminology used within this study and to review research pertinent to the subject. It compares the systematic conventional use of mediated technological distortions to the system of narrative symbolic encoding found in the study of linguistics.

Editing Techniques

In 1929, the Russian filmmaker, Vsevolod Pudovkin, wrote: "Once more I repeat, that editing is the creative force of filmic reality, and that nature provides only the raw material with which it works. That, precisely, is the relationship between editing and the film" (p. xvi). He came to the conclusion that the process of editing is the crucial act in the production of film. The selection, timing, and arrangement of given shots provide cinema its expected continuity and meaning.

In the early 1900's, American film directors began to discover that simple action continuities could be developed into "a subtle instrument for creating and controlling dramatic tension" (Reisz & Millar, 1984, p. 20). Directors such as D.W. Griffith divided the whole action of a given scene ("master shot") into a number of smaller components ("insert shots" and "cutaways") and then re-created his/her own scene from them by editing the pieces of celluliod together. The advantage this gave them over earlier editing methods was twofold:

> Firstly, it enables the director to create a sense of depth in his narrative: the various details add up to a fuller, more persuasively life-like picture of the situation than can a single shot, played against a single background. Secondly, the director is in a far stronger position to guide the spectator's reactions, because he is able to 'choose' what particular detail the spectator is to see at any particular moment (Reisz & Millar, 1984, p. 22).

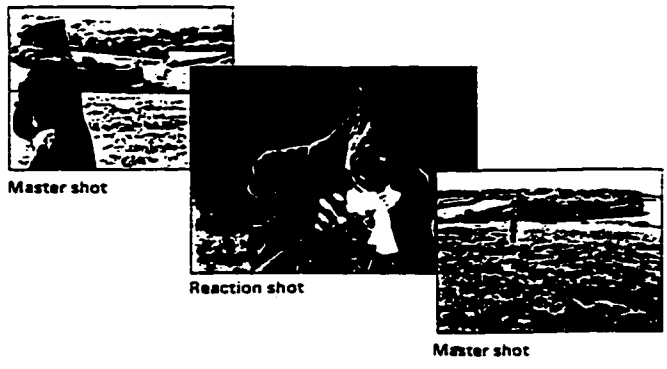
Early filmmakers discovered that a film sequence could be and should be made up of an incomplete set of shots whose order and selection are governed by "dramatic necessity." Directors were no longer obliged to stage scenes in their entirety. They created the depth in their narrative by adding up the details. In doing so, they discovered many film editing conventions found in motion pictures and television programs today. The director as editor, thus, became the constructor of the audience's "reality" and meaning by controlling the order and manner in which shots are shown (Pudovkin, 1929, pp. 138, 140).

Ernest Lingren (1948) suggests that the reason that film editing works is that it is psychologically correct.

> It reproduces this mental process . . . in which one visual image follows another as our attention is drawn to this point and to that in our surroundings. In so far as the film (as well as television) is photographic and reproduces movement, it can give us a lifelike semblance of what we see. In so far as it employs editing, it can exactly reproduce the "manner" in which we normally see it (p. 54).

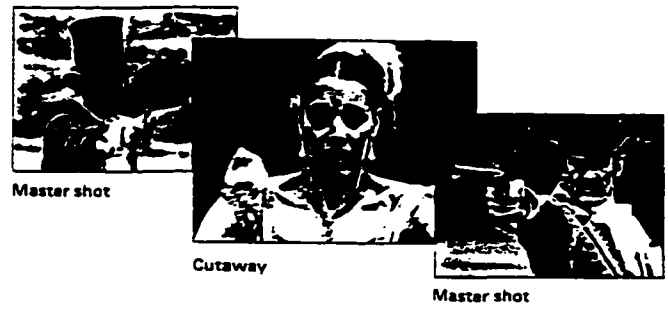
The mind is continually "cutting" from one picture to the next and, therefore, accepts a filmic representation of reality through abrupt changes of view as a proper rendering for "reading" an observed experience. It is not hard to imagine how a video artisan has the potential to manipulate an audience's emotional response to the subject matter he/she presents (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Master Shot/Insert/Cutaway



Using inserts
An insert is a closer shot of part of the action covered by the master shot. In this case it is a reaction shot. It is usually filmed in light of the main shot and therefore *after* it from a different camera angle. It is then intercut into the master shot to provide visual variety and to focus the audience's attention on to a small part of the scene.

Using cutaways
By intercutting a cutaway into the main action, it is possible to introduce an extra dimension to the scene. In the example illustrated here, the shot of an anxious woman located outside of the main action has been inserted into the master shot to increase the tension of the scene.



(Cheshire, 1979, p. 81)

American film directors such as D. W. Griffith are recognized for their discovery and application of editing methods which enable directors and editors to enrich and strengthen the narrative power of the film medium. The Russian director, Sergei Eisenstein (1951) applauded the manner in which Griffith translated the literary devices and conventions of the novelist, Charles Dickens,

into their film equivalents. "Cross-cutting, close shots, flashbacks, and dissolves have their literary parallels and it takes the genius of directors like Griffith to find them" (p. 56).

The Russian directors of the time felt that Griffith was weak in one area; in his ability to present his main idea or "title theme." They felt that they could take the film director's control over the subject matter one step further. By means of creative editing techniques, they planned not only to tell stories, but to have the audience interpret and draw intellectual conclusions from them as well (Eisenstein, 1943). These may be considered acceptable creative techniques for fiction, but do they have a place when presenting factual subject matter? Do they have the potential to distort the audience's interpretation of fact?

Lev Kuleshov (1974), a colleague of Pudovkin (1929), conducted editing experiments in which he discovered that the process of film editing was more than a method for narrating a continuous story. Suitable juxtaposition of shots could give them meanings that they did not originally possess.

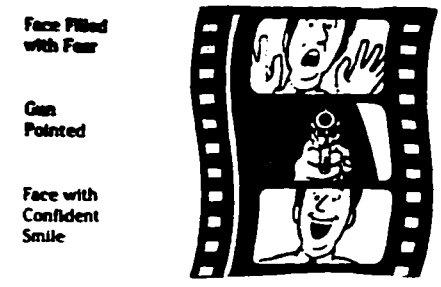
Pudovkin and Kuleshov's audience response experiments gave creedence to their theory of "constructive" editing. Paralleling the "trope" figure of speech in literature, film editing could be designed to function as a "montage trope." Using the term "trope" as a metaphor for video "language," editors could join pieces of film together which consist of images used in a sense other than that which was considered proper to them, much like, for example, the phrase, a *sharp* wit (normally, a *sharp* sword) in literature (Eisenstein, 1951, p. 240).

> Kuleshov maintains that the material in the filmwork consists of pieces of film, and that the composition method is their joining together in a particular, creatively discovered order. He maintains that film art does not begin when the artists act and the various scenes are shot -- this is only the preparation of the material. Film art begins from the moment when the director begins to combine and join together the various pieces of film. By joining them in various combinations in different orders, he obtains differing results" (Pudovkin, 1929, pp. 138 - 139).

Thus, editing the image of a smiling actor to that of a revolver and returning to an image of the actor terrified, would give the impression that the actor was portraying cowardice. Reversing the order would suggest heroic behavior. An entirely different emotional effect could be achieved by simply reversing the image order. By means of editing, the interpretation of an event has the potential to be distorted, if the sequence of editing is staged or is not edited in the same order or time continuum as that of the original event (Pudovkin, 1929, pp. 56 & 57) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Shot Sequence Order

By simply changing the shot order, an editor can arrange these three shots in a way that will give the audience either an impression of courage or cowardice.



(Schrank, 1991, p. 137)

In a negative sense, editing order could be used to falsely discredit an opposing candidate in political advertising, or, for that matter, a false positive impression could be manufactured for an advertisement's sponsor. According to this research, changing the juxtaposition order of the original event has the potential to change the "reading" of its original meaning. Also, when the same "common" shot is juxtaposed separately with each of three different shots, the meaning of the first shot changes in all three cases. The same close-up shot of an actor with a "neutral" expression on his face, when joined in turn to a shot of a bowl of soup standing on a table, to a shot of a coffin in which lay a dead woman, and to a shot of a little girl playing with a toy, might be interpreted by the audience as pensiveness, deep sorrow, and light happiness respectively (Pudovkin, 1929, p. 140). It is not hard to imagine how shot juxtaposition can be used to elicit emotional arousal toward the subject matter of a video scene.

In like manner, shots can be juxtaposed to convey an anology for the emotion that a character is feeling. The image of a prisoner

joined with the image of an expansive meadow might express the prisoner's desire for freedom (Pudovkin, 1929, p. xviii).

With this in mind, Pudovkin became more concerned with presenting the sidelights and overtones of dramas than in the dramas themselves. Unlike Griffith, who used the actor's characterizations and movement to convey the narrative, he built his scenes from the juxtaposition of a series of carefully planned details (Reisz & Millar, 1984, p. 31).

It is not difficult to conceive that the use of editing techniques has the potential to create misleading impressions (Diamond & Bates, 1984; Sabato, 1981). Messaris (1990) proposes that the juxtaposition of two or more images which suggests a "falsehood" creates a "misleading syntax" for the viewer (p. 27). Although Pudovkin (1929) might argue "artistic license," Jamieson (1986) believes that video splicing and editing techniques that juxtapose unrelated footage in political communication falsely imply a given candidate's position on an issue. Leroy and Smith (1973), as well as many politicians, consider such techniques to be unethical.

Visual imagery/dramatizations

Siegfried Kracauer (1960) felt film is related to still photography in its ability to reproduce reality closely. "Film is uniquely equipped to record and reveal physical reality and, hence, gravitates toward it" (p. 243). Esthetic validity comes from "material" rather than from form. He suggested that the true art of filmmaking is reshaping reality in a fictional narrative form to present its content. He called this the "found story."

Kracauer was strongly convinced that the film "artist" had an ethical responsibility to "discover rather than contrive" the story out of "the context of the world around it (p. 245)." Since film stems from reality, it must also return to it and mediate reality for us. It can both confirm and corrupt one's opinion of reality. In this way, film serves a purpose and no longer exists solely for itself. It becomes political in nature.

Andre Bazin (1967), a French film critic, wrote four volumes of essays on film theory. In his essays, he attempted to develop a deductive theory of film based on practice. "Film has significance not for what it is but for what it does" (p. 16). He felt that film technology is only a format for communication between the screen writer and the audience member. The characters and dialogue are merely vehicles (or channels) to promote his or her ideas. He called filmmaking a "plastic art" which "embalms time" and keeps it "uncorrupted," contending that technology and style are a film's source of power, but only secondary to the film's "psychological, ethical, and political effects" (p. 29).

At the core of Bazin's theory is "mise en scene," the deep focus shot or close-up, and the sequence-shot or "montage." He felt that both are a dialectic addition to cinematic "language." By using them, a filmmaker draws his or her audience's attention to certain aspects of the narrative. Thus, he/she influences the importance which that image or series of images has on the message. The meaning is derived from the "will" and the "attention" of the spectator (p. 35).

In the mid-1960's, Jean-Luc Godard (1986) suggested that montage (the juxtaposition of images) and mise en scene (the close-up) are inseparable; one implies the other. In his synthesis, he made two basic implications: (a) "that mise en scene can thus be every bit as useful as montage when a director uses it to distort reality," and (b) "that montage is not necessarily evidence of bad faith on the part of the filmmaker" (p. 39). Godard expanded realism to include discourse between the artist and his audience. Ethical evaluation judges whether the filmmaker is being honest or manipulative in his/her conversation with the audience (p. 23).

In video presentations, the reality of the actor's physical presence is missing, making the observer far more psychologically involved through the use of his or her own imagination. The audience member's intimate identification with the characters is proxemically manipulated through the use of "mise en scene." This "identification" should become key in ethical cinematic and esthetic theory. It gives consideration to the theory that video "proxemics" potentially could play an intentional role in disinforming the viewer as to what elements are really important and which are not.

Stemming from his original cinematic studies, Christian Metz (1974) uses the construct of semiotics to redefine the unit of measure for video science as a "unit of meaning." Unlike spoken or written language, video is not constructed out of single units. Rather, it is a "continuum of meaning" flowing from its units. The video picture experience presents a "quasi-language" that: "(a) consists of short-circuit signs in which the signifier nearly equals

the signified, and (b) depends on a continuous, nondiscrete system in which we can't identify a basic unit and which therefore we can't describe quantitatively" (p. 136).

He focuses on cinematic narrative as the heart of the film or television experience. This is determined by the connotative and denotative choices of the film or video maker. Metz surmises that these "syntagms" regulate the subject matter that is communicated (see Appendix B). He suggests that there is no real "grammar" in film language, only syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures or "axes" (see Appendix C). He uses them to redefine montage and mise en scene. After a filmmaker chooses what to shoot, he/she makes the paradigmatic decision of how to shoot it, mise en scene, and the syntagmatic decision of how to edit it, montage (Eberwein, 1979, pp. 193-197). These decisions make direct comment on the subject matter contained within a scene. In a sense, the filmmaker's or television director's hidden agenda may be detected in these choices.

As mentioned earlier, some feel that television's inclination toward this type of dramatic visual imagery is hazardous to political communication, contributing to unethical advertising outcomes. Others argue that such dramatizations only help focus voter attention on candidate issues and qualifications. Messaris (1990) suggests serious ethical concerns about the use of video technology to achieve dramatizations and imagery that are "staged" to look authentic, but are not true. Even Bazin (1967), Godard (1986), and Kracauer (1960) suggest that this intent would be somewhat dishonest as a dramatic means to present factual

material. The uses of such unreasoned televised political discourse are "frequent enough and have demonstrated sufficiently misleading applications to warrant attention" (Kaid, 1993a, p. 6).

The suggestion that the elements which are combined to create a video message are interdependent seems problematic when considering a research design meant to test the audience effect of individual technical distortion variables. Since Metz (1982) suggests that meaning seems to be drawn from connecting together all the variables within a given video, it must be taken into consideration that they all interrelate with one another to make meaning, and that it will be difficult to isolate reliably any one element for the purpose of scientific testing.

One other aspect to consider is the "connotative power" which video language holds in its neologistic nature. Unlike Vachel Lindsay's (1970) extrinsic theory, Metz (1982) feels that most cinema (and television) is one-way communication. He suggests that video statements are not often intercommunicational, but rather, as Hugo Munsterberg (1970) suggests, intra-active. Each audience member busies himself or herself with drawing connotative meanings and conclusions from each statement. Technically altering the image may technically distort the viewer's impression of the subject matter contained in the imagery.

It is here where the isolation of variables may be less problematic. If it is possible to alter digitally a piece of video (a technique discussed later) to remove its technologically distorted images, it may be possible to test variance in audience response between the original video and the same video with the distortion

removed. Will the viewers report a difference in their attitudinal responses and within the meaning of the messages between the two pieces of video?

It appears that video audiences are manipulated to draw meaning from the conventional or nonconventional ("tropic") use of montage and mise en scene. They are expected to draw directed conclusions from the juxtaposition of images and be sensitive to the importance of subject matter which is shown close up. This expectation conditioning or "literacy" seems to come from their individual previous viewing experience (Messaris, 1994).

Special effects

Applications of a set of "non-routine" photographic techniques for cinematography or electronic techniques for video are referred to as "special effects." Special effects vary in application and peculiarity. For film they can be basically classified as:

(1) In-the-camera effects, in which all the components of the final scene are photographed on the original camera negative or video tape.

(2) Laboratory processes, in which duplication of the original negative or video through one or more generations is necessary before the final effect is produced.

(3) Combinations of the two, in which some of the image components are photographed directly on to the final composite film or video tape, while others are produced through duplication.

Viewed in this fashion, the various techniques can be categorized in the following manner:

I. In-the-Camera Techniques

A. Basic Effects

1. Changes in object speed, position or direction.
2. Image distortions or degradations.
3. Optical transitions.
4. Superimpositions.
5. Day-for-night photography

B. Image Replacement.

1. Split-screen photography.
2. In-the-camera matte shots.
3. Glass-shots.
4. Mirror-shots.

C. Miniatures

II. Laboratory Processes

A. Bi-pack printing.

B. Optical printing.

C. Travelling mattes.

D. Aerial-image printing.

III. Combination Techniques

A. Background projection.

1. Rear projection.
2. Front projection" (Fielding, 1984, p. 18 & 19).

Often the techniques in the different categories are combined to produce a given effect. New technologies such as computer

alteration and digitalization have made special effects far more complex in nature.

Computerized alteration techniques

Politicians have made extensive use of special effects techniques in political advertising over the years. Beginning in the 1952 Eisenhower presidential campaign with cel animation, they have come to utilize just about every technique listed above. Simple effects such as cut-out animation and slow motion overcranking (Cheshire, 1979) have given way to the extensive use of sophisticated and "slick" computerized video sequences (Kaid & Johnston, 1991).

Along with the invention of modern computer technologies come clearer ethical concerns. Computer digitilization is already used extensively within commercial advertising (ABC Evening News, 1994; Parker, 1988) in which any component of "real" or "live" video footage can be undetectably altered (Sheridan, 1990).

This on-screen computer alteration can be used to change the candidate's physical features or voice quality. It can even alter the quality of the location or background setting. And, just recently, a complex computer program has been developed by which an object or person can be "morphed" into an entirely different object or person before the viewer's eyes (Marvin, 1991).

The revolutionary "Scitex" technology called the "Harry" can alter "moving" pictures at the rate of thirty frames of video per second. "Harry is a computer-graphics machine that breaks down the video image into digital components and then reassembles them so well that "even an expert would be unable to detect

Harry's handiwork" (Sheridan, 1990, p. 4). It becomes an "electronic paintbrush" that can alter any physical characteristic of any image (as in the controversial case of Time Magazine altering O. J. Simpson's "mug" shot on the cover of its June 27, 1994 issue (ABC Evening News, 1994)). It can take a portion of video and put new portions from other videos into it (the technique used to place the image of Tom Hanks within the historic film footage of President John F. Kennedy in the movie, Forest Gump (Zemeckis, 1994)).

"Harry's" potential for producing undectablely false pictures is worrisome. "How do I know that this isn't being done on a regular basis" (Sheridan, 1990, p. 4)? The answer is unknown since no written guidelines exist on digital manipulation of images. In Sheridan's (1990) article, David Schmerler, the general manager of editorial and production services at NBC News, suggests "with the arrival of this technology, video, like a written text, must be verified and fact-checked" (p. 4). So far organizations that have access to the "Harry" will have to be trusted to practice self-restraint with regard to producing "video lies." But, will they, considering the recent Time Magazine case mentioned earlier?

The first step may be to consider whether or not it matters at all in terms of audience response. If so, the ability to create moving (or for that matter, still) pictures that look so authentic that the eye cannot detect whether or not they have been altered may have to be considered in the realm of subliminal techniques and come to be governed accordingly (Schrank, 1991, p. 298).

The use of special effect and computerized alteration techniques in political advertising is extensive (Angell, 1988). Kaid and Johnson (1991) report that "385 (41%) of the 930 televised ads used in presidential campaigns from 1952 through 1988 contained" such techniques (Kaid, 1993, p. 5). Winsbrow (1987) discredits their use, maintaining that it does not contribute to the political reasoning process of the public and does "not seem to amplify or to expand upon a point already made, but rather to evade the requirement of rational argumentation altogether" (pp. 915-916).

Subliminal techniques

Maybe the technology that raises the clearest ethical questions is subliminal advertising. Subliminal persuasion consists of sending messages just below the threshold of perception; "below the level of consciousness" (Key, 1972).

It can be done visually by flashing one or two frames across the screen during a movie or TV program for about 1/30 of a second. It also can be done on the audio channel with messages recorded too "high" or "low" for the human ear consciously to pick up (Dominick, 1996, p. 376; Vivian, 1991, pp. 251-252). "Backmasking" is a recently discovered controversial form of subliminal audio persuasion.

