

Engendering and Activating Emotions Through Presidential Television Advertisements

By

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I am deeply grateful for my friends and family, who I would not be here without. Their unwavering support and belief in me is what keeps me going. I would also like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to my thesis advisor, Professor Davin Phoenix, for guiding me through this for an entire year and assisting me in every stage of this massive research project, as well as his insightful comments and suggestions in the completion of this work.

“Politics is an emotional game and TV is an emotional media, that is why it is the preferred battle ground.”

- Kyle Roberts

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Literature Review.....	7
Research Design and Methodology.....	14
Results and Data Analysis.....	19
Discussion and Conclusion.....	42
Appendix.....	51

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to advance work on how emotions play a role in political advertising. The current landscape shows that there are still numerous questions that must be answered in terms of what emotions are activated and engendered, and the why behind these emotions. For this, I conducted a survey and had people watch advertisements and see what emotions were activated, and see if these emotions were intended or not by the candidate and their team. Additionally, I explored whether these emotions actually played a role in affecting how these participants viewed the candidate before and after they watched the advertisement. An analysis of this data shows that political advertising sometimes activated emotions that would not be expected, and I examined how these emotions affect participants' view of the candidate. The research also illustrates that both negative and positive advertisements have a place in political advertising. This survey and my subsequent discussion and conclusions of my research questions exhibits that emotions play a massive role in political advertising and decision-making. This research reveals that even though the Internet is currently rising as a medium that candidates might take advantage of, television advertising has, and always will, have a place in political campaigns, and elections as a whole.

Introduction

Be it shoes, clothes, or jewelry, the aim of advertising is to sell the audience something. It is no different from political advertising. Political advertisements are selling you something: the candidate. To do this, they have to sell the audience a message. A view, decision, or side that the candidate is on, which differs from the rest of the field, to make them stand out. The current method of advertising a candidate in this day and age is television. The reason that this medium is the most prevalent is because the vehicle of television lends itself to both visual and audio cues that can resonate with the audience. Through this resonance, we find that the audiences have emotions. We can see that audiences use emotions to drive their decisions, so the question is how campaigns use television advertisements to activate and engender emotions. To answer this question, I created and set up a survey that I conducted to further the research that has already been created on this subject, but to also carve its place in terms of not only how emotions are used but also what emotions are being used and how television presidential advertisements are used.

The most popular and well-known advertisement is the “Daisy” advertisement from Lyndon B. Johnson’s 1964 presidential campaign. Even though this advertisement was only aired once, its impact was imminent. The spread and message were seen by campaigns and the general population alike as a turning point in political advertising history. Later, political candidates would use the “Daisy” advertisement as inspiration. Due to this, this advertisement set the standard for what an advertisement should set out to do. This advertisement was only played once; however, it was pulled after protests of using the nuclear war to its advantage were brought up, which only added to the mythos of this advertisement. Using this as a historical example, we

can see that advertisements have a place in political culture and can actively affect elections and political decision-making.

In this way, we must look at advertisements and emotions as connected. Political advertisements are meant to sell something, and in the case of presidential election advertisements, they are selling that candidate. To do this, they must give an audience a message. This message must then evoke an emotion in the audience. For this, the question must be asked of what advertisements and emotions are most likely to be engendered and activated. For this, I look towards my survey and my research to answer that and many other questions.

Literature Review

The subject of emotions playing a role in campaign advertisements has interested many politicians and political scientists before, as understanding this type of research and methodology can help campaigns get the perfect advertisement. Understanding what kind of emotions are felt through advertisements and what sticks with specific audiences can be crucial in creating advertisements for the future because knowing what works and what doesn't can help a candidate create something more memorable, which can sway voters. In this field, many scholars have used surveys and experiments to test and find the cause of emotional reactions in political advertising, which we can see in scholarly articles and books.