As mentioned earlier, some types of undetectable digital manipulation should be considered as subliminal techniques, since they are undetectable to even the most trained eye.

The FCC has banned the use of most subliminal advertising techniques, especially if they have been suspected to exhibit

audience behavioral effect (Schrank, 1991, p. 298). As of yet, its cognitive effect has remained only speculative and has not been proven.

Effects of Video Techniques on Voters

There is increasing evidence that political TV advertising has important attitudinal and behavioral effects on the electorate (Aden, 1989; Kaid, 1981). Although many scholarly studies address the impact that technology has on commercial television advertising (Condry, 1989), no research addresses its influence in political advertising. Suggestions have been made that indicate that modern technologies have influenced the presentational style with which candidates construct their appeals (Devlin, 1993; Jamieson, 1986). These "image versus issue" styles have been shown to be associated with certain production techniques (Shyles, 1984), but not with advertising results.

Exemplified by Patterson and McClure (1976), the only way actually to evidence a causal relationship between production techniques and advertising effectiveness is to verify a relationship between the use of these technologies and voter response.

Political research thus far has had to rely on the insufficiency of individual video studies which show that camera angle, editing, and other production techniques have an influence on audience judgments (Drew & Cadwell, 1985; Mandell & Shaw, 1973; McCain, Chilberg, & Wakshlag, 1977). It is the aim of the research reviewed in this proposal to test the effect that technically distorted video has on the viewpoint of the audience member

(Gerbner, 1996). The next step is to determine how video carries a message to the viewer.

Video "Language"

Throughout their histories, film and television have been analyzed as having (although similar to other art forms) a "language" and "grammar" unique unto themselves. In an attempt to establish their uniquenesses, artists and critical analysts have discovered some of their special psychological "encoding" and "decoding" properties and have developed theories pertinent to this study. Especially noted, are those related to their ability to distort "photographed" images and recorded sound through the use of "special effects." Recently, this capability has been vastly expanded with the development of the "new technologies" already mentioned (Fielding, 1984; Marvin, 1991).

The video artist's choice and combination of these plausible distortions or "tropes" also carry a unique language and grammar which metaphorically add his/her "point of view" comment to the presented "unit of meaning" (Eco, 1976; Metz, 1982; Munsterberg, 1970) (see Appendices D, E, & F). Several critical analysts have attempted to categorize and generalize the cognitive effect that certain special effect transitions and image distortions have on the viewer (Spinello & Arotow, 1993; Spottiswoode, 1950; Turner, 1988; Thompson, 1993; Ulmer, 1989) (see Appendices G & H).

Limited scientific research has compared audience response to differing "channel conditions" in controlled lab studies; the channel being the vehicle which carries the video image or audio (Frank, 1974; Garramone, 1983). Just how and to what extent each

of these affects the audience's perception of the image and issue within the "unit of meaning" has yet to be explored.

Bazin (1967) and Godard (1986) suggest that the artist (or political image-maker (Spero, 1980)) is to be judged ethically for these choices. Is he/she being psychologically and politically honest or merely manipulative in his/her "conversation" with the audience? Especially in political communication, Johannesen (1990) expresses ethical concern for the "means" and "motive" of a media communicator toward an audience response or "end."

Keeping in mind Johnston's (1990) ethical concerns for image/issue and Johannesen's (1990) categories of ethical communication behavior mentioned earlier, Kaid (1991a) states that the effects of such technical distortion choices, each a variable in itself, are virtually unknown. Not much research has been done on how the use of such "tropes" influence or confuse the rational decision-making process of the informed electorate. If any of these techniques have the capability dishonestly to influence or confuse the viewer's attitude toward the candidate and/or voting behavior, it becomes an ethical informed electorate issue.

Case Study

The political ad mentioned at the beginning of this study is the 60-second negative presidential campaign ad that Republican candidate, Richard M. Nixon, televised against his Democratic opponent, Hubert H. Humphrey, in 1968. It was unanimously chosen by coders in Kaid and Noggle's (1992) compilation study to be highly suspect in its use of technologically distorted audio and video channels.

The following is a critical overview of the spot. The use of technical distortion contained within it is analyzed as having a language and grammar of its own (Arijon, 1976; McAlister, 1993; Metz, 1974; Spinello & Arotow, 1993; Thompson, 1993; Turner, 1988). Suggested by Jamieson (1992), this analysis has not been verified by scientific study and is not claimed to be exhaustive. It is solely meant as an example to provoke thought and to lead to a summary of possible conclusions that link distortion techniques with video research.

As semiotic deductions are implied, keep in mind Johnston's (1990) ethical concerns of image and issue: "(1) political advertising's influence on voter's perceptions of the candidates, (2) interest in the campaign, (3) knowledge about campaign issues, and (4) final vote decision" (p. 333). Also applicable are Johannesen's (1990) categories of ethical communication behavior: "the conscious choice of (1) right or wrong, (2) subject to potential behavioral effects, and (3) a means to an end. . . . Standards such as honesty, promise-keeping, truthfulness, fairness, and humaneness" intended and maintained should be considered throughout the ad (p. 1).

Historically, the ad was met with considerable opposition. The public considered it a "below-the-belt" smear tactic "unworthy of a man running for the nation's highest office" (New York Times, 1968, p. 35). Even those responsible for airing the ad considered it in bad taste and distorted (Jamieson, 1992b, p. 247).

In the ad, several close-up black and white still photos of a smiling Humphrey are intercut with stills of the 1968 Democratic

Convention and later with the American social ills and political unrest of the time. Violent demonstrations are shown, soldiers are seen dying in Vietnam, and parents and children are seen suffering the effects of poverty. These are underscored with a band playing an upbeat rendition of "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight."

The music dissolves to dissonance as Humphrey's picture is replaced by the negative images. His image is distorted many times throughout the ad in a variety of ways. It vacillates back and forth, girates, defocusses (becoming out-of-focus), and splits into three "mirrored" images.

The ad appears to have been designed with the intent to be novel and most likely to catch and hold the viewer's attention and to arouse emotions through "contrasting character conflict" (Armer, 1993; Berlyne, 1970; Burgoon, Kelley, Newton, & Keeley-Dryson, 1989; Capella & Greene, 1982). Repeating Humphrey's image five times in close-up form or as a "tight shot" (according to "film convention") acknowledges him as the main "actor" in the "scenario" (Frank, 1974; Stephenson, 1967).

At the onset, his picture is juxtaposed with scenes from the Democratic Convention, connecting Humphrey to the Democratic Party. Approximately 75% of the ad (45 seconds) connects him with images of American discontent and tragedy. It may be argued that the ad only connects the Democratic Party to these maladies, using Humphrey as its figure-head, but using his picture so often in the spot may infer something else. As the early Russian theorists (Eisenstein, 1951; Kuleshov, 1974; Pudovkin, 1929) and American filmmaker, D. W. Griffith (Reisz & Millar, 1984) suggest,

juxtaposing two images together creates what Metz (1974) and Eco (1976) call a "unit of meaning" from which the audience draws a conclusion (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Unit of Meaning Model

IMAGE + IMAGE ---> INFERRED CONCLUSION

> The director by means of editing techniques not only tells stories, but has the capability to control the interpretations and the intellectual conclusions drawn from them as well. He/she is in a far stronger position persuasively to guide the spectator's reaction because he/she is able to choose what particular detail the spectator is to see at any particular moment.
>
> (Reisz & Millar, 1984, p. 39)

Nixon's adman, Harry Treleaven, admits the following (although detailed in scientific terms) to be the basis for his strategy. The "signifier," a closeup of Humphrey, juxtaposed with a "signified" catastrophe, is intended to lead the audience to believe the "sign," that he is in some way connected to and/or responsible for and/or equated with that catastrophe (McGinniss, 1969, p. 252).

In like manner, Humphrey's image may be viewed as the "signified," and each technical distortion as a "signifier" meant to lead the viewer to construct a "sign" which connects the two in some way (Petric, 1987). If so, then each distortion may carry with it a connotative symbolic meaning all its own (Ulmer, 1989). It has already been suggested by Turner (1988) that certain

special effects carry with them information which the audience has been conditioned to read in a particular conventional manner (see Appendix I).

Thus, editing style, special effects, and/or computer alteration can be considered cues given to the audience that signal some form of causal effect meaning to be drawn from connecting the technique to the image being distorted (Monaco, 1977, p. 428) (see Figure 4). The implications of this will be discussed later.

Figure 4. The "Sign" Model



According to semiotic theory, all "texts" convey meaning through *signs*. These are *signifiers* that refer to objects, concepts, and/or events called *signifieds*. These signifiers interact with one another in meaningful and sophisticated relationships, or *sign systems*, which make up the "language" or "code" of the text. The process of *signification* (or giving meaning to the sign) involves four elements: (1) the objects or conditions which exist in the world, (2) the signs that are available to represent these objects or conditions, (3) a set of choices among signs, or a "repertoire" of responses held or given to signs, and (4) a set of rules of correspondence that are used to encode and decode the signs which are made or interpreted.

(Fiske, 1985, p. 178)

Humphrey's image is presented as an omnipotent "icon" (Wollen, 1972) throughout the ad; a god-like presence overseeing all that is negative within the American society (see Appendix J). His smiling face watches over the tragedy of war. Considering what Kuleshov (1974) discovered in his shot order study, the audience expects to see an image of "antipathy" connected to one of atrocity. Instead, Humphrey's positive facial expression counterpoints or contradicts the negative issue images, giving the audience an assumed mixed message (Adler & Rodman, 1994, p. 169). This "trope" is most likely meant to provoke a negative "emotional catharsis" in response to Humphrey's image (Garramone, 1983; Jamieson, 1992b; Rudd, 1986). Viewers are to make the causal judgment that he is responsible for these events, is oblivious to them, and/or just doesn't care about them (Bem, 1972; Ross & Fletcher, 1985; Rudd, 1986).

As negative image after negative image is juxtaposed with Hubert Humphrey's omnipotent presence, "dramatic play theory" (Stephenson, 1967) and "Marxist theory" (McQuail, 1989) come to mind. American viewers, as members of American society, might hypothetically "identify" themselves as the "protagonist underdogs" or "universal human beings" respectively. Their "will is in conflict" with Humphrey, the would-be "antagonist" or tyrannical dictator (Armer, 1993, pp. 6, 83; McQuail, 1989, pp. 63, 197). In this scenario, a self-imposed "empathetic" audience response should build to "emotional catharsis" as the "problem" is compounded in a quasi-"three-act" design (Bronfeld, 1989) (see Appendix K).

"Conflict is the fuel that drives this dramatic train foward" and keeps the audience interested (Root, 1979). Humphrey is seen as the agent of this conflict, keeping American culture from reaching its "goal" of "well-being" (p. 32).

The ad "climaxes" with the problem's resolution: "This time vote like your whole world depended on it . . . Nixon." The American voter is challenged to be a "participant" in the drama to rid the world of evil through his/her "behavior," the "action" of voting for Nixon (seen as text only).

Armer (1993) often states that the most effective drama is devised to serve the "audience as participant." It gives the appearance that the audience member is important enough and intelligent enough to become involved in drawing directed conclusions from the design of the subject matter. Being all-inclusive or preachy may be regarded as an insult to the viewer. It is not so in this case.

It is interesting to note that Nixon's image is never seen in the ad, only his name. It focuses almost entirely on his opponent, connecting Humphrey's image with negative issues. Nixon in no way wants his image connected with these problem issues (Washington Post, 1968, p. A1). His adman realizes that the novelty of using the only visual text (written across the screen) in the ad to suggest him as the solution to these problems would be highly memorable (Garramone, 1983; Jamieson, 1992b, p. 245).

Peter Thompson (1993) suggests that there is a fundamental language within all moving images. Imaginative editing, visual illusions, and special effects constantly lead the viewer to redefine

the meaning of the presented image. The "very choice of framing" and effects "can define relationships, tell a story, convey emotion, create or release tension" (p. 747). There is a "psychological impact" caused by the technology of film and video when used deliberately to "disturb and challenge the physiological equilibrium of the viewer." This is evident in most political ads which use these devices (pp. 748, 752). The suggestion that they relevantly influence the rhetorical meaning of the subject matter and the emotional state of viewers is essential and significantly relevant to the central paradigm of this study.

The pictures in the Nixon ad are technically distorted in their "field of view." The viewing area which the audience sees is less than contained within the original still pictures. This distortion pervades the "internal and external camera movements" (such as, zooming, panning, and girating), and "special effects" (such as, dissolves, reverse images, defocussing, and split images) throughout the ad. Quick zooms and pans, "whip pans," and camera giration are considered "unnatural" with regards to conventional "filmic reality." They tend to break the "diegesis" (the audience's willingness to suspend disbelief) and draw attention to the film or video technique and the content of the image (much like the use of exclamation points and question marks in linguistics) (Doane, 1980; Silverman, 1983; Spellerberg, 1977).

The deliberate use of such techniques could be similar to "semantic inflection." Much as paralanguage and "disfluencies" within nonverbal communication (Adler & Rodman, 1994, pp. 175-177), the audience may be cued for a probable need for query,

attention, judgment, and intrapersonal response to the pictured subject matter.

Research shows that listeners pay more attention to these nonverbal cues than to the words which are actually spoken when asked to determine a speaker's attitudes (Burns & Beier, 1973; Mehrabian, 1981). Could this also be true of techniques which draw attention to themselves in videos? When technological factors interfere with the message or contradict it, can viewers judge intention more from the video "tropes" than from the pictures themselves (Larson, 1995, pp. 334-362; Schwartz, 1973)?

Continuing on in this vein, "Aesthetic framing errors," such as lack of "nose room" in Humphrey's close-ups and askew backgrounds in the Party's convention shots and social calamity shots are created by angling the camera in the process of filming. These video techniques may lead to the interpretation (according to conventional aesthetics) that he is "off-balance" and that there is something sinister lurking about (Giannetti, 1987, p. 44).

Expanding on Jamieson's (1992b) analysis of this ad (pp. 245-251), and according to Thompson (1993), the following is a hypothetical analysis of how the technical devices within the ad might influence the meaning of its message.

The use of slow dissolves "superimpose" Humphrey's image over the scenes for a split second. In this way he may be seen as omnisciently pervading them. Flip-flopping his picture in reverse shots may suggest either two-faced deception or vacillation on the critical issues presented in the ad. Defocussing Humphrey's image possibly insinuates his personal lack of focus. Image giration is

used as the transition between Humphrey and Vietnam War casualties. This may be a metaphor for his instability or lack of control or dangerous nature. Finally, Humphrey is shown with an outstretched hand and a rather smug expression on his face. This picture filmically splits into three, suggesting maybe schizophrenia or political disjunction.

The audio channel condition is also included in film and television semiotics (Eco, 1976; Garramone, 1983; Metz, 1974; Spottiswoode, 1950). Bruce Smeaton (1993) attributes great evocative and emotive power to music in television and film. The ad combines rousing "let's party" music with Hubert Humphrey's image and discordant noise to his distorted images and the images of social calamity. This may insinuate that he is caught up in the excitement and fun of the presidentual race, not paying attention to the social chaos and "cry" of the American people, perhaps because of his distorted view of life.

As mentioned, this analysis is only speculative according to Jamieson (1992b). In order to be more conclusive about ethically suspect ads such as this one, a method is needed to test these suppositions. Many recent media theorists suggest that each technical distortion carries along with it a "language" and "grammar" that affects the reading of the image by the audience (Metz, 1982; Petric, 1987; Whittock, 1990; Wollen, 1972). The accuracy of their hypothesis has yet to be tested.

With respect to judging ethical intent and truthfulness, using political advertisements such as the one mentioned above might prove productive in gathering such audience effect data. Was the

political intent a matter of "mud-slinging" or merely to inform the electorate of the candidate's political irresponsibility? Viewer response data would at least indicate what his/her perception of the intent is.

This political ad, as well as many others (Kaid & Noggle, 1992), have drawn a great amount of scrutiny and criticism for use of editing techniques, special effects, and visual illusions. It appears that often disagreements arise about their use because of lack of scientific evidence one way or the other. Thus far, the review of the ethical concerns of the use of technical distortion within negative and positive political TV ads has been done to evidence the need for further study. Messaris (1994) often mentions the fact that many of his audience effect findings are only speculative due to the limited number of, or, most often, absence of systematic research in the area. He adds, "In general, research on viewer's awareness of visual conventions and manipulation is still something of a rarity in academic scholarship, despite the fact that 'visual literacy' has become an area of considerable concern. A similar scarcity of systematic empirical evidence is characteristic of most other" visual manipulation topics (p. 39).

Many recent theorists suggest that each technical distortion carries with it a message that affects and actually modifies the "reading" of the image (Arijon, 1979; Frank, 1974; Metz, 1982, Petric, 1987; Spottiswoode, 1950; Whittock, 1990; Wollen; 1972). As mentioned, the accuracy of this hypothesis has yet to be tested. Audience effect experiments designed to isolate the distortions

described by Kaid (1991a) as separate variables may prove to support or refute the critical concern for potential ethical abuse.

The data gathered from such experiments should support or refute the suspect use of specific technological distortions within political advertising. The research has the potential to be expanded to address and evaluate the cognitive effects of these variables within other genres as well, such as technically distorted images of gender, race, sex, and violence within theatrically released films, televised news, and episodic television programming.

This study reviews ethics in terms of political communication. It lays a valid claim to the questionable ethical nature of political advertising. It specifically questions the use of technology within the genre.

Research suggests the notion that video channels, when distorted by technology, in some way influence and distort the message being carried. In turn, these altered representations have the capacity to deceive or mislead the electorate by misrepresenting the information being carried by the mediated channel.

This study proposes to test the short-term influence that technical distortion has on the viewer of political ads. It should be noted that this study does not propose to make any ethical judgment about the use of such manipulation. The initial design is to test, in general, viewer response variance between the presence and absence of intentional distortion.

New technologies such as digitalization used within political ads may be questionable, yet they act as a double-edged sword.

These very technologies make it possible to isolate the various technically distorted features within a given ad and remove them from its design. In turn, they make it possible to test variance in audience response to the same ad with the distortions present and with them virtually absent. If critical concerns are accurate, there should be significant variance between the interpretations of respondents who watch ads containing technically distorted images and/or sounds and those who watch the same ads in which the distortions have been removed.

Nonverbal elements, such as dress, facial expressions, and body movements; technological elements, such as photographic or electronic distortions and editing; and other elements of video "language," such as the "tightness" or "looseness" of a camera shot and the camera angle may all be variables that contribute to the overall image and issue impressions received by an audience (Arijon, 1976; Frank, 1974; Kaid 1991; Spottiwoode, 1950, pp. 139-140) (see Appendix L). Garramone's (1983) political research design and Frank's (1974) video "grammar" study suggest a connection between them. They should be examined as an outgrowth of past studies, especially those cited in this paper. Which variables influence audiences in just what direction has yet to be investigated and established.

Specific Variables to be Tested

The three most recurrent ethically suspect categories in the use of technical distortion in political TV ads are coded as: (a) computerized alterations (37%), followed by (b) editing techniques (35%), and (c) specialized audio techniques (30%) (Kaid, 1993a, p.

15). Oddly enough, this coincides with three similar categories chosen independently for the same reason by Messaris (1994) from Whittock's (1990) list of visual manipulation techniques. Though the terminology is different, since they solely relate to the visual image, they basically have very similar characteristics: (a) "camera positioning to manipulate viewers' involvement with the on-screen characters," (b) "the use of editing (and technology) to manipulate contextual meaning," and (c) "the use of temporal or spacial juxtaposition to create mental associations" (Messaris, 1994, pp. 154, 155).

Three major categories for these variables seem to emerge. The audience through experience comes to expect certain conventional (or "grammatical") cues in each category. (a) editing techniques lead to the degree of dramatic intensity that a piece of video will have; the more intensity, the more attentiveness occurs. Also, individual image order and/or juxtaposition lead to specific implied meaning. (b) Visual illusions and (c) special effects add information or comment to the subject matter and increase interest. Nonconventional "tropes" within these three techniques conventionally cue an increase in attention and interest. Thus, these technical distortion devices, when removed, should prove to decrease audience attentiveness, interest, and recall, when the expected devices do not satisfy the design of the video.

Video "Literacy"

As mentioned, the primary concept being investigated in this research is that of determining whether or not the various technological distortions in Kaid's (1991a) categories have an effect

on the way voters perceive and interpret the messages in political ads. Before designing an instrument to assess this as a causal relationship, Messaris (1994) suggests that in a study such as this there is a confounding variable to be addressed. It pertains to what he terms the visual "literacy" level of each respondent. To be more exact, in this case it might be called "video literacy." He, among others (Custen, 1980; Diamond & Bates, 1984; Elsaesser, 1990; Fiske, 1987; Gardner, 1985; Gross, 1985; Ray, 1985; Wawrzaszek, 1983), defines visual "literacy" as "the degree of explicit awareness about the processes by which meaning is created through the visual media" (p. 135).

Visually "literate" or "sophisticated" respondents (i.e., those with greater experience in the workings of visual media coupled with a heightened "conscious awareness" of those workings) should be more "aware" of how meaning is created visually and, therefore, less likely to be "taken in" by abuses of the process than are ordinary or "naive" respondents (Messaris, 1994, pp. 2, 3). They evidence familiarity with the ways with which visuals can be used to persuade, (mis)inform, or elicit an emotional response (Whittock, 1990) and are able to make "the judgment that a particular image, feature of an image, or juxtaposition of images is a deliberate expression of an intended meaning" (Messaris, 1994, p. 154).

Video "literacy" involves several related components, including some understanding of production techniques, some knowledge of relevant precedents, and some familiarity with critical commentary (MacKinnon, 1990). "Ordinary" or "naive" viewers are not often aware of the visual devices responsible for

their interpretations (Kuleshov, 1974; Messaris, 1981). "Trained" or "sophisticated" viewers have an awareness of artifice at the formal level which also leads to awareness of ideology (Elsaesser, 1990). A comparison study performed by Massaris (1981) concludes that "trained" viewers draw inferences about broader social implications of images and are less vulnerable to their influence than "ordinary" viewers who seem far less aware of intentionality (p. 154).

Messaris (1994), as well as Messaris and Nielsen (1989), suggests that each viewer maintains one of three possible levels of video "literacy" competency based on his/her fore-knowledge of the inner-workings of television and film production: (a) the "ordinary" viewer is fairly naive about such things, (b) the "educated" viewer is academically aware of them, and (c) the "trained" viewer is professionally trained in the industry. The latter is assumed to be the best equipped to discern artifice and intentionality and less likely to be deceived by visual and audial manipulation. He adds: "the idea that a connection may exist between cinematic or pictorial experience and extracinematic or extrapictorial abstractive/analogical skills remains a very tentative hypothesis" due to the lack of empirical evidence (p. 134).

Technological Distortion Hypotheses

In summary, modern political advertising has drawn a great amount of critical fire based mostly on intuitive speculation. Associated with the lack of empirical evidence should be a caution in drawing valid conclusions based solely on the "hunches" of "experts." Further, there are a considerable number of conflicting

views related to many of the existing criticisms, which also cast some degree of doubt on their complete validity. Thus far, the review of communication ethics, technical distortion, and video "literacy" have been done to warrant further investigation.

Toward this end, the data obtained in this investigation is meant to extend the research by testing three hypotheses:

H1: Viewer evaluations and vote likelihood for the sponsoring candidates will be higher in the ads containing technological distortions. In turn, the opponent will receive lower evaluations and vote likelihood.

H2: Evaluations of the ads themselves will be more positive for positive ads containing technological distortions and more negative for negative ads containing technological distortions.

H3: The more video "literate" the respondents are, the more "immune" they will be to the positive or negative influence that the distorted ads are intended to have. In other words, a higher "literacy" score will correspond to a lower sponsoring candidate evaluation for the positive ads and a higher opponent evaluation for the negative ads.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This experiment is designed to test whether or not the use of technological distortion within televised political advertising affects the viewers' attitudes about and interpretations of the candidates featured within the ads. The basic design involves exposing subjects to versions of political spots with and without the technological distortions discussed earlier.

To do this, ten political spots were digitally altered to remove the various technical distortions they originally contained. The original version of one ad (with technological distortion) was randomly paired with an altered version of another ad (without technological distortion) in the experimental treatment.

Test Instrument

The choice of ads to be used in this experiment was accomplished by committee. A panel of experts viewed a compilation of suspect ads drawn from the University of Oklahoma's Political Commercial Archive by members of the Kaid's (1992, 1993a) National Science Foundation task force team. The panel helped establish criteria for evaluating and categorizing the ads that contained technological distortion. It consisted of Dr. Franklyn Haiman of Northwestern University, Dr. Richard Johannesen of Northern Illinois University, and Dr. Lee Wilkins of University of Missouri at Columbia.

Using these criteria, approximately 100 ads were chosen from a sample of 312 spots coded as ethically suspect. Another panel was devised to select the appropriate ones for testing in this experiment. That panel consisted of Dr. Lynda Lee Kaid and three

graduate students from the University of Oklahoma's Department of Communication who were familiar with the contents of the University's Political Commercial Archive. The first consideration was to distinguish which ads contained the three most prevalent distortions found in Kaid's (1993a) content analysis. It should be noted that none of the three most frequent categories mentioned above are exhaustive or mutually-exclusive.

The next evaluation was based upon how obvious the image/sound distortion was. At first, it was thought that an obvious/subtle variant would be a consideration in this experiment, but upon viewing the compilation, no intended subtle manipulations were detected as being present or easily enumerable -- as corroborated in Messaris' (1981) experiment on "obtrusive" devices.

The final consideration for the ads that survived the panel's scrutiny was how easily the existing distortions could be digitally removed to produce "distortion-free" prototypes. The ads could then be utilized as ads devoid of their intented manipulative distortions for the purpose of testing the variance of reponses between their "presence" and "absence."

It was surprising to find so many positive candidate-focused ads among the more recent ads containing questionable material. It appears that with the increased availability and affordabiliy of new technology, more candidates have been using technical distortion as a means to promote themselves as well as to criticize their opponents. Thus, three questionable positive ads have been included in this experiment.

It should again be noted that this study does not propose to make any ethical judgment about the use of such manipulation. The experiment simply tests audience response to the intended "presence" or "absence" of the techniques. "It is in the presence of this kind of attempted deception -- which is not always ill-intentioned, of course -- that a viewer's ability to decipher intentionality is most likely to become a conscious" task (Messaris, 1994, p. 141).

An example of such an ad is the 1990 Secretary of State commercial in which John Campbell accuses his opponent, Jim Miles, of "telling lies." The screen shows a still picture of Jim Miles whose nose appears to grow (through means of computer alteration) accompanied by a "stretching" sound effect. The voice-over text states what appears to be factual statements about Mile's political record, but the visual picture distortion implies that he has been lying to his constituents. The visual and audio metaphors are reminiscent of the Pinocchio fairy tale. In fact, the ad's title, Pinocchio, discloses its intent to link Jim Mile's image and performance with that of Pinnocchio's outward manifestation of lying.

Another example is Henry McMaster's 1986 ad against Senator Fritz Hollings titled, Globe Trotting Fritz. A picture of Hollings appears on the screen. Visual distortion through the use of computer graphics adds several images to the picture. A jet plane, maps of foreign countries, and several ethnic hats appear throughout the ad. These visual analogies, as well as the inflection in the voiced-over text, accuse the Senator of a "Lifestyles of the

Rich and Famous" existence using "tax payers' dollars" to support his extravagant "Globe-Trotting" lifestyle.

The sample ads chosen for this study consist of the seven negative and three positive ads listed below:

NEGATIVE ADS

John Campbell
1990 Secretary of State
"Pinocchio"

Henry McMaster
1986 South Carolina State Senate
"Globe Trotting Fritz"

Patty Murray
1992 Washington State Senate
"Jobs"

Barbara Neilson
1990 South Carolina State Superintendant of Education
"Sorry Charlie!"

Richard M. Nixon
1968 United States President
"Humphrey Stills"

Ted Strickland

1986 Colorado State Governor

"Hats"

John Sununu

1982 New Hamshire State Governor

"Pinocchio"

POSITIVE ADS

Bob Abrams

1990 New York State Attorney General

"The Courage to Lead"

Bart Barker

1989 Salt Lake County Commissioner

"Bangerter"

Dick Harpootlian

1990 Solicitor

"Crime"

Video Stimuli

As mentioned, these spots were altered to remove the various technical distortions they originally contained. The original version of one of the above ads was randomly paired with an altered version of another ad. The ten pairs of ads then were

copied onto each of ten numbered tapes (Cell #1 through Cell #10). They were placed after the video "literacy" pretest clips (which are discussed later) located at the beginning of each tape: (#1) Henry McMaster (altered) and Bart Barker (original), (#2) Henry McMaster (original) and Dick Harpootlian (altered), (#3) Bob Abrams (altered) and Ted Strickland (original), (#4) Bob Abrams (original) and Bart Barker (altered), (#5) Dick Harpootlian (original) and John Sununu (altered), (#6) Ted Strickland (altered) and John Sununu (original), (#7) Richard Nixon (altered) and John Campbell (original), (#8) Richard Nixon (original) and Patty Murray (altered), (#9) Patty Murray (original) and Barbara Nielson (altered), and (#10) John Campbell (altered) and Barbara Nielson (original) (see Appendix Q).

Demographics of Respondents

Respondents were recruited from the University of Oklahoma's graduate and undergraduate student research pools, as well as from the local general populus and from various media production houses in the Oklahoma region. Each of 250 respondents was randomly assigned to one of the cells mentioned above (25 per cell).

Each participant viewed an unaltered (ad with technological distortions) as well as an altered (ad without technological distortions) version of two different ads. The ad order varied for each cell. No subject saw both the altered and original versions of the same ad. The overall interpretations of the altered ads and the original ads as viewed by different respondents were statistically

analyzed for response variance with regards to the candidate sponsoring the ad, his/her opponent, and to the ad itself.

Test Administration

The experiment was conducted in June of 1994 in the Communication Department video laboratory at the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. The testing ran for a three-week period, starting on Monday, June 6th, and ending on Friday, June 24th. The overall procedure for each testing session lasted approximately 45 minutes for each respondent.

Research Design

The subjects were given a questionnaire, and each was assigned a participant number to insure anonymity. They were randomally stationed at one of ten individual video playback booths where they received instructions on how to use the equipment and were given general guidelines as to how to participate in the study (see Appendix R). Terminology specific to this study was defined to avoid confusion. The terms, "sponsor" and "opponent" were clarified for the analysis of the political ads. When asked about "video techniques," they were instructed to describe how certain visual procedures were accomplished rather than describing the dramatic content happening within a scene.

Each respondent began the experiment by filling out the demographics portion of the questionnaire which included traditional information, as well as information about his/her academic field of study, political affiliation, voting behavior, formal media training, and TV viewing habits (see Appendix S).

Next, the participants took the video "literacy" pretest discussed later and designed for this experiment. They were then asked to view two political ads, one at a time. Each of the ten stations contained a different combination of an original ad and an ad that was altered to remove its original distortion. Immediately following each ad, the subject was asked to respond to questions concerning his/her recall, attention, interest level, and recognition of artifice, intent, and ideology. The influence potency of the ad toward the sponsoring candidate, the opposing candidate, and the ad itself were tested in a series of Likert-type and semantic differential scales.

The participants were asked to respond to a number of items concerning their reactions to the sponsoring and opposing candidates presented in each ad. These items were adapted from several previous political communication experiments (Kaid & Boydston, 1987; Kaid, Downs, & Ragan, 1990; Kaid & Sanders, 1978; Kaid & Singleton, 1977; Sanders & Pace, 1977). They were designed to assess the respondent's perceptions toward political candidates and/or their televised ads.

Test Instruments

The 250 respondents viewed a total of 2 ads each, making the total number of viewings 500 (2 ads x 10 cells x 25 respondents per cell). This consisted of 350 viewings of the negative ads (175 for ads with distortion and 175 for ads without distortion) and 150 viewings of the positive ads (75 for ads with distortion and 75 for ads without distortion). Each subject separately rated the sponsor of each ad, his/her opponent, and the ad in general on a 12-

stimulus item semantic differential scale. The mean scores in each of these categories for the ads containing technological distortion were compared to the mean scores for the responses to their altered counter parts, the ads without technological distortion (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Semantic Differential Scale to Measure Candidate Image

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Unqualified :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Qualified

Unsophisticated :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Sophisticated

Dishonest :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Honest

Believable :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Unbelievable

Unsuccessful :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Successful

Attractive :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Unattractive

Unfriendly :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Friendly

Insincere :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Sincere

Calm :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Excitable

Aggressive :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Unaggressive

Strong :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Weak

Inactive :___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Active

(Kaid, 1995, p. 134)

The scale used was adapted from one which has been developed over the past 30 years and used to measure a candidate's mediated image and the respondent's vote likelihood. "Semantic differential scales, as a means to summarize measures of

evaluation and to suggest factorial dimensions, have become an accepted way of measuring candidate image," as well as predicting "voting behavior choices" (Kaid, 1995, pp. 132; 133).

The respondents were asked to make an evaluation of the candidate and his/her opponent on 12 7-point semantic bipolar adjectives. Their responses indicated the position that most closely corresponded to their perceptions of the sponsoring and/or the opposing candidate(s). Terms such as dishonest-honest, strong-weak, insincere-sincere, and so on were used, as shown in Appendix S. These scales have been modified from those advocated by Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum (1957) in their classic research on semantic meaning.

Some terms were reversed in polarity to test the reliability and validity of the answers -- that is, that the respondents were paying close attention to the questions. The *alpha* reliability coefficient (Chronbach, 1951; Krippendorf, 1980) was .86 for the sponsor scales and .925 for the opponent scales.

In like manner, the subjects were asked to evaluate the ethicality of each ad on seven, 7-point, Likert-type scales (Likert, 1932). Each Likert scale presented an ethical statement about the ad, such as that the ad was fair or that the ad was honest with the pair of polar opposites, disagree-agree, as answers. Some scales were also reversed in polarity in order to test reliability of the answers. The *alpha* reliability coefficient was calculated to be .878 for these scales.

These items were summed to create a single measure of respondent attitude toward each candidate (sponsoring and opposing) and each ad respectively.

Likelihood of voting for each candidate (sponsor and/or opponent) was also tested on a 7-point Likert-type scale using the polar-opposite terms, very unlikely to very likely. The scores would range from (1) being the most negative to (7) being the most positive.

Awareness of artifice, intent, and ideology were tested by asking a series of open-ended questions after each ad, such as: "Did any of the visual or audio techniques used in the ad seem troublesome or suspect to you?" "If so, briefly describe them and how each influenced you." The score of each applicable awareness coded from the questions were summed to form a second measure of self-perceived awareness (see Appendix T).

Self-percieved awareness also includes what Massaris (1994) calls visual "literacy." He and other experts (Moore & Dwyer, 1994; Muir, 1992; Silverblatt, 1995) involved in the study of visual, video, and media "literacy," claim that a scale to measure such viewer competency has yet to be devised and tested. From classroom video exercises and systematic research which Massaris (1994) and his colleagues have conducted, categories of viewer competency emerge. They were operationalized to develop a pretest to evaluate the video "literacy" level of each respondent within this study (see Appendix M).

Visual "Literacy" Scale.

All of the participants took the video "literacy" pretest designed for this experiment. Each evidence of viewer awareness was placed in one of three categories: (a) awareness of artifice, (b) awareness of intent, and (c) awareness of ideology. For the purpose of this experiment the number of correct answers for each of the three categories were summed to create a single video "literacy" score. A maximum score of 17 was possible.

The following is an overview of the video "literacy" scale that was developed for this study. Each category tests the respondent for conscious detection of the workings of particular artificial conventions and the awareness of their intentionality. Higher levels of awareness of visual artistry and manipulation are linked strongly to a list of viewer compentencies which result from his/her consciousness of: (a) pictorial depth perception, (b) camera positioning, (c) "invisible style" editing, (d) transitional mechanisms, (e) production "literacy," (f) propositional editing, and (g) the intentional and ideological significance of each of these devices.

A cumulatively high number of these compentencies within a particular viewer should correspond with a higher visual "literacy" level along with greater comprehension of manipulative devices. This should be coupled with more immunity "to whatever negative (or positive) influence these devices might normally be expected to have" (Messaris, 1994, p. 138). Thus, the lower the visual "literacy" score that a viewer has, the more he/she should be

susceptible to the negative or positive influence that the use of technical distortion is intended to have.

Upon viewing examples from each of the above categories, it should be possible to calculate a facsimile of a viewer's competencies in these areas. A video "literacy" level should be evidenced in his/her responses to questions directed to identify each artifice and its intented meaning and ideology.

Pictorial depth perception. The comprehension of the "collapsing" of three-dimensional figures into a two-dimensional means has been found to be considerably more difficult for less visually "literate" viewers. Conversely, more sophisticated viewers seem to circumvent the "barriers posed by such 'obviously' unrealistic conventions" and it presents no significant obstacle in the reading of the image for them (Hagen, 1980; Marr, 1982).

In real-world vision, once the brain extracts a representational outline from the eye of the viewer, it begins a process of interpretation. Part of that process is assigning depth to the various parts of the outline. The brain determines the distance between the viewer and each part of the scene in a complex process which calculates several different kinds of information: (a) binocular disparity -- the difference between the image formed in each eye, (b) motion parallax -- the amount of change the retina detects caused by moving objects, (c) texture gradients -- changes in the density of the patterns or textures of the objects in the scene, (d) occlusion -- how one object blocks part of the view of another object in the scene, (e) contours -- outlines of objects which, once recognized, are seen as three-dimensional, (f) shading

-- the brightness of a surface relative to its orientation to a light source, (g) linear perspective -- the relationship between depth and the degree of the appearance of line convergence, (h) relative size -- the inverse relationship between depth and the size of recognizable objects, and (i) height -- how high the figure is in the visual field (Bruce & Green, 1990; Hagen, 1980; Kubovy, 1986; Marr, 1982; Wade & Swanston, 1991).

Pictorial representations of a scene lack two of these depth perception cues that real-world vision gives. Working without binocular disparity and motion parallax as depth cues, naive viewers have trouble seeing depth in pictures. They tend to interpret pictures as "relatively flat" with little depth, while experienced viewers seem to have no trouble seeing pictures as representations of three-dimensional space (Hudson, 1967).

The model for testing depth perception in this study is a modification of Hudson's (1960) pictorial depth perception test (see Appendix N). The pictures used contain various combinations of four different depth cues: occlusion, linear perspective, relative size, and height in the visual field. He, as well as, Cook (1981), Deregowski (1968), Hagen and Johnson (1977), Hamdi, Knirk, and Michael (1982), and Kilbride (1969), finds significant variance in the degree of sensitivity toward depth information between "naive" viewers and "sophisticated" viewers.