What we know today about how campaign advertisements use emotions is built on the foundation of Ted Brader's book, *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Campaign Ads Use Emotion and Information to Sway the Electorate*. This book was the first-ever scientific study examining the effects of emotions on voters and their decisions based on their emotions. In this book, Brader argues that emotions are crucial in how a voter will perceive a campaign advertisement. Brader argues that there is actually a science behind creating campaign advertisements. Before that, however, Brader answers the question of why emotions. In his words, the average U.S. citizen cares little, knows little, and participates little¹. His multiple experiments put this knowledge and theory of emotions to the test. This book has multiple experiments where he changes little things like music and imagery and how these small changes can significantly impact emotions. The emotions that conjure up when watching an advertisement are usually manufactured so people feel that way on purpose. On the topic of his

¹ Brader, Ted Allen. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Campaign Ads Use Emotion and Information to Sway the Electorate*. 1999 Page 73.

studies, he says, “These studies argue that the emotional aspects of political communication and the emotional responses of citizens can alter how citizens process new information, form political attitudes, and make political choices” (Page 111)². Brader is saying that he expects his research to bridge the gap between people's emotions when they watch advertisements and their choices with those emotions. Brader is saying how his research offers a unification for resolving tensions between rational and partisan models of political choice and also gives a way to explain the significance of different approaches to campaign politics¹.

Despite his research making strides in understanding this topic further, Brader admits that there are still some gaps and doubts in the knowledge of this research. Brader mentions how voters might have other anxieties stemming from various sources, as his research to date simply assumes that the responses come directly from the candidates and the issues at hand. The correlation in the data also does not allow for the conclusion that anxiety played a causal role, as, in fact, anxiety towards the candidate could even be a result of the behavioral changes¹.

While Brader's book was a groundbreaking contribution to the field, it was published over two decades ago. In light of the significant changes in technology and communication since then, I aim to update and apply Brader's insights to the modern era. By leveraging the anonymity of online surveys and the vast reach of the Internet, I aim to address Brader's concerns about the potential bias in his research methods.

One intriguing aspect of emotions in political campaign advertising is the lasting impact of negative advertisements. This part of the field was highlighted in Marcelle Rathie Nama's article, *The effects of negative political direct comparative television advertisements on voter evaluations and voting decisions of viewers*, as it provides valuable insights in this area. Their

² Brader, Ted Allen. *Campaigning for Hearts and Minds: How Campaign Ads Use Emotion and Information to Sway the Electorate*. 1999 Page 111.

findings suggest that negative comparative advertising can turn voters away from the advertisement's target³. This idea helped decide that negative advertisements have a place in political advertising. The actual impact of negative advertisements warrants further research and exploration, however, as this research doesn't account for the theory that negative advertisements make a more lasting impact than positive advertisements, which was one of the driving forces for one of the research questions in my research.

We also know, broadly speaking, how being moved by political campaign advertisements is crucial. The article by David J. Grüning and Thomas W. Schubert, *Emotional Campaigning in Politics: Being Moved and Anger in Political Ads Motivate to Support Candidate and Party*, answers the question of what types of emotions play a role. They answered it through an experiment they did where they also talked about the idea of Kama Muta. As they describe it, Kama Muta is a feeling of being moved. They also discuss the emotion of anger playing a considerable role (one of the four emotions I used in my experiment)⁴. They would go on to talk about the differences of the two and how they're opposites. Despite this, they concur that both of these types of advertisements can mobilize their supporters. An example of this is the rise of attack ads. The number of attack ads in the United States has gone up, as from 2014 to 2018, the number of attack ads during the midterms went up 61 percent⁵. Because of this, and the experiment they did where they showed eight ads from eight different candidates, they deduced that people get especially moved or angered by political ads commissioned by the party they

³ Naman, M. R. (2000). *The effects of negative political direct comparative television advertisements on voter evaluations and voting decisions of viewers* (Order No. 1398262). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304647828). Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/effects-negative-political-direct-comparative/docview/304647828/se-2>

⁴ Grüning, David J., and Thomas W. Schubert. "Emotional Campaigning in Politics: Being Moved and Anger in Political Ads Motivate to Support Candidate and Party." *Frontiers*, Frontiers, 13 Dec. 2021, www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.781851/full

⁵ Wesleyan Media Project (2018b). 61% Increase in Volume of Negative Ads. Available online at: <https://mediaproject.wesleyan.edu/103018/> (accessed December 19, 2021)

identify with more³. Further research and insight showed that they had a three-way interaction of the video party, the viewer's party preference, and the emotion evocation in predicting the participant's support motivation. This means that when Kama Muta was evoked, it really only translated into support if the source of the emotion was an ad by one's already initially preferred party⁶. Despite this, they recognized limits in their anger portion of the study, as their present findings of anger were the first of their kind they were aware of⁶.