In defense of using still pictures as a means of detecting depth perception competency within a film and television study, "it should be added that much of what has been said above also applies to an important aspect of the interpretation of film and

television -- namely, the viewer's recognition of the objects in a single image" (Messaris, 1994, p. 14). Far more academic research exists in this area than in media research and using still pictures in an empirical study design to test depth pereption compentency within respondents is less problematic than using a medium that uses a series of still images to create the illusion of "moving" images (pp. 14, 39, 51). Because the representational principles typical of photographs are consistent with many of the requirements of real-world interpretational processes, the same should be true of the "moving" pictures in television and film (Fell, 1974; Hollander, 1989).

Camera positioning. "Camera positioning can be analyzed in terms of three major variables - viz., distance, point-of-view, and angle" (Messaris, 1994, p. 156). Distance and point-of-view are very commonly a part of the persuasive appliances used in TV commercials. Both distance and point-of-view manipulate the viewer's involvement with the scene by reinforcing the viewer's identification and sympathy with a character.

As mentioned earlier, in the study of "paraproxemics," the close-up of an item or person cues the viewer that that item or face is more important and intimate for some reason at that moment and should be attended to by the viewer (Balazs, 1952; Kuleshov, 1974; Meyrowitz, 1986). Using a camera angle which indicates a "subjective" point-of-view, conventionally places the viewer in the position of the character's eyes within the scene as a direct recipient of the message (Gable, 1983).

The relative effectiveness of these techniques have been investigated in research conducted by Galan (1986). Seeing a commercial as a spectator from an "objective" point-of-view is far less persuasive than it is as a participant in which the receiver's or the persuader's "subjective" point-of-view predominates. According to such studies, "ordinary" viewers pay less attention to point-of-view camera positioning and the importance of image size than "trained" viewers. They are generally unaware that these are being used as persuasive techniques. (Image size awareness is tested in the "'Invisible style' editing" section of this video "literacy" scale.)

Because "the perception of (video 'literacy') skill clearly depends on an awareness of the conventions that the artist is following or breaking (Messaris, 1994, p. 29), a scene from Schepisi's film Iceman (1984) is used in this study to test viewer awareness of the point-of-view convention. In the scene, the camera continuously pans from an objective point-of-view directly into a subjective point-of-view and back again without the use of an edit. Editing to cue the audience of a change in point-of-view is a convention that is "normally never violated" (p. 29). In this scene, the convention is broken to generate within the viewer the same feeling of disorientation that the character on the screen is feeling.

A viewer who has only tacit familiarity with this rule will certainly be able to evaluate the sequence in terms of how exciting it is, how poignant, and so on. But for the viewer whose knowledge of the rule is conscious, evaluation of this scene acquires an added

dimension. Such a viewer is also able to make an informed judgment about the "means" the director used to make the scene exciting and poignant (p. 30).

Also incorporated here is a test to determine the respondent's spacial intelligence with regard to reverse angle point-of-view editing techniques. Salomon's (1979) version of the Piagetian three-mountain test involves pictures of the interaction between two people (see Appendix O). Those with relatively high spacial-intelligence abilities should not have difficulty detecting what a reverse angle camera shot from the other person's point-of-view should look like. Picturing what an instantaneous reversal of camera angle might look like, on the other hand, may prove to be very demanding to those with a less trained eye.

A simple test to determine audience awareness of camera angle is found in Mandell and Shaw's (1973) research and supported by Tomasulo (1989). In this study, viewers are shown one of three simulated versions of the same news story which is interjected into an actual newscast. A fabricated political appointee is shown from one of three camera angles in the story: eye-level (normal), 12 degrees below eye-level (low), and 12 degrees above eye-level (high). As anticipated, the respondents rated the political figure in the low-angle version as "stronger" and the same figure in the high-angle version as "weaker."

Most viewers appear to be unaware of the presence of camera angle manipulation. Only those who are well-experienced or well-trained in production techniques seem to be aware its metaphoric ramifications. The findings of this research make this test well-

suited as a component for judging the visual literacy sophistication of a respondent. In this experiment, the participants are questioned about their awareness of camera angle manipulation in the "Production technique" and "Analogical construction" sections of the visual "literacy" test.

"Invisible style" editing. The basic principle behind most narrative editing in television and film production is "false continuity," "the illusion that no time has passed between one edit and the next" (Cheshire, 1979, p. 54). It creates what appears to be a continuous flow of action across the edit. It is "read" by the viewer as "being part of a coherent stream of space, time, and action, even if the separate shots were in fact taken at widely separate times and places" (Messaris, 1994, p. 35).

This style of editing inhibits the viewer's awareness of artifice. It is meant to do so. It is not meant to draw attention to itself. "As an audience, we no more want to see the wheels and gears and levers responsible for the effect the film is having on us than we want to see the pencil marks on an author's first draft or the invisible wires in a magic show" (Rosenblum & Karen, 1979, p. 296). It is not something noticed easily and does not seem to attract the attention of the ordinary viewer. "Here, then, is an aspect of visual artifice whose detection appears to require specific priming of the viewer's eye, either through explicit instruction or through relevant prior experience" (Messaris, 1994, p. 145). With this in mind, it is not difficult to conceive of "staged" material posing as nonfiction and somewhat succeeding in the mind of the ordinary viewer. The continuation of an action across an edit is

"one sure sign" that the scene has been "staged" and yet for most American viewers it goes by virtually undetected (Block, 1975). This deception on the part of the artist is not always ill-intentioned, but the potential for abuse has already been questioned in many films, TV programs, and commercials, especially political ads, which pose as documented material but in reality are posed and fictitious in nature (Diamond & Bates, 1984; McGinnis, 1969; Metz, 1974; Mitchell, 1988).

Two such political ads of concern are cited as examples by Diamond and Bates (1984). Both a 1980 Howard Baker primary ad and a 1980 George Bush presidential ad are held suspect in their use of sequences of images and sounds. Neither is consistent with the context of the "real" event speeches they appear to represent. In both cases, as with many political ads, the editor chooses to juxtapose images and sounds from outside the event to reshape the dramatic impact that the candidate has on the original event (p. 260).

> The tendency to look for such discrepancies in the first place is contingent on the specific knowledge about these aspects of editing, and this kind of knowledge can be said to be the key to the "literate" viewing of films or TV programs based on unstaged footage (Messaris, 1994, p. 147).

The test for continuity or "invisible style" editing awareness is multilevel in nature. It questions the respondent's cognizance of "paraproxemics" (as mentioned earlier, the use of close-ups for emphasis) and recognition of the technical use of a camera lens

"zoom" (a counterpart to cutting to a close-up), as well as, his/her consciousness of the presence or absence of continuity editing.

Two experimental videos are designed to show the same scene with and without "invisible style" editing. Similar in nature to the two sections of film produced for Messaris's (1981) film study, they are viewed back-to-back. Both contain the same actor entering the scene, sitting in a chair, looking at his watch, and getting up and leaving the scene. One contains four continuity or "invisible style" edits, starting with a full shot (seeing the actor from head-to-toe on the screen) and ending with a close-up of the actor (seeing the his face fill the screen) (see Appendix P). The other uses no editing, only a "zoom-in" from a full shot to a close-up to show the same action. The screen time of both films is approximately the same.

Awareness of these devices is one indicator of the video "literacy" level of the respondent. The "naive" or ordinary viewer is generally unaware of them. The sophisticated or "trained" viewer is more likely to be conscious of them, especially as an indicator of intentionality (Messaris, 1994, p. 154).

Transitional mechanisms. The cut, fade, and dissolve are often used as artificial transitions to transport the viewer over "discontinuities" in the "location" of events, in the flow of "time" of the events, and/or in the events' "relationship to reality" (e.g., from "reality" to dream, thought, flashback, etc.).

The idea that the viewer requires familiarity with a set of medium-specific codes of video "language and grammar" to interpret these artifices is controversial. Some (Carey, 1982;

Meadowcroft & Reeves, 1989) say it is untenable, while others (Turner, 1988; Cheshire, 1979) suggest that space/time transitions in contemporary films and television programming require prior familiarity by the viewer with the use of transitional "special effects" and "editing" to be "read" in a particular conventional manner. In any case, both views concede that a level of respondent media experience is required to detect the conventional application of these artifices. The use of these devices for "narrative progression" is closely related to the "special effects" category in the use of technical distortion (Kaid, 1991) and are tested in this scale. Detection and awareness of this intent are tested for the "fade" in the Dressed to Kill (DePalma, 1980) scene, which fades to black at the end before the next scene begins, and for the "dissolve" in the Chariots of Fire (Hudson, 1981) scene, which incorporates a lengthy dissolve between the church congregation scene and the running on the beach scene, and for the "cut" in the 2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick, 1968) scene, which cuts directly from an ape-man tossing a bone in the air to a space ship docking at a space station.

Production "literacy." Evidence suggests that "literacy" in visual interpretation may result from "literacy" for the "manufactured image," video "literacy" that stems from experience in the "production" of images, as opposed to experience in their interpretation (Messaris & Nielsen, 1989). There is a direct correlation between the knowledge of the manual and/or technical skills in film and video technology and an increased visual interpretational awareness (Worth & Adair, 1972).

Studies comparing the audience effect of continuity editing and disjunctive editing (Messaris, 1981; Messaris & Neilsen, 1989) use three sets of respondents: (a) those with substantial film/video production experience, (b) those who have experienced film/video theory and analysis coursework, and (c) those who have had no formal training or experience in television or film.

> The viewers with production experience are much more likely to express awareness of the visual conventions being tested. Although, education in and of itself also appears to increase awareness to a certain extent, viewers without special experience in production still seemed to be struggling to disentangle the devices and deal explicity with intentionality and the making and breaking of conventions (Messaris, 1994, pp. 182 - 183).

The findings of these two studies suggest that awareness of the conventions and the intent of overt manipulative devices often found in advertising are heightened greatly by production experience. The respondent's production experience is gathered in the demographic section of the questionnaire, as well as, tested in the visual "literacy" scale by using the elevator scene from Brian DePalma's Dressed to Kill (1980).

In the scene, a villain wielding a straight razor advances on an intended female victim. The razor is in sharp focus in the foreground, while the villain's face is in full view yet out-of-focus in the background.

> Some significant things about this shot would be quite opaque to a viewer whose level of interpretational

> expertise went no further than what has been discussed thus far. These additional layers of meaning would be available only to a viewer who was self-conscious about the process of visual communication and therefore explicitly concerned with the filmmaker's manipulation of his material (Messaris, 1994, p. 136).

A spectator experienced in media production would be far more aware of the basic technique of using a narrow depth of field in this shot to obscure the villain's distinct facial features than would be an inexperienced viewer. The intentional and ideological awareness of this scene are discussed in the "Ideological significance" section of the test.

Propositional editing. This feature of "literacy" tests the participant's ability to make an analogy from the juxtaposition of images. Contrary to the seamless illusion of narrative editing, propositional editing uses editing for purpose of commentary (Bazin, 1967; Godard, 1986). Two or more images may be juxtaposed to suggest an analogy and/or contrast among the subjects or objects or situations contained within the images (Eisenstein, 1951). Their structure mimics the formal structure of verbal syntax in the juxtaposition of "subject image" and "object image" in simile, in contrast, in cause and effect propositions, or in the linking of individual situations of rhetorial reiteration (Clifton, 1983; Dyer, 1989; Kaplan, 1990, 1992).

A case-in-point is the Ronald Reagan 1984 re-election TV advertising campaign (sometimes referred as the Morning in America spots). In the ads shots of Reagan's first-term

inauguration in 1981 are intercut with early-morning scenes of Americans going to work. Intended by the producer of the commercial, the interpretational task confronting the viewer moves from a presentational form of communication to the propositional form of communication. The viewer is expected to make a causal, as well as a metaphoric (Whittock, 1990), connection between the beginning of Reagan's presidency as "a new beginning" and "the nation doing well again." These are to be made from "aspects of reality not represented directly in the film (e.g., the economy, U.S. citizens in general, etc.)" (Morreale, 1991).

Propositional editing has found a place for itself in both commercial and political advertising. "A major prerequisite for its interpretation must be the capacity to discern the presence of conceptual relationships between the objects or situations portrayed in a sequence of images -- and to do so very swiftly in most cases, as the pacing of propositional editing in TV ads is quite rapid" (Prince, 1990, p. 156).

Not all viewers are equally adept at grasping the complex meaning intended in this form of editing. Both formal education and especially visual media experience "appear to contribute significantly to a viewer's development of this form of interpretational skill" (Messaris & Nielsen, 1989). Furthermore, it may be abusive in its capacity to "bring about an 'unconscious' association between a candidate or product and an image even for those 'ordinary' viewers who were never consciously aware of the intended proposition" (Zuckerman, 1990, p. 40).

Viewer awareness of the analogical construct in Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968) is tested in this video "literacy" scale. The reasoning behind the edit from the ape-man's bone to the space ship is questioned to determine the respondent's analogical interpretation skill. The viewer is also questioned concerning his/her detection of the use of the special effect of "slow motion" within the scene.

Ideological significance. Video "literacy" can be said to have ideological ramifications. Coupled with awareness that images should be taken as a deliberate expression of an intended meaning, it equips the viewer for drawing inferences about the broader implications of the images (Elsaesser, 1990). Such a case would be the viewer's familiarity with theoretical perspectives dealing with the male spectator tradition of Western art (Berger, 1972) or in Hollywood movies (Mulvey, 1975; Lesser, 1991). Watching the "slasher" scene from De Palma's (1980) Dressed to Kill would make the moral and ideological implications of the visuals particularily acute for the informed viewer. Since the "slashee" is the traditional female (Dika, 1990), the subjective shot would "be seen as a device for heightening identification with the character through whose eyes one is seeing. . . . Subjective shots through the slasher's eyes are an invitation to the audience to participate vicariously in the agression of a male against a female" (Mulvey, 1989, p. 23).

The analytical spectator who is aware of the ideological significance of point-of-view (Messaris, 1994) would, as a result, be considerably "immune" to whatever negative influence the

device might normally be expected to have (MacKinnon, 1990). Awareness of artifice at the formal level leads to awareness of ideology (Elsaesser, 1990). Thus, any references to ideology made by the respondent are scored as such on the visual "literacy" scale.

The visual "literacy" scale design consists of a five-section pretest questionnaire in which the respondent views video footage and answers explicit and open-ended questions directed toward his/her detection of artifice, intentionality, and ideology. Each respondent watches and responds to six independent video clips. Videos #1 and #2 are the two "sitting" sequences combined to be compared with one another. Video #3 is the Iceman (Schepisi, 1984) "disorietation" scene. Video #4 is the "church to beach" scene from Chariots of Fire (Hudson, 1981). Video #5 is the Dressed to Kill (De Palma, 1980) "elevator" scene; and Video #6 is the "bone to space ship" scene from 2001: A Space Odessey (Kubrick, 1968).

After each video is viewed, the subject responds to a series of questions about that video before viewing the next one. Particular video "literacy" proficiencies are tested for each video in this manner and given a score for correct answers. The overall score of this pretest should result in a comparative indication of each respondent's visual "literacy" adeptness.

This video "literacy" score can be tested for variance against the subject's response to the presence or absence of the technically distorted devices found in the political ads chosen for the second part of this experiment. Differences in the subject video "literacy"

level may, in turn, help to explain response variance within groups that view the same ads.

Chapter 4: Results

The results were analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test statistics. Computation was done using the SPSS computer program. The level of significance required was the traditional .05.

Hypothesis One predicted that the respondents who viewed an ad using technological distortion would evaluate the sponsoring candidates more positively and with greater vote likelihood. The opposing candidates would receive lower evaluations with less vote likelihood than in the ads in which the distortion has been removed. To test this, the mean semantic differential scores and the vote likelihood for the sponsors of the ads containing distortion were compared to those of the ads without distortion. The responses to the opposing candidates were also tested in like fashion.

Demographics of the Respondents

The participants were made up of 148 (59%) females and 102 (41%) males with an average age of approximately 26 years; 161 (64%) were single, 72 (29%) were married, and 17 (7%) were divorced. Their education level ranged from 12 (5%) having no high school diploma to 112 (45%) having graduated from high school and 79 (32%) holding at least an associate's degree, with 31 (12%) holding a bachelor's degree and 16 (6%) having received a master's degree. Over 46% (116) of the respondents declared their party affiliation to be Democratic, 32% (80) to be Republican, and 22% (54) to be Independent or other.

Forty-two (17%) of the subjects had professional experience in media production, while 208 (83%) had none, and approximately 36% either majored or minored in some form of Media Communication. Forty-three percent (108) were light TV viewers of less than 1 to 2 hours per day, 44% (110) were considered moderate TV viewers averaging 2 to 4 hours per day, and 13% (32) considered themselves heavy TV viewers with 4 to over hours 5 of TV viewing per day.

Effect of Presence of Distortions

As Table 1 shows, the respondent mean attitude score (a sum of the semantic differential scales measuring candidate image) toward the sponsors of all the original distorted ads (52.34) varied significantly in a positive direction from that of all of the altered ads (50.25). The mean respondent attitude potency toward the opponent of all the distorted ads (32.46) was also shown to vary significantly from that of the altered ads (36.32).

Vote likelihood scores for the sponsor and opponent were similarly different in the predicted direction for distorted and undistorted spots. This confirms the first hypothesis that presence of the distortion works to the benefit of the sponsoring candidate and to the detriment of his/her opponent.

Table 1

Mean Evaluation Scores: Ads with Technological Distortion/Ads without Technological Distortion

	Mean Scores		
Group	Total Population	Ads with Distortions	Ads without Distortions
Sponsoring * Candidate	51.29 (500)	52.34 (250)	50.25 (250)
Opposing * Candidate	34.39 (500)	32.46 (250)	36.32 (250)
Sponsor * Vote Likelihood	3.91 (500)	4.06 (250)	3.76 (250)
Opponent * Vote Likelihood	3.07 (500)	2.94 (250)	3.20 (250)

Note: *t-test indicates the difference in distorted and undistorted ads is significant at $p \leq .05$.

Negative vs. Positive Ads

A two-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) (Frey, Botan, Friedman, & Kreps, 1991, pp. 293 - 297) was done to compare the mean score responses of all of the original ads to that of all of the altered ads and then all of the negative ads to that of all of the positive ads. This was done for the three dependent variables of the subjects' mean-score responses (1) to all the sponsors of the

ads, (2) to all their opponents, and (3) to all the advertisements in general, as seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Two-way ANOVA: Ads With and Without Distortion/Negative and Positive Ads

Group	Mean Scores		Significance of F	
	Ads with Distortions	Ads without Distortions	With/ Without	Neg./ Pos.
Sponsoring Candidate				
Negative ads	50.74 (175)	49.10 (175)	.029*	.000**
Positive ads	56.07 (75)	52.92 (75)		
Opposing Candidate				
Negative ads	43.00 (175)	45.77 (175)	.002**	.000**
Positive ads	18.87 (75)	24.25 (75)		
Advertisement Evaluation				
Negative ads	26.21 (175)	25.08 (175)	.182	.000**
Positive ads	31.48 (75)	30.79 (75)		

Note: *$p \leq .05$; **$p \leq .01$.

Table 2 shows significant main effects for presence versus absence of distortion for both sponsor and opponent evaluations. A significant result of .029 (Williams, 1992, p. 70) occurred between all of the sponsor-related responses for the original ads containing distortion and all of the responses to the altered ads not containing distortion, F (1, 500) = 4.822, $p \leq .05$. A significant result of .002 also occurred for the opponent-related responses when comparing the original ads to the altered ads, F (1, 500) = 9.682, $p \leq .05$.

Although there was no significant main effect for the advertisement evaluation, F (1, 500) = .182, $p \leq .05$, or no interaction effect for the sponsor, F (1, 500) = .469, $p \leq .05$, for the opponent, F (1, 500) = .182, $p \leq .05$, or for the advertisement evatuation, F (1, 500) = .790, $p \leq .05$, there was a main valence effect for the sponsoring candidate, F (1, 500) = .029, $p \leq .05$, and for the opposing candidate, F (1, 500) = .002, $p \leq .05$. In other words, it mattered if an ad was distorted or not as in Hypothesis One and if it was negative or positive (not in the hypotheses), but not if the ad was negative-distorted versus negative-undistorted and positive-distorted versus positive-undistorted.