This is why having presidential television advertisements in my study that provoke anger is crucial. It didn't have to be directed at anyone else, like their competition, but anger, as an emotion, can come from anywhere. The limitation of Grüning and Schubert's study was based on how anger was the only component in their study that was neither significantly affected by political ads nor that it didn't affect people's motivation to support a political campaign. The gap here is because they separated Kama Muta and anger, while, in my opinion, both could have been interwoven.

The question of how emotions can influence public behavior and opinion can be answered by examining *The Emotional Campaign: How Emotions Influence Political Behavior and Judgment* by Christopher Robert Weber. Weber discusses how emotions are integral to political decision-making and behavior. The part to focus on when looking at the argument tied to voting is when Weber talks about how: "following exposure to fear-evoking messages, weak evidence was found to support the notion that issue considerations were more important than party loyalties on vote choice, whereas enthusiasm advertisements strengthened the effect of PID on vote choice. Moreover, anger was found to have an effect comparable to enthusiasm, as both

⁶ Naman, M. R. (2000). *The effects of negative political direct comparative television advertisements on voter evaluations and voting decisions of viewers* (Order No. 1398262). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304647828). Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/effects-negative-political-direct-comparative/docview/304647828/se-2>

affective intelligence and appraisal theories would suggest.”⁷ Research has been conducted on this, and findings backed how crucial emotions play in political decision-making and behavior. Not only that, but his research has reinforced my theory about how angry advertisements can have a bigger impact than advertisements that are more positive or deal more with policy and issues. Despite this, no research has been done on what makes these advertisements really stick out. This is why, in my research, I want to see what people liked and disliked about specific advertisements.

It was crucial to focus on why emotions like sadness and fear are essential for political campaigns in their advertising. The question was why advertisements that inflict sadness and fear are so prominent, yet in everyday life, no one chooses to feel negative emotions. Travis Ridout and Kathleen Searles answer this in their paper, *It's My Campaign I'll Cry if I Want to: How and When Campaigns Use Emotional Appeals*. This paper breaks ground on studies of why negative emotions charge political decisions so much, as they state: “...research finds that individuals experiencing anxiety are likely to increase their assessments of risk when contemplating action; thus individuals who feel anxious about a candidate may see greater risk in relying on easy partisan cues, leading them to thoughtfully process information about a candidate in the race.”⁸. Because of these findings, the reason why politicians use these tactics is because they make people more susceptible and vulnerable to being swayed one way or another with information, as their emotions are all over the place. This was important for my research because I used

⁷ Weber, C. R. (2008). *The emotional campaign: How emotions influence political behavior and judgment* (Order No. 3406694). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (288306247). Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/emotional-campaign-how-emotions-influence/docview/288306247/se-2> Page 247

⁸ Ridout, Travis N., and Kathleen Searles. “It’s My Campaign I’ll Cry If I Want to: How and When Campaigns Use Emotional Appeals.” *Political Psychology*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2011, pp. 439–58. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41262871>. Page 445

advertisements that didn't have an evident emotion. Still, I wanted to see what emotions people would feel from watching an advertisement rather than knowingly picking a "sad" or "fearful" advertisement for them to watch.

Christopher Weber's other work, *Emotions, Campaigns, and Political Participation*, delved further into how these types of questions should be surveyed and what research needs to be done. It answers these questions by outlining how an experiment should look. Here, Brader had participants watch four different advertisements that each provoked a different emotion: fear, anger, sadness, and enthusiasm. This outline and foundation were crucial for later experiments like mine in laying the groundwork for what was to be expected of participants and how to approach such a process. Despite this, other factors were in play during his experiments, like advertisements that focused on drugs and crime rates⁹. My research dilutes it by solely focusing on the participants and how the participants go about talking about themselves and each other.

Television advertising in electoral campaigns is still prevalent today. Darrell M. West's work, *Television Advertising in Election Campaigns*, discusses why. West answers why television advertisements are still a big part of any political campaign. Commercials are still one of the more dominant means of candidate communication in these types of races. This is because, in his words, "Commercials that are rebroadcast for free during the news not only save the candidate money and reach a huge audience, they also evoke great credibility on the part of view because of the general believability of journalistic outlets. Ads furthermore shape campaign themes and overall storylines about the candidates."¹⁰ So the reason why television advertisements are crucial in any era for any generation is that it is free. The spreadability can

⁹ Weber, Christopher. "Emotions, Campaigns, and Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 2, 2013, pp. 414–28. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23563153>. Page 416

¹⁰ West, Darrell M. "Television Advertising in Election Campaigns." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 109, no. 5, 1994, pp. 789–809. JSTOR, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2152532>. Page 803

reach a wider audience of different age ranges than the newspaper (who skew towards the older generation) and the Internet (which skews towards the younger generation). For this, I chose advertisements that spanned multiple generations because even though television advertisements have been and will continue to be around for a long time, the style and presentation of these advertisements change, which I will also be taking a closer look at.