No significant effect was apparent on the dependent variable ad evaluation when comparing the original ads to the altered ads. There were no significant interaction effects between distortion and ad valence (positive versus negative). Thus, Hypothesis Two was negated by the lack of an interaction effect for ad evaluation in the 2-way ANOVA in which ad evaluation is the dependent variable.

Effect of Visual "Literacy"

For questions concerning awareness of artifice, intentionality, or ideology, responses were coded as either mentioning or not mentioning them. Answers were accepted as indicating an awareness if they indicated a general detection of artifice, intentionality, or ideology respectively, or if they were explicitly noted with correct terminology. These data were used to determine the individual visual "literacy" score for each respondent as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

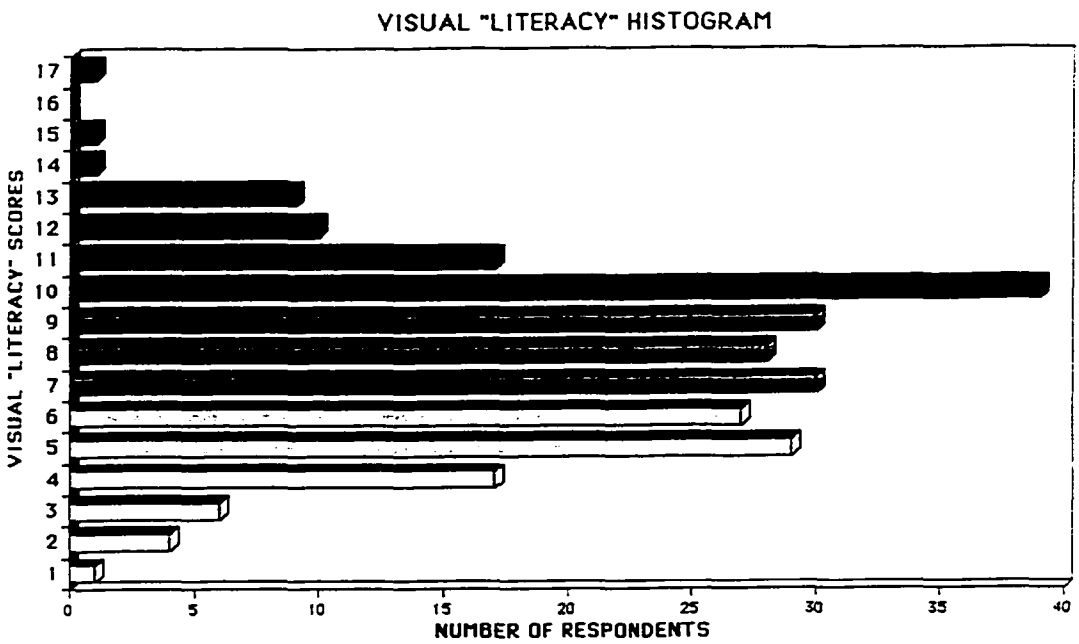
Frequency of Visual "Literacy" Scores

	Value	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Low	1.00	1	.4	.4
	2.00	4	1.6	2.0
	3.00	6	2.4	4.4
	4.00	17	6.8	11.2
	5.00	29	11.6	22.8
	6.00	27	10.8	33.6
Medium	7.00	30	12.0	45.6
	8.00	28	11.2	56.8
	9.00	30	12.0	68.8
High	10.00	39	15.6	84.4
	11.00	17	6.8	91.2
	12.00	10	4.0	95.2
	13.00	9	3.6	98.8
	14.00	1	.4	99.2
	15.00	1	.4	99.6
	17.00	1	.4	100.0

The frequency of visual "literacy" scores (0 to a possible score of 17) was calculated to determine a "low," "medium," and "high" range for the scores. The cumulative percentage was tabulated to

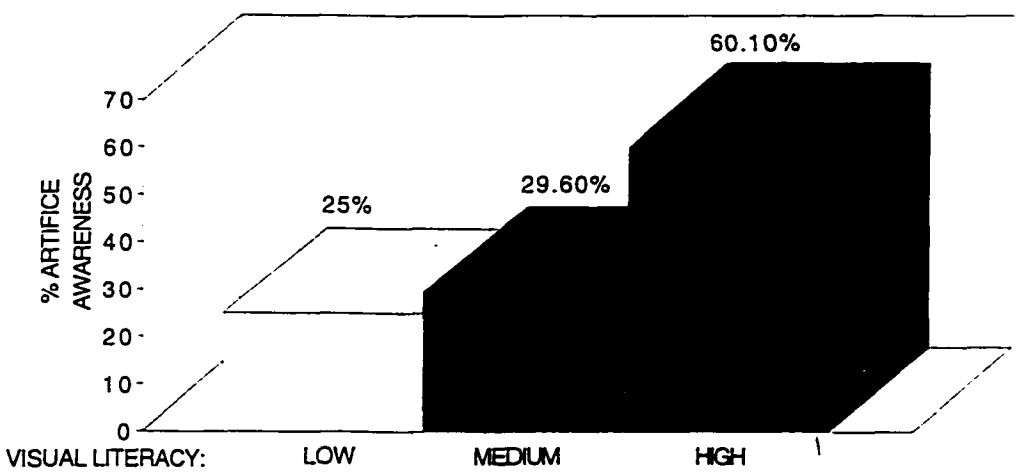
determine a one-third cut-off point between "low" and "medium" at approximately 33% (the difference between scores 6 and 7) and between "medium" and "high" at approximately 66% (the difference between scores 9 and 10). Thus, a "low" visual "literacy" score was between 0 and 6, a "medium" score was between 7 and 9, and a high score was between 10 to 17 as shown in Figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6. Histogram of the Frequency of Visual "Literacy" Scores



A comparative analysis was conducted for awareness, using the factors of a "low," "medium," or "high" visual "literacy" score and the detection of artifice. As expected, the analysis revealed a main effect with regards to the visual literacy level of the respondents: 25% of the artifices were recognized by the "low" respondents, 29.6% by the "medium" respondents, and 60.1% by the "high" respondents. Thus, as Messaris (1994) predicted, recognition of artifice correlated to visual literacy levels. As the visual "literacy" score increased over the three visual "literacy" levels, the respondents' awareness of artifice also increased (see Table 7).

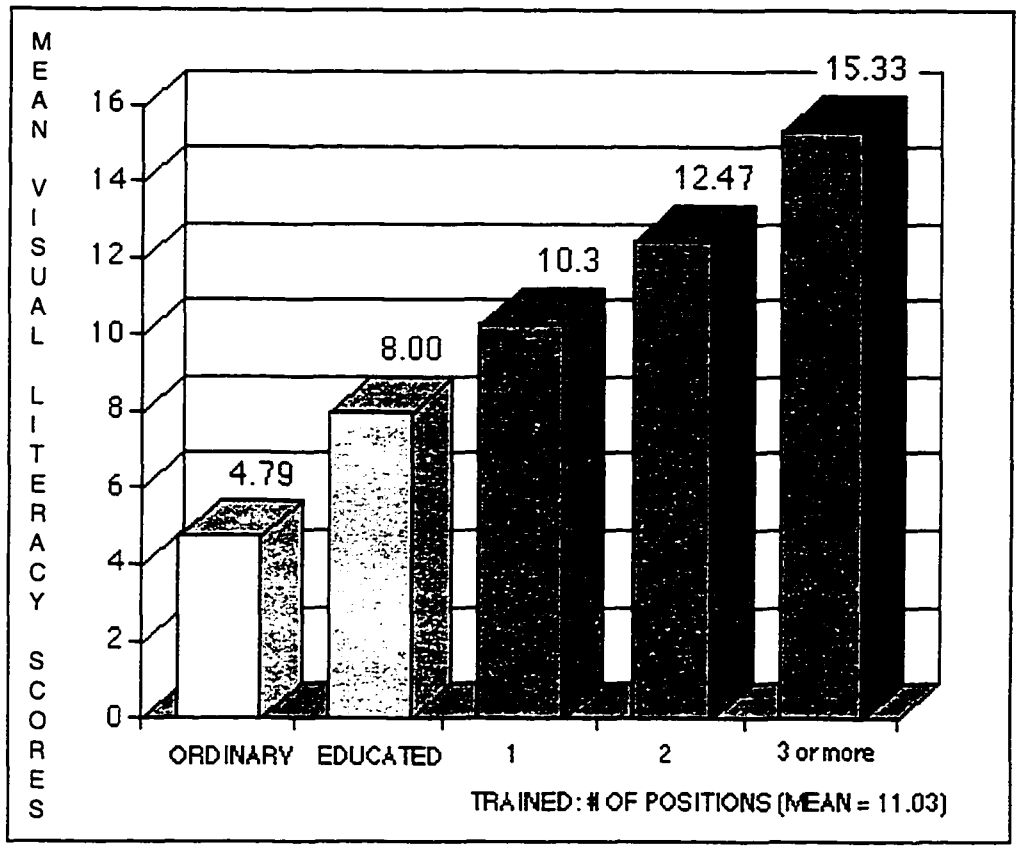
Figure 7. Visual Literacy and Artifice Awareness



In general, the findings of this study indicates that there is a considerable difference in the frequency of references made to the devices tested among the three levels of visual "literacy." They overwhelmingly supports Messaris's (1994) prediction. Training and production experience are responsible for substantially higher visual "literacy" scores. Responses from those with only academic media training were considerably lower, and lower yet were "ordinary" viewers with no formal training whatsoever.

There was a significant difference indicated between the mean visual "literacy" scores of the "ordinary" viewers (4.79), those of "educated" viewers (subjects with media-related majors) (8.00), and those who were "trained" and held media production positions (11.03). There was also a main effect noted within the number of positions that the trained respondents held. As the number of the media positions they have held over time increased from 1 to 2 to 3 or more, their mean visual "literacy" scores also increased significantly from 10.30 to 12.47 to 15.33, respectively (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Number of Media Positions Held and Visual "Literacy" Scores



A 2 X 3 ANOVA was done to compare the respondent scores of all of the original ads with distortion versus all of the altered ads without distortion to the respondent scores within the three levels of visual "literacy" (low = scores 1 through 6, medium = scores 7 through 9, and high = scores 10 through 17). This was

done for each of the three dependent variables, evaluations of the sponsors, the opponents, and the ads themselves. (see Table 4).

Table 4

2 X 3 ANOVA: Ads With and Without Distortion/Low, Medium, and High Visual "Literacy"

Group	Visual "literacy" Mean Scores			Significance of F
	Low	Medium	High	
Sponsoring Candidate				
Ads with Distortion	53.47 (84)	52.88 (88)	55.47 (78)	.612
Ads w/o Distortion	51.35 (84)	50.92 (88)	51.66 (78)	
Opposing Candidate				
Ads with Distortion	28.45 (84)	23.30 (88)	28.47 (78)	.431
Ads w/o Distortion	37.75 (84)	28.21 (88)	35.65 (78)	
Advertisement Evaluation				
Ads with Distortion	29.77 (84)	28.10 (88)	30.52 (78)	.531
Ads w/o Distortion	28.87 (84)	28.00 (88)	26.39 (78)	

The level of respondent visual "literacy" was found to have no significant main effect on the data sets gathered for the distorted versus the undistorted ads with regards to the sponsoring candidate, $F(1, 500) = .612$, $p \leq .05$, the opposing candidate, $F(1, 500) = .431$, $p \leq .05$, and the advertisement evaluation, $F(1, 500) = .531$, $p \leq .05$. There were no significant two-way interactions within the model, $F(1, 500) = .712$, $p \leq .05$, $F(1, 500) = .078$, $p \leq .05$, and $F(1, 500) = .462$, $p \leq .05$, respectively. Nor were there any significant three-way interactions detected, $F(1, 500) = .815$, $p \leq .05$, $F(1, 500) = .176$, $p \leq .05$, and $F(1, 500) = .482$, $p \leq .05$, respectively. These findings overwhelmingly refute Massaris's (1994) prediction stated within Hypothesis 3. Higher visual "literacy" is not necessarily connected to greater critical scrutiny by the viewer.

Summary

This research advances the argument that the use of technology can be used to influence the meaning being drawn by the viewer from the video image, confirming Hypothesis One. The viewer evaluations and vote likelihood of the sponsoring candidates were significantly higher in the ads containing technological distortions and, in turn, the opponent received significantly lower evaluations and vote likelihood.

The evaluations of the ads themselves were not significantly more positive for positive ads containing technological distortions and more negative for negative ads containing technological distortions. Thus, support for Hypothesis Two was not obtained.

The null hypothesis for Hypothesis Three was not rejected. The data sets did not show any significant variance. Video "literate" respondents were not shown to be more "immune" to the positive or negative influence that the distorted ads are intended to have. In other words, a higher "literacy" score did not correspond to a lower sponsoring candidate evaluation for the positive ads and a higher opponent evaluation for the negative ads.

The visual "literacy" variable was shown to have little significant influence on the viewer. Thus, there was a lack of support within this study for Hypothisis 3. Production "literacy" was shown to better equip a viewer to discern artifice, but not necessarily to equip him/her to become a more responsible receiver of political persuasion. It did not tend to lessen the ad's intentional impact on the viewer.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Although this must be considered a pilot study consisting of a convenience sample of 250 respondents, it may indicate a general direction for audience effect studies in this realm. The results of this study indicate that ethical concern over the use of technological distortion within political advertising may not be critically over-rated. Technological distortion was the only variable that seemed to have consistent significant effect, especially when it was overtly used to demean a candidate (as in negative ads) or bolster the image of a candidate (as in positive ads).

Research Design

Need for more research is indicated, but with a design less complicated than this one. It was extremely difficult to decipher the effects within a study utilizing both positive and negative ads. It often seemed like attempting to compare "apples to oranges." As a result, each genre may need to be treated separately.

The results reported in the opponent data set for the positive ads seemed somewhat illogical and problematic. This may have been caused by the nature of positive ads. They featured only the sponsor of the ad, with no mention of his/her opponent. When asked to react to an opponent who was never mentioned within the ad, the subjects seemed to have been somewhat confused and many chose not to respond. This lowered the figures and left many zeros on the score tallies for this category, thus skewing the calculations. It may be wise to eliminate this variable when assessing responses to positive political advertisements, or at least

clarify the scoring procedures for this section of the questionnaire when the respondents receive instructions prior to each testing session.

Each subject should view only one ad, eliminating the question of sensitization and data contamination. A simplified questionnaire design directed more toward questions only concerning the opponents for negative ads and the sponsors for positive ads would most certainly reduce respondent confusion.

The question may also be raised concerning the removal of the technological distortion from an ad designed to contain distortion. It may change the whole meaning of the information within the ad. An audience already conditioned to expect such distortion might draw entirely different meaning from the ad than it was originally intented to have. However, that is precisely the reason this study has been performed; to determine if adding distortion does in actuality change the meaning of or add information to the political advertisement itself.

One other concern that may need to be addressed in reviewing the research design of this study, is the use of the visual "literacy" pre-test. Since it focused primarily on the knowledge of media technology, did it sensitize the respondents to the technology awareness variables they were to assess within the ad analyses questions? If so, it did so equally within each cell tested, since all the cells received exactly the same pre-test. Thus, if the data collected were affected by sensitization, they should have been affected fairly equally across all the cells which should have kept any skewing effect to a minimum.

Visual "Literacy"

An important dimension to this study was the development of a pre-test instrument designed to determine a score for each respondent's level of media decoding proficiency. The visual "literacy" test design seemed to work well. With a few adjustments, it could become a viable tool for scoring respondent visual "literacy" levels. A few more direct comparison video examples may be needed specifically to test the respondent's awareness of specific artifices, such as, the "cut," the "fade," and the "dissolve," and their intended meanings.

The open-ended questions were useful in testing the internal reliability and validity of the directed questions. Here it was interesting to note that although the subject was directed to concentrate only on the technology, he/she most often responded to the subject matter within each scene. This was apparent especially when it involved emotional behavior on the character's part, such as in a reaction shot. It may be of interest to test if content may over-ride the respondent's awareness of the influence of the technique in any way. If so, this may be the area for ethical concern also.

Since this was the first time such a device has been operationalized for such a purpose, there still remain questions concerning its external design reliability and validity. Was it measuring what it was designed to measure? To this end, subjecting the visual "literacy" test and its results independently to the scrutiny of factor and *alpha* coefficient analyses (Chronbach, 1951) might prove to be worthwhile.

The results did contain a strong indication of discrimination among the determined levels. This face validity warrants further testing and development of the instrument, but it should in no way be considered an end-all solution to testing this variable; only a beginning.

Content

Alvin Toffler (1980) suggests that humanity is in the midst of a new "wave" of institutional change. The worldwide shift into the technological age has ushered in an onslot of marketers vieing for consumer attention. The technological revolution goes hand in hand with the average person in America receiving exposure to over 5,000 persuasive messages a day (p. 5).

Marshall McLuhan (1967) may have been a man ahead of his time in making the controversial statement, "The medium is the message" (p. 1). In a world in which high-tech computers and digitilization did not exist, his "probing" metaphor may have seemed far-fetched and unfounded (Levinson, 1981). But in a world where technological distortion has become the norm and, in some cases, may be virtually undectable, McLuhan's (1964) warning may have come none too soon; the medium channel "is like the juicy piece of meat carried by the burglar to distract the watchdog of the mind" (p. 63).

Although the study of the text within a mediated message such as a political advertisement is important, McLuhan's writings (1963, 1964, & 1967), as scientifically unsustained and nonreplicated as they were (Gordon, 1982), began to shift some

attention to the information being carried to the public by the technology of the medium itself.

His concept of "Technological Determinism" probed causal relationships between media and culture and how modes of communication determine the course of history. As sophisticated technological distortion techniques increase within the television meduim, McLuhan (1980), had he lived longer, may have very well predicted the shift from issue oriented political ads towards the predominance of image ads. In his words, "people no longer inquire, 'Do you see my point?' Instead we ask, 'How does that grab you'" (p. 70)?

It would be difficult to accept all of McLuhan's ideas, but he did stimulate a heightened awareness of the possible effects that new media technologies could have on culture. This is apparent by the increased interest in media "literacy" by researchers today (Messaris, 1994; Muir, 1992; Silverblatt, 1995).

According to this study, it is apparent that when technological distortion is used, the medium at the very least modifies the message in some way. It is also apparent that political ads containing technological distortion carry with them a higher degree of intended impact (whether it be positive or negative) to the electorate than those not containing distortion and that many viewers are not aware of why. When technological distortion is used within political advertising, it is ethically vital to discover just how this occurs.

Adhering to traditional beliefs, it is argued that political communication should be created to inform voters. "If voters are

to make rational choices about leaders and policy issues, they must have access to information that is true and accurate, unambiguous, unclouded by emotion, and, therefore, enhances, rather than undermines, the decision-making process" (Kaid, 1991a, p. 146). Analysts argue that television's inclination toward dramatic visual imagery is hazardous to political communication, contributing to unethical advertising outcomes (Spero, 1980). Messaris (1990) raises serious concerns, suggesting that the use of video technology achieves imagery that is "just not true." The uses of such unreasoned televised political discourse are "frequent enough and have demonstrated sufficiently misleading applications to warrant attention" (Kaid, 1993a, p. 6).

Awareness

According to the findings of this study, McLuhan (1963) may have been mistaken when he termed television a "cool" medium (at least in its capacity to distort an image) -- that is, one which requires high sensory involvement and participation and demands a response (p. 15).

Proof that this may have been a misnomer appeared often within the answers to the open-ended questions asked of the respondents. One such example recurred in the answers to the questions concerning the production techniques found within the Campbell (1990) and Sununu (1982) "Pinocchio" ads. The ads featured pictures of their opponents. The texts were made up of a series of voice-over statements about them. Through the use of computer animation, the nose on each picture appeared to grow longer with each statement.

Without a derogatory word, their opponents were visually called liars using the Pinnochio nose effect. When asked if there were any visual techniques used which commented on the presentation of ideas within the ad, most respondents seemed unaware of the obvious visual comment, yet mentioned in another question that they were being called liars.

It is troublesome to think that such an obvious statement made by technologically distorting the video channel may not be "read" as such by the viewer. If this is so, the potential for technological distortion abuse is worrisome. Modern technology has made it easier to oversimplify information and say a lot more in a shorter period of time in a manner which defies accountablility (until research may prove otherwise).

In this case, a technologically distorted image of the opponent visually encodes the "issue" information to be decoded by the audience members. It is here where political media specialists may be tempted with a fair amount of legal safety to present short-circuited "issue" statements through "image" distortion without having to devulge informational sources or proof. Unethical intent would be hard to prove in such cases, leaving the door open to potential abuse.

In fact, it appears that the distortions within the negative ad that Richard Nixon ran against Hubert Humphrey in 1968 carried such crucial information with them into the ad, that removing them caused mixed signals and audience confusion. Without the obvious negative visual and audial distortion cues, many

respondents judged the ad to be a positive ad in favor of Humphrey.

This poses questions for further study. Does the viewer passively accept and reach the obvious conclusion intended by the creator of a political advertisement without thinking about how the message was manipulated and transmitted? Is the viewer aware that he/she may subconsciously "read" technological distortion of the video channels as a "language" or "text" for meaning?

Conclusion

If so, these findings point to two possible avenues for increasing viewer awareness of the political advertiser's intent: (a) formal education in media theory and analysis and (b) training in actual media production -- the latter being the most effective means (Messaris, 1994, p. 182). A third may need to be added; that of the critical thinking developed by introducing the student to such self-protection methods as Hugh Rank's (1976) model of intensify/downplay schema and Kenneth Burke's (1960) method "dramatism." Applying these types of analyses to the curriculum may help to make viewers more critically aware of their subtle manipulative devices.

Rank (1976) outlines a model of media persuasion that could help teach viewers to become responsible critical decoders of rhetorical as well as visual arguments. His basic idea is the premise that persuaders use two basic strategies to achieve their goals. They either "intensify" or "downplay" certain aspects of their "product, candidate, or ideology:" "(1) Intensify their own good points. (2) Intensify the weak points of the opposition. (3)

Downplay their own bad or weak points. (4) Downplay the good points of the opposition" (p. 15). Persuaders use tactics such as, "repetition, association, composition, omission, diversion, and confusion" in their favor (pp. 16 - 22) (see Appendix U). Applied knowledge of these various tactics make audience members more "skeptically alert" to their intended use.

Burke (1960) offers a tool for analyzing the semantic dimension of mediated persuasion. He calls his method "dramatism" and his tool of analysis the "dramatistic pentad" (p. 135). His model has five central elements: the scene, the act, the agent, the agency, and the purpose (p. 135) (see Appendix V). "Identifying a persuader's key terms or elements can alert you to the underlying motives of the persuasion and help you predict his or her future persuasive appeals" (p. 139).

In a world permeated by attempts at persuasion by means of visual manipulation, Larson (1995) prescribes that a certain amount of "reasoned skepticism" is needed in each viewer as a means not to be easily taken in by them. This kind of skepticism can only be nurtured by nurturing awareness of intent. The results of this test indicate that whether the viewer is visually "literate" or not, there is little difference in the persuasive power that the media have over him or her. All seem to fall prey to their intended influences.

A highly publicized and sustained notion was not supported by this study. Developing visual "literacy" curricula across America may not be all it takes to develop a society equipped actively to detect the illicit use of persuasive media techniques.

It has been suggested that media "literacy" courses be designed and incorporated into the American education curriculum as a means of circumventing the seemingly subversive influence that "media hype" is having on society. ABC Nightly News (October 23, 1993) reports that this is already being accomplished with great success in "pockets" across the country and throughout Canada. As with this study, it has been found that the most effective tool to "immunize" the citizenry against the "attacts" of media propaganda is to combine formal critical analysis training with production training in coursework designed to make people aware. This research readily confirms that point-of-view.

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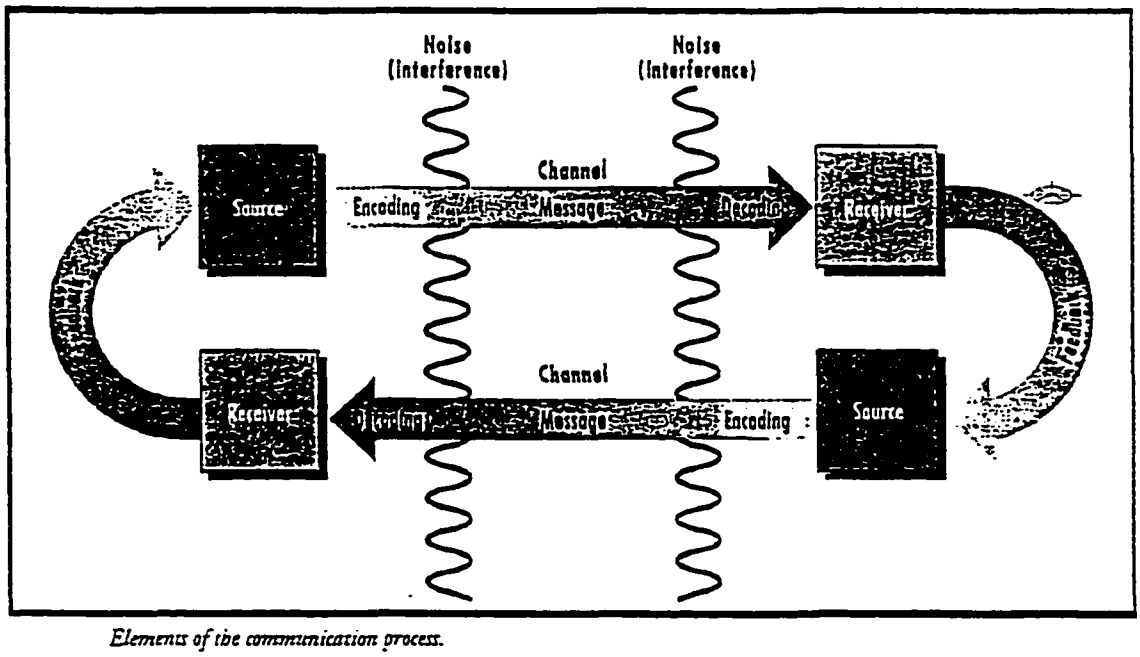
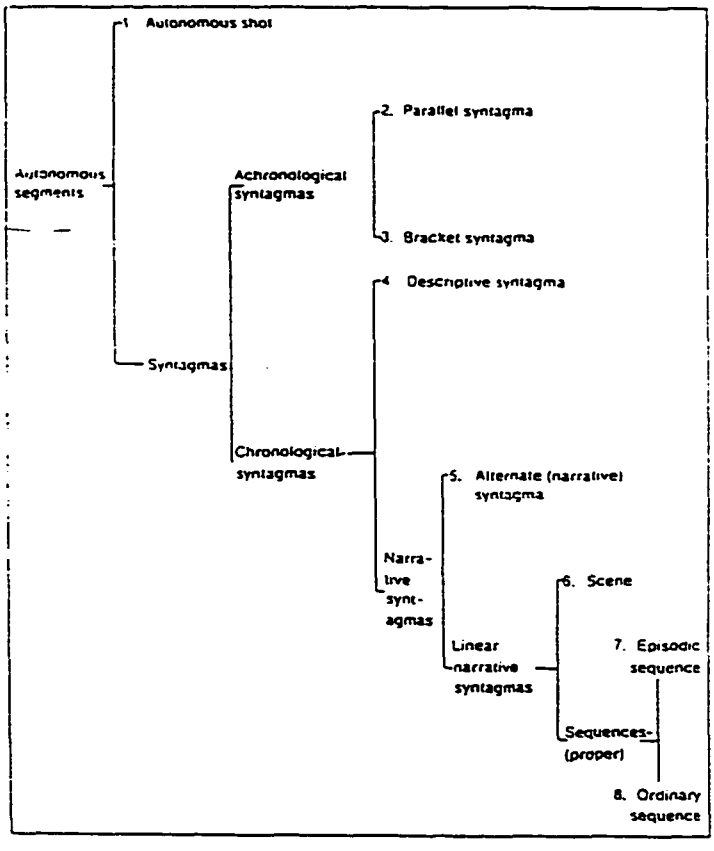
Appendix A



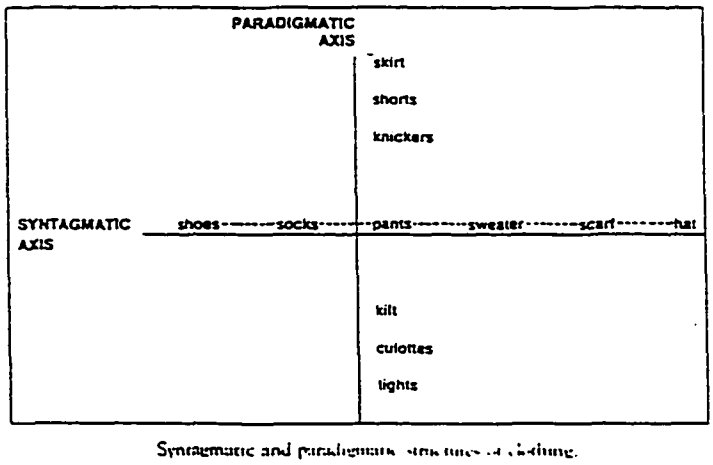
Elements of the communication process.

(Dominick, 1996, p. 7)

Appendix B



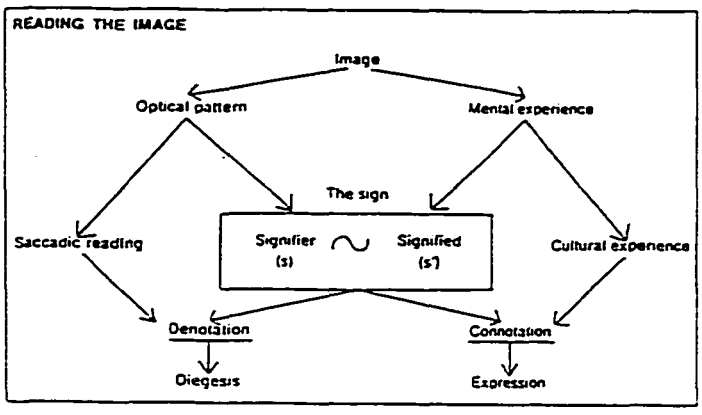
METZ'S SYNTAGMATIC CATEGORIES



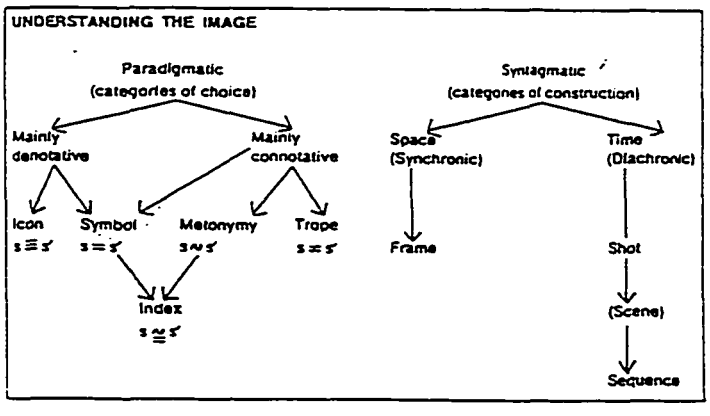
Syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures of clothing.

(Metz, 1974, p. 136)

Appendix C



READING THE IMAGE: The image is experienced as both an optical and mental phenomenon. The optical pattern is read saccadically; the mental experience is the result of the sum of cultural determinants, and is formed by it. Both optical and mental intellection combine in the concept of the sign, where signifier (s) is related to signified (s'). The signifier is more optical than mental, the signified more mental than optical. All three levels of reading—saccadic, semiological, and cultural—then combine with each other in various ways to produce meaning, either essentially denotative or essentially connotative.



UNDERSTANDING THE IMAGE: We understand an image not only for itself, but in context: in relation to categories of choice (paradigmatic) and in relation to categories of construction (syntagmatic). The categories of choice are variously denotative or connotative, and each variety, none of whose boundaries are sharply defined, is characterized by the relationship between signifier and signified. In the Iconic image, signifier is identical with signified. In Symbols the signifier is equal to the signified, but not identical. In metonymies and synecdoches, signifier is similar in some way to signified, while in tropes, the signifier is not equal to (distinctly different from) the signified. Here the relationship is considerably more tenuous. In Indexes, signifier and signified are congruent.

Syntagmatic relationships (categories of construction) operate either in space or in time: synchronic phenomena happen at the same time, or without regard to time, while diachronic phenomena happen across time, or within it. (Here, the words "synchronic" and "diachronic" carry their simplest meanings. They are also used with more specific definitions generally in semiology and linguistics, in which case synchronic linguistics is descriptive, while diachronic linguistics is historical.)

Finally, it must be noted that many of the concepts expressed in this chart are true for sounds as well as images, although usually to a considerably lesser extent. While it is true that we do not read sounds saccadically, we nevertheless focus psychologically on particular sounds within the total auditory experience just as we "block out" unwanted or useless noise. While sound must seem, in general, far more denotative and Iconic than image, it is nevertheless possible to apply the concepts of Symbol, Index, metonymy, synecdoche, and trope, if the necessary changes are made.

(Metz, 1974, pp. 137, 138)

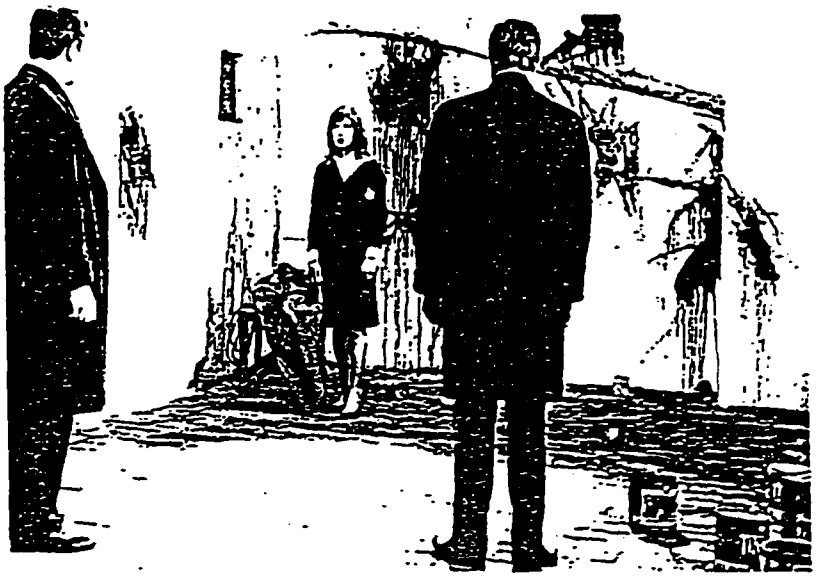
Appendix D



TROPE An ant-covered hand from Dali and Buñuel's surrealist classic *Un Chien Andalou* (1928). Another very complex image, not easily analyzed. Iconic, Indexical, and Symbolic values are all present: the image is striking for its own sake, it is a measure of the infestation of the soul of the owner of the hand, it is certainly symbolic of a more general malaise, as well. It is metonymic, because the ants are an "associated detail"; it is also synecdochic, because the hand is a part that stands for the whole. Finally, the source of the image seems to be a trope: a verbal pun on the French idiom, "avoir des fourmis dans les mains," "to have ants in the hand," an expression equivalent to the English "my hand is asleep." By illustrating the turn of phrase literally, Dali and Buñuel have extended the trope so that a common experience is turned into a striking sign of decay.

(Reisz & Millar, 1894, p. 78)

Appendix E



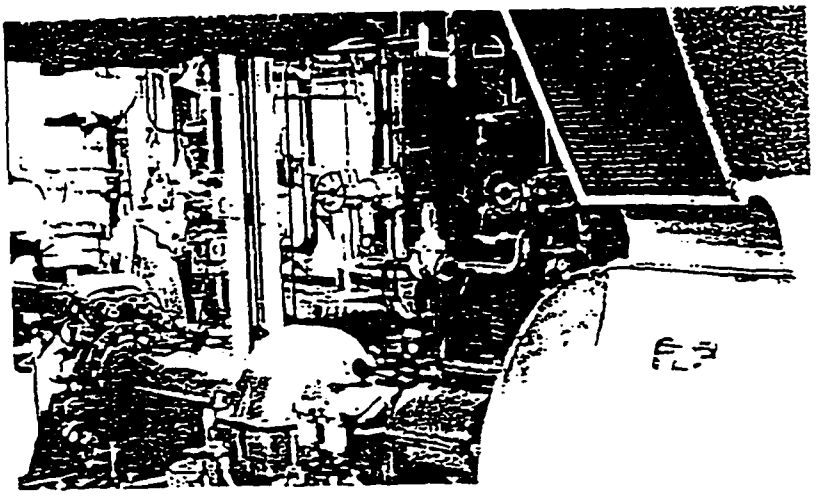
METONYMY. In *Red Desert* (1964), Michelangelo Antonioni develops a precise metonymics of color. Throughout most of the film, Giuliana (Monica Vitti) is oppressed psychologically and politically by a gray and deathly urban industrial environment. When she manages to break away from its grip on several occasions, Antonioni signals her temporary independence (and possible return to health) with bright colors, which is a detail associated with health and happiness not only in the film but in general culture as well. In this scene, Giuliana attempts to open her own shop. The gray walls are punctuated with splotches of brilliant color (the attempt at freedom), but the shapes themselves are violent, disorganized, frightening (the relapse into neurosis). In all, a complicated set of metonymies.



METONYMY. In Claude Chabrol's *Leda* (1959), André Jocelyn portrays a schizophrenic character. The image in the cracked mirror is a simple, logical metonymy.

(Reisz & Millar, 1894, pp. 79, 80)

Appendix F



SYNECDOCHE. Giuliana in *Red Dessert*, again, this time surrounded and nearly overwhelmed by industrial machinery, a "part" that stands for the "whole" of her urban society. It isn't this factory, these particular machines, that oppress her, but the larger reality they represent.



SYNECDOCHE. Juliet Berto in Godard's *La Chinoise* (1967) has constructed a theoretical barricade of Chairman Mao's "Little Red Books," parts that stand for the whole of Marxist/Leninist/Maoist ideology with which the group of "gauchistes" to which she belongs protect themselves, and from which they intend to launch an attack on bourgeois society.

The terms "synecdoche" and "metonymy"—like "Icon," "Index," and "Symbol"—are, of course, imprecise. They are theoretical constructs that may be useful as aids to analysis; they are not strict definitions. This particular synecdoche, for example, might very well be better classified as a metonymy in which the little red books are associated details rather than parts standing for the whole. (The decision itself has ideological overtones!) Likewise, although this image seems easiest to classify as Indexical, there are certainly elements of the Iconic and Symbolic in it.