Research Design and Methodology

This paper aims to answer the following questions:

- 1) What factors distinguish an effective television advertisement for a presidential candidate?
- 2) How do effective advertisements engender and activate emotions among their intended audience?
- 3) Which do participants prefer: Negative ads or Positive ads?
- 4) How do advertisements communicate their main message, and how easily can participants pick up on these messages?
- 5) Is there such a thing as the perfect advertisement?

The first two questions are my central questions (Q1 and Q2), while the final three (Q3, Q4, Q5) are supplementary ones that I hope my research will answer. They are also more open-ended questions, while qualitative and quantitative research can answer the first two. Based on my review of relevant scholarship, I hypothesize that what factors make up an effective television design would be a good style, a hook, and, above all, a message that people could easily find and understand. Understanding and agreeing are two different things in this case, as many advertisements are attack-heavy, so many people might not agree with them.

According to my expectations, effective advertising would stem from engendering and activating emotions by playing into the fact that it is meant to make you feel sadness, anger, happiness, etc., towards its intended audience. Because of this, I expect that people will feel strongly towards positive advertisements because they will understand and relate to them more

since they will be happier. For Q4, I hypothesize that advertisements would communicate their message through practices like showing it off right or subliminal messages throughout.

I utilized observational and causal methodologies. I observe people in a way that has a cause and effect. The reason is they watch advertisements, and to see what effect it has on them, I had participants take a survey on how they feel about candidates before and after. Seeing how people react to advertisements will help me understand what kinds of emotions are being brought out and if these emotions are intended or not. Looking at these advertisements, participants will then be asked a series of questions before and after to see if there was an effect, if at all, it had on a participant's view of a candidate.

Within the scope of my study, I exposed people to four different kinds of presidential television advertisements. I had my participants take a survey about what kinds of emotions they felt before and after and how they felt about that candidate. I used closed-ended and open-ended questions that allowed me to take quantitative and qualitative approaches. Since my participants provided a great deal of information, I wanted to limit the number of advertisements that they would actually see.

My independent variable is presidential campaign advertisements. I present them with the intention to activate and engender emotions among the participants. My universe would be the general population. A general population would be the best universe for this type of research because they give me a general sense of how people would react to a television advertisement. I don't want to lean one way or another or seek out a specific audience because I want to see how these advertisements affect a population or an entire audience. The impact of the difference-maker, or presidential campaign television advertisement, is supposed to engender and activate emotions among an intended audience. Whether it is to mobilize their supporters or to

turn non-believers into supporters, an advertisement has to have a goal, and it is the goal to find in which way these advertisements impact emotionally. My comparison cases would be that I would be comparing four different campaign advertisements from four different elections. Due to this, different trends and styles will appear because every election is different. I want to compare and contrast whether commercials have gotten more attack-heavy or have always been attack-heavy.

My primary expectation is that people will remember negative advertisements more than positive advertisements. I expect people to remember negative advertisements more than positive ones because most popular advertisements, like Daisy and George W. Bush's Wind Sailing advertisements, were very negative.

The reason I chose presidential campaign advertisements is that they're more readily available. Not only that, but I hope that with my research and findings, campaigns for presidential advertisements can actually be used to change the advertisements. Campaign advertisements don't really determine elections on a more local level, and so I want to be able to use my findings on a more national level. Not only that, but through dedicated websites like The Living Room candidate, I want to inspire some of the people I surveyed to view more presidential television advertisements.

I chose four presidential television advertisements for my study because I felt like it was the perfect number. When looking at presidential advertisements, they usually fall into one of four quadrants: Democratic positive, Republican positive, Democratic negative, and Republican negative. This study's positives are about the candidates behind the advertisements themselves, while the negative advertisements are all directed at the other party.