(Reisz & Millar, 1894, pp. 81, 82)

Appendix G

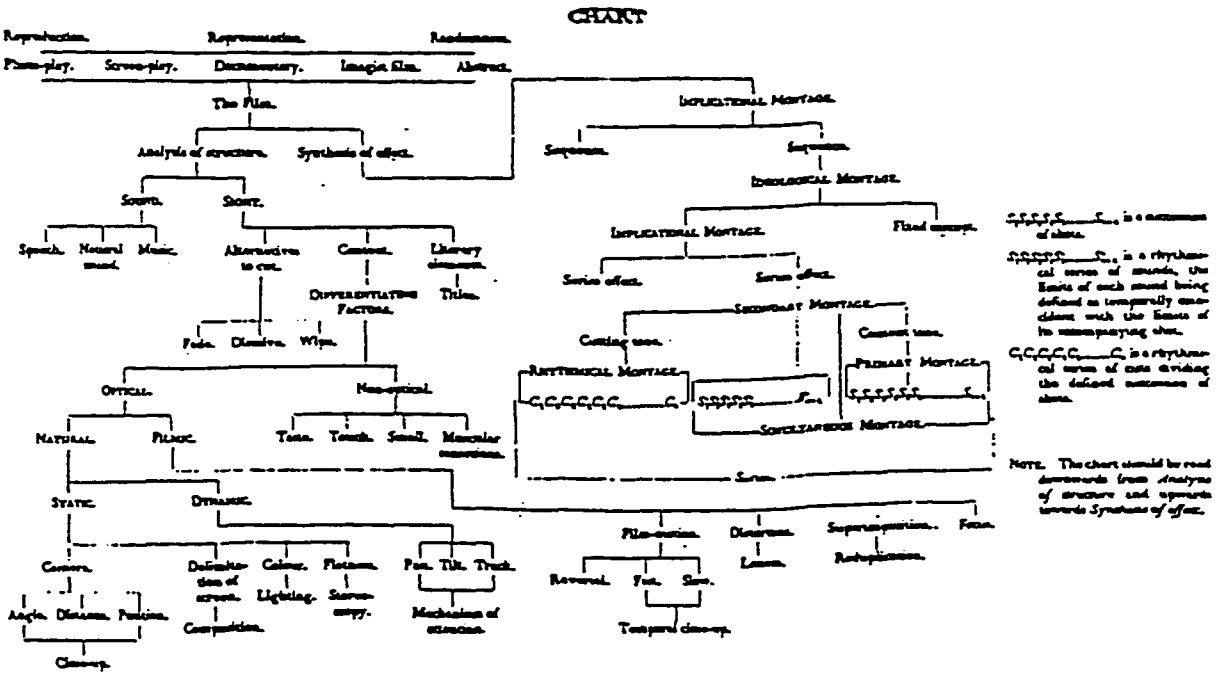
Raymond Spottiswoode's (1950) categories of film grammar.

1. Visual and aural material of the cinema. 2. Analysis of structure and synthesis of effect. 3. Separation of the cut from its substitutes, and and—consideration of the latter: fade, dissolve, wipe. 4. Credit and continuity titles. 5. Introduction of the divergences from realistic reproduction to be found within the shot: differentiating factors. 6. The non-optical factors: the coenaesthesis. 7. The static factors: camera angle and position; 8. the closeup; 9. delimitation of the screen; 10. the expanding screen; 11. colour and lighting; 12. applied to the synthetic film; 13. flatness; 14. the stereoscopic film. 15. The dynamic factors: camera movement; 16. the mechanism of attention; 17. tilting. 18. The filmic factors: camera speed; 19. fast motion; 20. slow motion; 21. the temporal close-up; 22. reversal; 23. optical distortion; 24. focus; 25. superimposition; 26. reduplication. 27. Sound: classification; 28. realism-unrealism; 29. counterpoint; 30. realistic counterpoint; 31. unrealism; 32. parallelism-contrast; 33. examples; 34. the internal monologue; 35. the imitative use of music; 36. the evocative use of music; 37. the dynamic use of music. 38. The relation of the scenario to montage: the denial of montage (pp. 113 & 114).

Appendix H

Metaphor and film

Metaphoric formulas	
A is like *B*	Explicit comparison (epiphor)
A is *B*	Identity asserted
A replaced by *B*	Identity implied by substitution
A/B	Juxtaposition (diaphor)
Ab, so *b*	Metonymy (associated idea substituted)
A stands for (*ABC*)	Synecdoche (part replaces whole)
O stands for (*ABC*)	Objective correlative
A becomes A or *a*	Distortion (hyperbole, caricature)
ABCD becomes *AbCD*	Rule disruption
$\frac{(A/pqr)}{(B/pqr)}$	Chiming (parallelism)



(Spottiswoode, 1950, pp. 126, 129)

Appendix I

(Turner, 1988)

GENERAL LANGUAGE OF FILM TECHNOLOGY

CAMERA:

1. close-up = strong emotion or crisis
2. slow fade = continuation and completion
3. shot-reverse-shot = conversation or interaction
4. slow-motion = aestheticized/mythologized/eroticized
5. angle up/down = elevated/diminished power of subject
6. point of view = identification/empathy
7. increasing long shot = closure
8. pan left/right = establishing point of view
9. left/right tilt = comic/sinister incongruousness
10. soft focus = romantic subject
11. halo effect (through focus/lighting/lens manipulation) = exaggeratedly glamorous and dreamlike
12. black & white film stock = nostalgic past/newsreel/ documentary

LIGHTING:

13. High-key = realism through unobtrusive illusion of 3-D/few shadows
14. low-key = expressive through exploiting shadows to reveal or hide elements

SOUND:

15. increased volume = increased emotion/action
16. decreased volume = decreased emotion/increased importance of visual

can be used to : enhance realism, act as transitional device, construct the world of the film, create atmosphere, reference subcultures in the film.

Appendix J



ICON. Liv Ullmann in Ingmar Bergman's *Face to Face* (1975). The image is what it is.



INDEX. Liv Ullmann in Bergman's *Shame* (1968). The offer of money—the roll of cash on the pillow—is an index of prostitution and, hence, of Eva's shame.

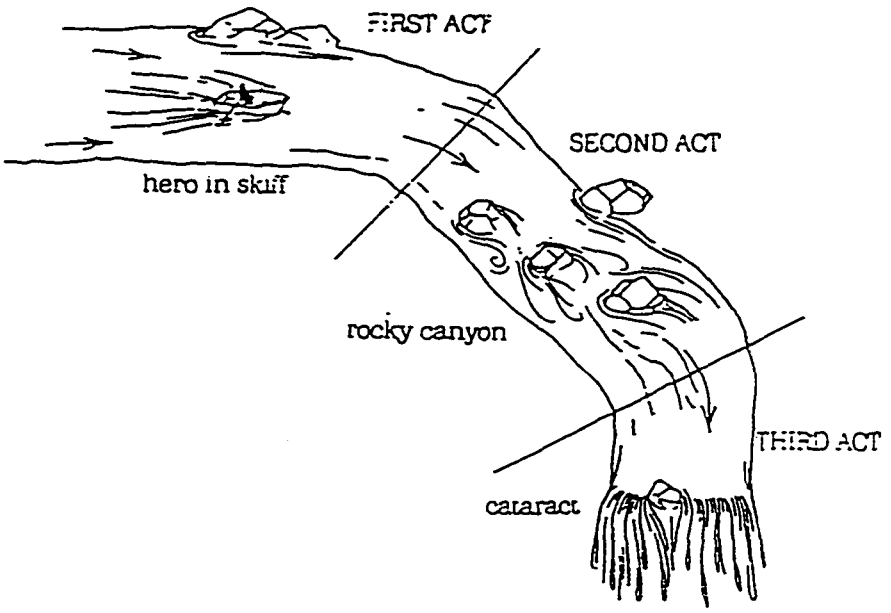


SYMBOL. Bergman often uses coffins and corpses as symbols in his films. Here, Ullmann again in *Face to Face*...

- The Icon: a sign in which the signifier represents the signified mainly by its similarity to it, its likeness;
- The Index: which measures a quality not because it is identical to it but because it has an inherent relationship to it;
- The Symbol: an arbitrary sign in which the signifier has neither a direct or an indexical relationship to the signified, but rather represents it through convention.

(Wollen, 1972, pp. 73, 74, 75)

Appendix K



First Act. Diagram represents a rocky, tumbling river. In this first act you launch your hero and/or heroine in a frail skiff. Once on the way, there is no turning back.

Second Act. The river angles sharply, since your audience should never see ahead, or you will lose suspense. Rocks and rapids make safe passage for the flimsy skiff apparently impossible.

Third Act. Again the river angles sharply. Dead ahead is a roaring cataract. If your protagonist goes over the brink he is bound for glory. How you resolve that final crisis we will explore presently.

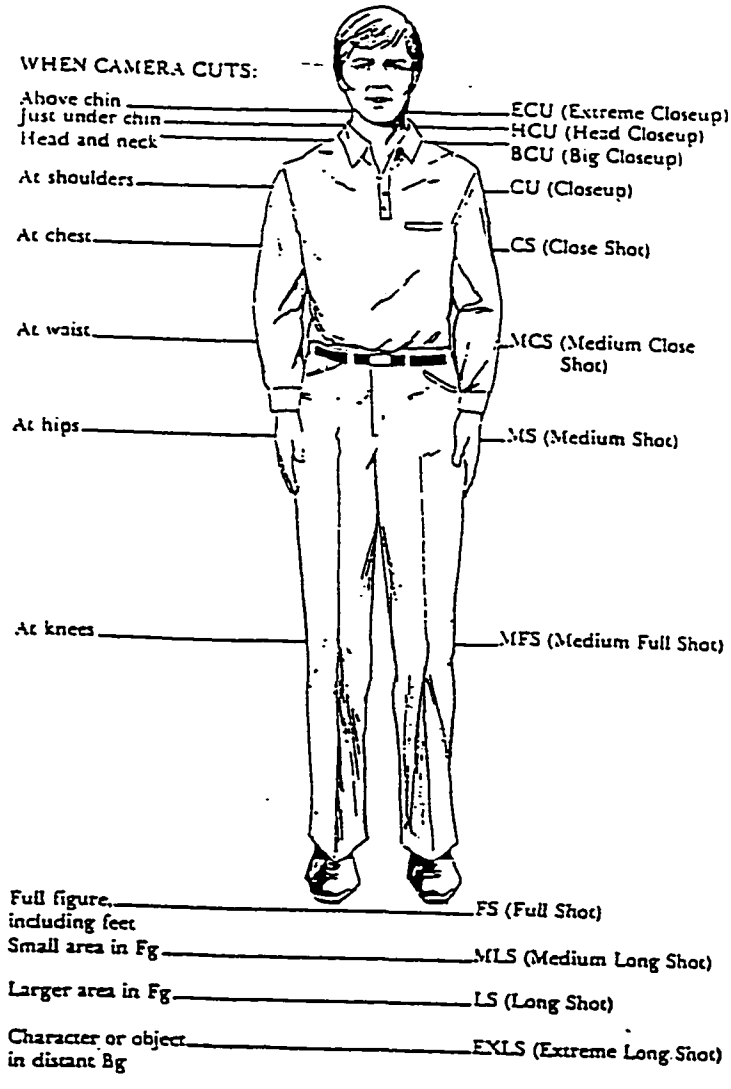
First Act (Beginning)	*Second Act (Middle)*	*Third Act— (End)*
1. Introduce your star character(s).	Intensify your hero's problem with complications.	Resolve his problem, affirmatively or tragically.
2. Face him with a problem or crisis.		
3. Introduce his antagonist (the bad guy).		
4. Set up the *or-else factor*, or *dreadful alternative*.		

(Bronfeld, 1989, pp. 90, 91)

Appendix L

Image Size

Overview of camera shot sizes.

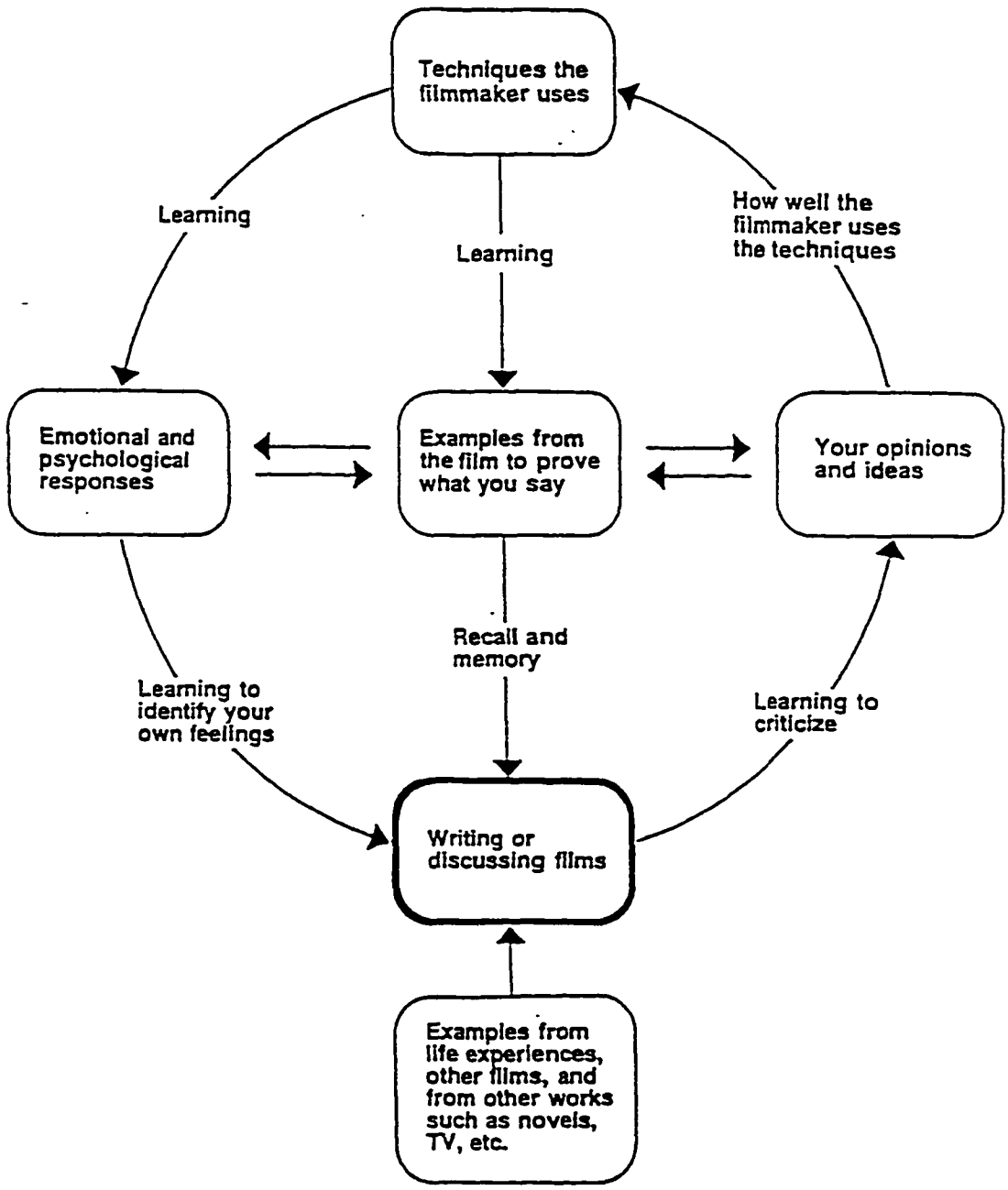


(Cheshire, 1979, p. 60)

Appendix M

Visual Literacy

The cycle of visual (or filmic) literacy.

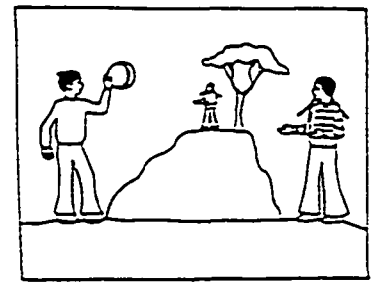


(Bone & Johnson, 1991, p. 20)

Appendix N

Referring to picture #1 to the right,
who is "nearer?"
Circle one: (1) The boy
(2) The girl in the white shirt
(3) The girl in the striped shirt

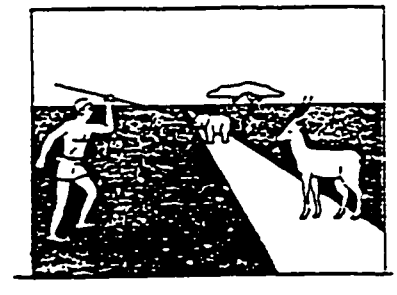
To whom is the boy throwing the ball?
Circle one: (1) The girl in the white shirt
(2) The girl in the striped shirt



PICTURE #1

Referring to picture #2 to the right,
who is "nearer?"
Circle one: (1) The boy
(2) The elephant
(3) The antelope

At which is the boy aiming the spear?
Circle one: (1) The elephant
(2) The antelope

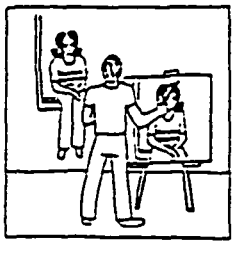


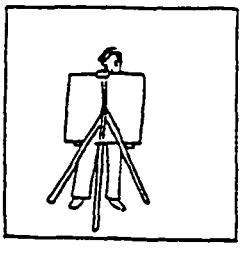
PICTURE # 2

(Hudson, 1960, p. 183; 1967 p. 89)

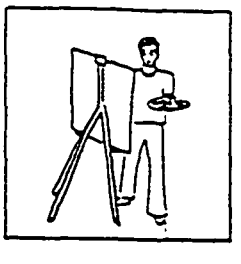
Appendix O

Imagine that you are the person sitting on the window sill in the picture to right. How would you see the painter? Circle one of the 4 pictures below:











(Salomon, 1979, p. 25)

Appendix P

SHOTS AND SCENES

The basic building block of a film is the "shot." A shot is simply what happens in front of the camera from the time the camera starts until it stops. The shot is to a film as a word is to a book. Just as words are put together to make sentences, shots in a film are put together to make scenes. A scene is a single shot or a group of shots usually unified by time and place. Both a sentence and a scene are difficult to define but easy to demonstrate. Let's take a look at the making of just a few seconds of film that will eventually become part of a feature film. Here is the script for two scenes (numbers 114 and 115) from a film:



114 LONG SHOT–Bank building on busy street. Entrance to bank is clearly visible. Pedestrians pass by, uniformed guard stands on right side of door. Charley stands to the left of the revolving door.



Cut to

115 MEDIUM SHOT–Charley
Charley chews his ever-present toothpick and glances around nervously.



Cut to

CLOSE-UP–Charley
He checks his watch.

(Schrank,1991, p. 159)

Appendix Q

POLITICAL AD CODE & CELL NUMBER SHEET

AD CODE NUMBERS:

001. (Negative) HENRY McMASTER (Opponent: FRITZ HOLLINGS)
101. ALTERED VERSION

002. (Positive) BOB ABRAMS
102. ALTERED VERSION

003. (Negative) JOHN SUNUNU (Opponent: HUGH GAHLAN)
103. ALTERED VERSION

004. (Negative) PATTY MURRAY (Opponent: ROD CHANDLER)
104. ALTERED VERSION

005. (Negative) BARBARA NIELSON (Opponent: "CHARLIE")
105. ALTERED VERSION

006. (Positive) DICK HARPOOTLIAN
106. ALTERED VERSION

007. (Negative) RICHARD NIXON (Opponent: HUBERT HUMPHREY)
107. ALTERED VERSION

008. (Negative) JOHN CAMPBELL (Opponent: JIM MILES)
108. ALTERED VERSION

009. (Negative) TED STRICKLAND (Opponent: ROY ROMER)
109. ALTERED VERSION

010. (Positive) BART BARKER
110. ALTERED VERSION

CELL & VIDEO NUMBERS:

1.) 1 - 101 2 - 010	4.) 1 - 002 2 - 110	7.) 1 - 107 2 - 008	10.) 1 - 108 2 - 005
2.) 1 - 001 2 - 106	5.) 1 - 006 2 - 103	8.) 1 - 007 2 - 104	
3.) 1 - 102 2 - 009	6.) 1 - 109 2 - 003	9.) 1 - 004 2 - 105	

Appendix R

INSTRUCTIONS

The first part of this research experiment is a questionnaire that is designed to gather specific information about your background. Your questionnaire will be assigned a number and you will not be asked to identify yourself as part of the demographics.

The second part will consist of 6 short videos for you to analyze. Follow the directions as they appear on the questionnaire and video screen. Please do not turn to the next questionnaire page until after a video has been viewed.

Once you do turn the page you may not go back to any previous pages.

Keep your answers brief, concise, and to the point and please print. Don't write an essay, but rather, use short statements in an outline form. We are looking for your overall general ideas.

Remember, this is not a graded exam. There are no right or wrong answers. Just tell us what you think, not what you think we want to hear. If there is something you don't know or are unsure of, be honest. However if you think that you might know, put down what you think. Don't be afraid to guess.

The last section consists of 2 advertisements. Be sure to follow the "Pause" and "Stop" instructions on the video screen promptly after each video.

If you have any questions during the experiment, please feel free to ask.

REMEMBER to pickup your verification of participation before you leave.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION!

Appendix S

QUESTIONNAIRE

I.D. # _____ -1- Cell # ____ ____
1 2

Do not write on this side of the line.

First I need some descriptive information from you, strictly for statistical purposes. You will not be asked for your name, and your answers will not identify you.

1. How old are you? Write in the number (no fractions please). _____ ____ ____
3 4

<u>For the following questions, circle the appropriate answer:</u>

2. What is your gender? (1) Female (2) Male ____
5

3. What is your marital status? ____
(1) Single (2) Married (3) Divorced 6

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? ____
(1) No high school diplogma (2) High school (or equivalent) 7
(3) Associates degree (or 2-year college) (4) Bachelor's degree
(5) Master's degree (6) Doctorate degree

5. Which best describes your political affiliation? ____
(1) Democratic (2) Republican (3) Independent or other 8

6. Have you have ever worked in the mass media industry? ____
(1) YES (2) NO 9

7. If so, print up to 4 main position(s) which you have held. (If not, print "none" in space #(1).) ____
10
(1) _____ (2) _____
(3) _____ (4) _____

8. Also, how many years have you worked in the mass media industry? ____
(1) None (2) Less than 1 year (3) More than 1 year 11
(4) 5 years or more (5) 10 years or more

9. How many hours per day do you watch television? ____
(1) Less than 1 hour (2) Between 1 and 2 hours 12
(3) Between 2 and 3 hours (4) Between 3 and 4 hours
(5) Between 4 and 5 hours (6) Over 5 hours

10. How often do you watch music video TV programming (such as, CMT, M-TV, TNN, and VH-1)? ____
(1) Frequently (2) Sometimes (3) Not at all 13

Do not write on this side of the line.

11. If you attend college or have attended college in the past, or have a college degree, print what you consider your main major and minor fields of study.
    MAJOR _____ ____ 14
    MINOR _____ ____ 15

12. Print your present occupation.
    OCCUPATION _____ ____ 16

13. Print your home state or country.
    HOME STATE or COUNTRY _____ ____ 17 ____ 18

For the next 3 questions, write in the number that best describes your voting behavior:
1 = Always
2 = Often
3 = Occasionally
4 = Never
5 = I'm not yet 18 years old

14. How often do you vote in LOCAL elections? ____ ____ 19

15. How often do you vote in PRIMARY elections? ____ ____ 20

16. How often do you vote in GENERAL elections? ____ ____ 21

Next you will have the opportunity to view a series of sample videos.
After viewing each video, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "PAUSE" button and to turn to the next page of the questionnaire to answer questions.

If headphones have been provided, please put them on now.

When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch the first two videos, Video #1 and Video #2.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED VIDEOS #1 & #2.

Do not write on this side of the line.

17. Was there any difference in the production technique between Video #1 and Video #2?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain ____ 22

If you think so, briefly describe below what you thought the main difference was. (Please print.) (If not or uncertain, leave the spaces blank or make a guess if you can.)

VIDEO #1 - _____ ____ 23
_____

VIDEO #2 - _____ ____ 24
_____

18. Was there any indication that some of the visual information presented in the videos might be more important than the rest?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain ____ 25

If you think so, briefly describe below how this was indicated. (Please print.) (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____ ____ 26

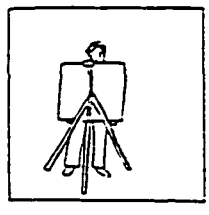
Next you will have the opportunity to view Video #3. After doing so, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "PAUSE" button and turn to the next page of the questionnaire. When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch Video #3.

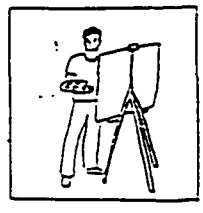
PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED VIDEO #3.

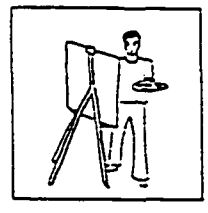
Do not write on this side of the line.

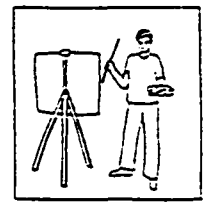
19. Imagine that you are the person sitting on the window sill in the picture to right. How would you see the painter? Circle one of the 4 pictures below:











27

20. Do you think the manner in which the camera is used to film the action in Video #3 is different in any way from normal action filming?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain
If you think so, briefly print how below. (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

28

29

21. Briefly describe why you think the director of the scene shown in Video #3 used the camera the way he did to film the action. (Please print.) (If you are unsure, print "uncertain" or make a guess if you can.)

30

Next you will have the opportunity to view Video #4.
After viewing the video, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "PAUSE" button and turn to the next page of the questionnaire.
When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch Video #4.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED VIDEO #4.

Do not write on this side of the line.

22. Did you see any video technique used between the church congregation and the men running on the beach in Video #4?

Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain ____ 31

If so, what is it? Please name of it or briefly describe it below. (Please print.) (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____ ____ 32

23. If a video technique is used in Video #4, what is its purpose? Briefly print below what you think. (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____

_____ ____ 33

Next you will have the opportunity to view Video #5.
After viewing the video, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "PAUSE" button and turn to the next page of the questionnaire.
When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch Video #5.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED VIDEO #5.

Do not write on this side of the line.



24. Do you know how the shot pointed out in Video #5 and shown above was photographed to look the way it does?

Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain

34

If so, briefly print a description of how it was done below. (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____

_____

35

25. Briefly describe below why you think the director chose to shown this shot in this manner in Video #5. (Please print.) (If you are unsure, print "uncertain" or make a guess if you can.)

_____

_____

36

Next you will have the opportunity to view Video #6.
After viewing the video, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "PAUSE" button and turn to the next page of the questionnaire.
When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch Video #6.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED VIDEO #6.

Do not write on this side of the line.

26. Do you think there is a video technique used to get from the shot of the caveman's bone flipping through the air to the shot of the space ship in Video #6? Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain
Please print how you think it is done below. (If you are unsure, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____ 37

27. Do you think there was a certain video technique used to film the action of the caveman beating the bones and the bone flipping through the air in Video #6?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO or Uncertain

38

If you think so, briefly describe it below. (Please print.) (If not or uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

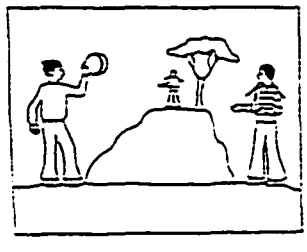
_____ 39

28. What do you think the overall meaning or message is to the sequence of images in Video #6? Briefly describe it below. (Please print.) (If you are uncertain, leave the space blank or make a guess if you can.)

_____

_____ 40

29. Referring to picture #1 to the right, who is "nearer" to you?
Circle one: (1) The boy
(2) The girl in the white shirt
(3) The girl in the striped shirt



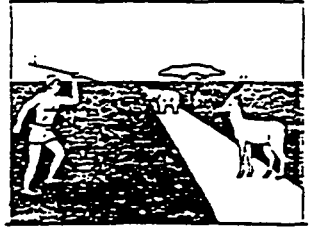
PICTURE #1

41

30. To whom is the boy throwing the ball?
Circle one: (1) The girl in the white shirt
(2) The girl in the striped shirt

42

31. Referring to picture #2 to the right, who is "nearer" to you?
Circle one: (1) The boy
(2) The elephant
(3) The antelope



PICTURE #2

43

32. At which is the boy aiming the spear?
Circle one: (1) The elephant
(2) The antelope

44

Next you will have the opportunity to view Commercial #1.
After viewing the commercial, you will be directed on the video screen to press the "STOP" button and turn to the next page of the questionnaire.
When you are ready you may push the "PLAY" button on the VCR to watch Commercial #1.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE VIEWED COMMERCIAL #1.

Do not write on this side of the line.

33. Did you recognize any of the candidate(s) shown or mentioned in this ad? Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO

45

34. The political ad you saw is best described as (place a check mark on your choice):
____ Strongly Negative
____ Negative
____ Neutral
____ Positive
____ Strongly Positive

46

35. Briefly, print why you feel this way below.

_____

_____

47

36. Check the statement that best describes the political ad that you saw:
____ The ad dealt with the personality and character of the candidate.
____ The ad dealt with an issue or policy question.

48

37. Briefly, print points you remember about the candidate SPONSORING the ad below. (If none, print "none.")

_____

_____

49

38. Briefly, print points you remember from the ad about the OPPOSING candidate below. (If none, print "none.")

_____

_____

50

39. Do you remember the name of the candidate who SPONSORED the ad?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO (3) Not Mentioned
If so, print it here: _____

51

52

40. Do you remember the name of the candidate OPPOSING the one who sponsored the ad?
Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO (3) Not Mentioned
If so, print it here: _____

53

54

41. Briefly print, what you think the main idea being expressed in the ad is below.

_____

_____

55

Do not write on this side of the line.

42. Please react to (CANDIDATE'S NAME) on each of the scales below.
For example, if you think he/she is **very pleasant**, you would check the UNPLEASANT-PLEASANT scale as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
UNPLEASANT	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: _X_	: PLEASANT

On the other hand, if you think he/she is **very unpleasant**, you would rate him/her as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
UNPLEASANT	: _X_	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: PLEASANT

If you think he/she is **somewhere between** these two extremes, then you would check the space which best represents your reaction on the scale.

If you feel that you have **no reaction** to (CANDIDATE'S NAME) on any scale, please check space number 4 to indicate your neutrality.

(CANDIDATE'S NAME)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
UNQUALIFIED	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: QUALIFIED	___ 56
UNSOPHISTICATED	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SOPHISTICATED	___ 57
DISHONEST	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: HONEST	___ 58
BELIEVABLE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNBELIEVABLE	___ 59
UNSUCCESSFUL	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SUCCESSFUL	___ 60
ATTRACTIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNATTRACTIVE	___ 61
UNFRIENDLY	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: FRIENDLY	___ 62
INSINCERE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SINCERE	___ 63
CALM	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: EXCITABLE	___ 64
STRONG	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: WEAK	___ 65
AGGRESSIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNAGGRESSIVE	___ 66
INACTIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ACTIVE	___ 67

Do not write on this side of the line.

43. Please give us your feelings toward the candidate SPONSORING the ad and his/her OPPONENT on the scale below.
Ratings between **50** and **100** degrees mean that you **feel favorable and warm** toward the individual.
Ratings between **0** and **50** degrees mean that you **don't feel particularly favorable** toward the individual.
If you **do not feel particularly warm or cold**, you would rate the individual at the **50** degrees mark.

0 ----------50----------100

Rate the SPONSOR, : ____ degrees. 68-70

Rate the OPPONENT, : ____ degrees. 71-73

(IF THERE IS NO OPPOSING CANDIDATE MENTIONED PUT A "0" IN THE SPACE.)

Do not write on this side of the line.

44. Please react to the OPPONENT, CANDIDATE'S NAME, on each of the scales below. For example, if you think he/she is **very pleasant**, you would check the UNPLEASANT-PLEASANT scale as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
UNPLEASANT	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: _X_	: PLEASANT

On the other hand, if you think he/she is **very unpleasant**, you would rate him/her as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
UNPLEASANT	: _X_	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: PLEASANT

If you think he/she is **somewhere between** these two extremes, then you would check the space which best represents your reaction on the scale.

If you feel that you have **no reaction** to (OPPONENT'S NAME) on any scale, please check space number 4 to indicate your neutrality.

(OPPONENT'S NAME)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
UNQUALIFIED	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: QUALIFIED	___ 74
UNSOPHISTICATED	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SOPHISTICATED	___ 75
DISHONEST	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: HONEST	___ 76
BELIEVABLE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNBELIEVABLE	___ 77
UNSUCCESSFUL	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SUCCESSFUL	___ 78
ATTRACTIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNATTRACTIVE	___ 79
UNFRIENDLY	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: FRIENDLY	___ 80
INSINCERE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: SINCERE	___ 81
CALM	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: EXCITABLE	___ 82
STRONG	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: WEAK	___ 83
AGGRESSIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: UNAGGRESSIVE	___ 84
INACTIVE	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ___	: ACTIVE	___ 85

Do not write on this side of the line.

Please respond to the following questions by telling us how much you agree or disagree with the statement. For instance, if you **agree very strongly,** you would mark the **7**. If you **disagree very strongly,** you would mark the **1**.
If the statement is **somewhere between** these two extremes, then you would check the space that best represents your reaction on the scale.
If you feel that you have **no reaction,** please check space number **4** to indicate your neutrality.

45. The ad was based on facts.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 86

46. The ad was fair.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 87

47. The ad was truthful.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 88

48. The ad would help a voter choose a candidate.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 89

49. The ad was honest.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 90

50. The ad was misleading.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

____ 91

If you felt it was, briefly describe why you thought it was misleading below. (Please print.)

_____

_____ ____ 92

Do not write on this side of the line.

51. The ad was ethical.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DISAGREE	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: AGREE

93

If you felt that it was not ethical, briefly describe why. (Please print.)

_____

_____ 94

52. Where there any visual or audio techniques used in the ad which may have distorted or commented on the presentation of the ideas?

Circle one: (1) YES (2) NO 95

If so, briefly describe them. (Please print.)

_____

_____

_____

_____ 96

53. Write in any visual or audio elements used in the ad which you thought made the ad interesting. Print "none" if you thought there weren't any. (Please print.)

_____

_____

_____

_____ 97

54. On a scale of 1 through 7, mark how likely it would be for you to vote for the OPPONENT, (CANDIDATE).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
VERY UNLIKELY	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: VERY LIKELY

98

Briefly describe why. (Please print.)

_____

_____ 99

Do not write on this side of the line.

55. On a scale of 1 through 7, mark how likely it would be for you to vote for the candidate SPONSORING the ad, (CANDIDATE'S NAME).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
VERY UNLIKELY	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____	: ____ :	VERY LIKELY

Briefly describe why.

_____

_____

100

- 8 -

56. Did any of the visual or audio techniques used in the ad seem troublesome or suspect to you? Circle one: YES NO

101

If so, briefly describe the ones that you remember and how each influenced you. If not, write "none."

_____

_____

_____

_____

102

57. Describe anything unique or anything that stood out to you about the way the material in the ad was presented. You may also include your personal comments.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

103

104

Thank you very much for your time.

Please press the "REWIND" button on the VCR and return this questionnaire to the lab attendant.

Appendix T

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION CODE SHEET

1. RIDICULE
2. NEGATIVE TACTICS
3. POSITIVE TACTICS
4. CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE
   (+ Sponsor)
   (- Opponent)
5. ISSUES / CONTENT
6. PERSUASION TACTICS
7. MORE INFORMATION NEEDED
8. SKEPTICAL ATTITUDE
   (Disagreement)
   (Ineffectual)
9. OTHER
   (Name recognition, Incumbant, Political position, Personal voting behavior, No recall, Party affiliation, etc.)

#96, #97, #156, & #157:

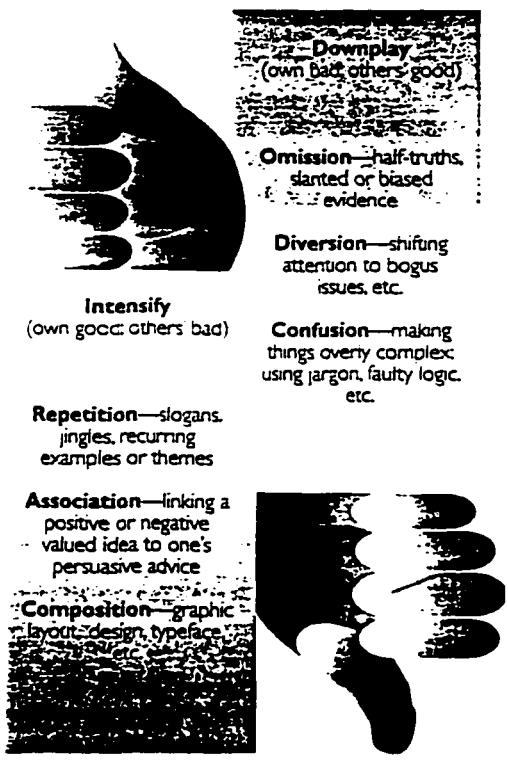
0. NO / NONE
1 - 9. NUMBER OF MENTIONS

#103, #104, #163, & #164:

1. VISUAL TECHNIQUES
2. AUDIO TECHNIQUES
3. VISUAL & AUDIO TECHNIQUES
4. ISSUES / CONTENT
5. NEGATIVE TACTICS
6. POSITIVE TACTICS
7. PERSUASION TACTICS
8. CYNICAL ATTITUDE
   (Disagreement)
   (Ineffectual)
9. OTHER

Appendix U

Hugh Rank's Intensify/Downplay Schema

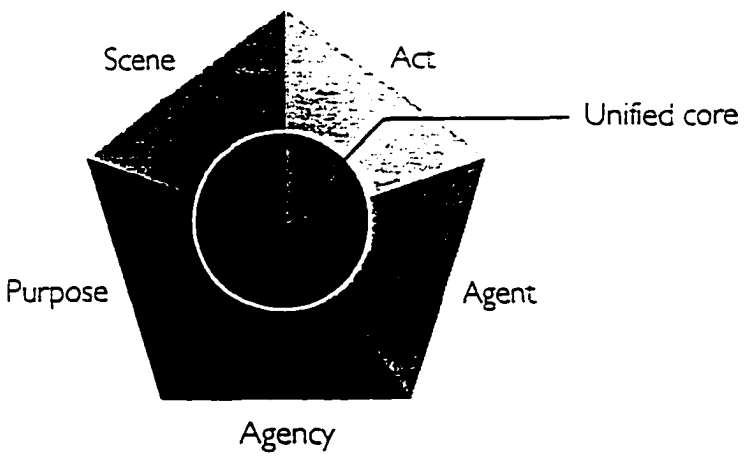


(Rank, 1976 p. 15)

Appendix V

Kenneth Burke's Dramatistic Pentad Model

The five elements of dramatism ultimately affect one another and each emerge from a common unified core — the drama itself.



Scene is where the action occurs.
Act refers to any motivated or purposeful action.
Agent is the person or group who take action with in the scene.
Agency is the tool, method, or means used by persuaders to accomplish their ends.
Purpose is the reason an agent acts in a given scene using a particular agency.

(Burke, 1960 p. 31)