The reason for choosing one in each quadrant is that I want my subjects to be exposed to differences in terms of the content, message, and style that really highlight the different varieties of advertisements across party lines. Additionally, I chose advertisements from all throughout American history to show the evolution of advertisements. Having four separate and distinct advertisements made the most sense, as it also allows the person taking the survey to be invested but won't take too much of their time. In my three attempts as practice rounds, purposely going slow, average, and fast, I averaged about 3-9 minutes. I feel like anything under 10 minutes would have been good, as anything above would have felt too long and arduous.

I chose Google Forms as my mode to publish my survey because it was fast and easy for me to create. Most of the people I surveyed had experience with the Google suite, so it was familiar to them. Giving them any sense of comfort was important to me because I wanted them to be able to take the survey as optimally as possible, without any outside forces that might have swayed them. An example of this was that I had earlier attempted to use SurveyMonkey. I ran into a lot of trouble when trying to set it up and do a few practice runs, as it was new software. Because of this, I didn't want my survey takers to feel the same way, so I went with a survey website that more people would have felt more comfortable and familiar with. I wanted to start by ensuring they consented adequately to the questions themselves. If the participant felt they might be exposed for their answers, and it was tied to their name, they would have been swayed one way or another. Due to this, my survey didn't ask for any names but rather just other general information like age, employment, school, and party affiliation. This was just to ensure the participants had some sort of identification.

The bulk of the research was to have participants take a survey about a candidate before watching the advertisement. This survey was to see how they felt about a candidate and the

emotions associated with the candidate. Afterwards, they would watch the advertisement, and then take a post-survey. The pre and post-survey were about the same to see if there were any differences or changes that occurred after watching the advertisement. This survey contained answers that could easily be translated into numerical values (1=Very unfamiliar to 5=Very familiar), which would help later on with plotting the data. After asking participants if they were familiar with a candidate and their advertisements, I went into asking the participants how they felt about the candidate. These questions included attributes such as how strongly you feel about the candidate. Afterward, in the post-survey, it would ask them what emotions were brought out after they watched it. These emotions were: happiness, anger, sadness, hope, and surprise. I chose these five emotions because they encapsulate what the five most common emotions these advertisements were trying to bring out of the audience. Afterward, I would ask them what they liked and disliked about the advertisement. This was to gauge if there was anything of note and if people had the same issues or compliments regarding the advertisements. Finally, I asked the participants to rank the advertisements from least favorite to most favorite. In doing this, I wanted to see how the advertisements stacked up to each other and if there was a consensus first-place advertisement.

Results and Data Analysis

When looking at my first question (1. What factors distinguish an effective television advertisement for a presidential candidate?), I want to look at all the advertisements' positives and negatives to see what people like and dislike. The first is that a lot of people prefer music over non-music. When looking at the (n=48) responses, over half of the respondents favored music over not having music. This can be seen in the “likes” question, where they talked about how they liked the music and how, in other advertisements, without music, some respondents disliked how there was no music. Because of this, it is safe to say that music plays a vital role in how an advertisement responds to an advertisement and how it directly links to how much they like it. Despite this, with the music in the JFK advertisement, some people found the song repetitive and loud. Because of this, the best scenario would be to have music that resonates with people but not make it overbearing both sonically and musically.

Even though the second advertisement (Mondale Ad) fared the worst in favorability among the participants, placing last in terms of favorite advertisement, some parts were still liked, which is a factor in making an effective television advertisement. Some participants liked the patriotism and the imagery that followed that. Due to this, the idea of uniting people under the umbrella of America worked in favor of the advertisement and the candidate rather than working against it. Patriotism, even though working in favor of most, can still be seen as patronizing, as some participants had feedback saying that the pro-America imagery in the Mondale advertisement was overbearing. This balance of having a strong message while not being overwhelming is similar to the music, but this can be achieved in ways other than sound, like through visual or audio means. The anti-war message resonated with a lot of people as well, but this was also negative for some other people due to the gun noises and what they perceived to

be fear-mongering. In this case, it is essential, as shown here, for presidential candidates to make sure that the message is direct but also that it shouldn't be forceful in pushing a person one way or another, especially with audio and visual cues that might incite a flight or fight response due to the graphic noises and imagery.

The third advertisement (Bush Ad) elicited a diverse range of reactions, reflecting the challenge of crafting political ads that resonate with a broad spectrum of viewers. This diversity of opinions and feelings serves as a testament to the complexity of creating effective advertisements in the political sphere.

Rank the ads in order of your favorite to least favorite:

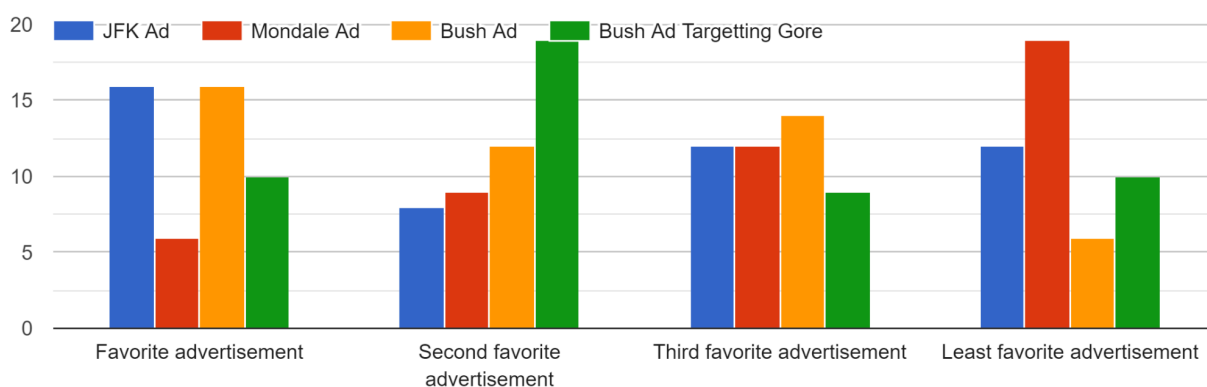


Figure 1: Participants' Ranking of Advertisements

Looking at this advertisement, it can be ascertained that the polarizing response is because the message is overwhelmingly pro-American. The advertisement was even more pro-American than the Mondale advertisement because that had the backdrop of war. This helped the Mondale advertisement because it was pro-American to serve another message. For an advertisement like the Bush one, the entire message is that it is pro-American, so the data suggests that people were very polarized because of it. In terms of what factors we can learn

about this advertisement that makes it effective, some people noted that the uniting message and the personal aspect were highlights. Bush was present in the video, unlike the other advertisements, as his face was shown. This made the advertisement seem more personal, as it was like he was speaking directly to the audience. This made some people view this advertisement favorably, while others felt as if the overall message was overwhelming and too sentimental. So, the factor that can be taken away from this to make an effective advertisement is to have a face associated with the message so that when audiences think about the message, they will think about the candidate's face. This associated person makes it more personal and personable, which people will relate more to.

Finally, many people commented on how funny the Bush advertisement targeting Gore was. This can be seen in the overwhelming likes section of the advertisement, which was mainly about the humor of the advertisement. The humor was something that the other advertisements didn't really have, so the respondents responded well to it. In terms of what the advertisement lacked, it was a clear message, as some participants were confused about what the advertisement was trying to say. This could also be coupled with the fact that he didn't appear at all despite being a Bush advertisement, so it was hard to relate the message back to Bush. Because of this, some people felt as if the message was lost. So, factors to take away from this are humor and ensuring your candidate is seen, providing practical insights for political strategists and advertising professionals.

Returning to the second question, "How do effective advertisements engender and activate emotions among their intended audience?" (Q2), I want to revisit the first advertisement. This advertisement conveys a message of happiness, which can be seen through its upbeat music

and the happy faces of the characters. The participants' feedback conveyed this, as 72.9% of respondents felt happy when viewing the advertisement (Figure 2).

Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

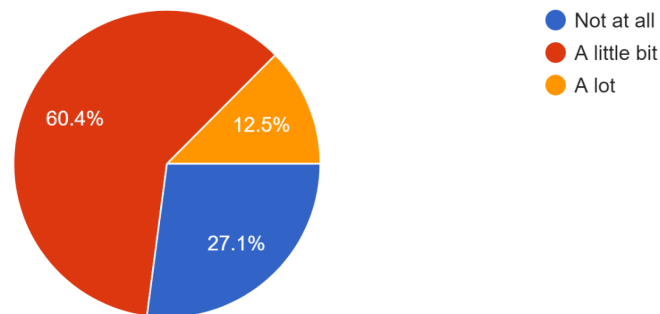


Figure 2: Happiness Chart of JFK Advertisement

In this sense, it worked, as it used the emotion of happiness and conveyed it well, as most participants could feel this feeling. Despite this, other emotions were felt as well, as there were some participants who felt other emotions, as shown below:

Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

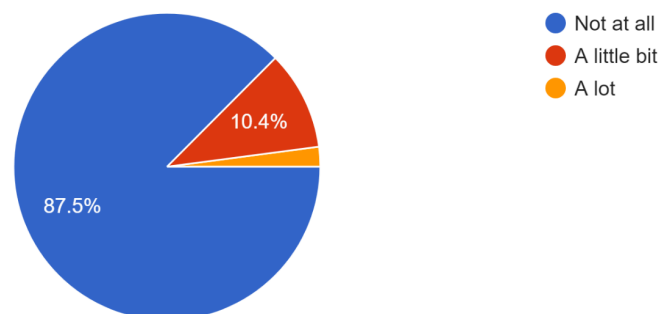


Figure 3: Sadness Chart of JFK Advertisement

Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

46 responses

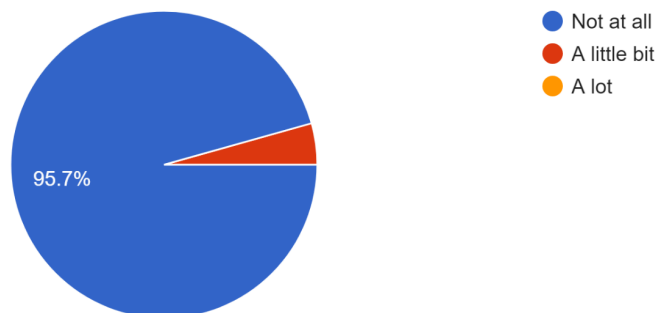


Figure 4: Anger Chart of JFK Advertisement

Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

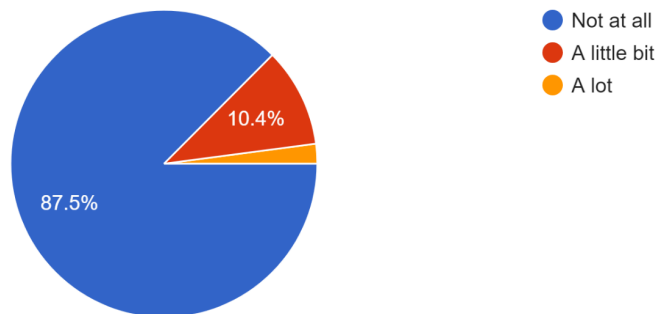


Figure 5: Patriotism Chart of JFK Advertisement

Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

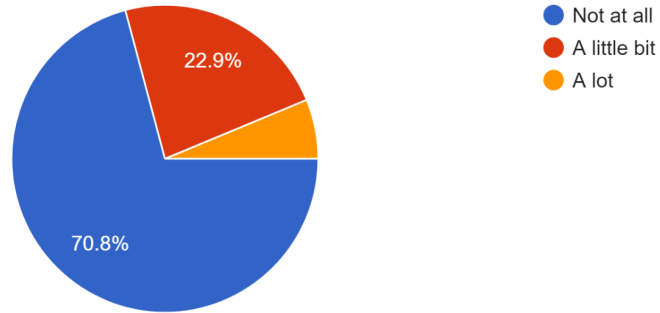


Figure 6: Hope Chart of JFK Advertisement

Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

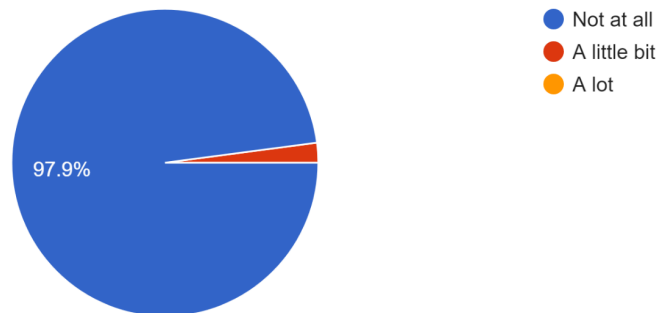


Figure 7: Fear Chart of JFK Advertisement

Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

48 responses

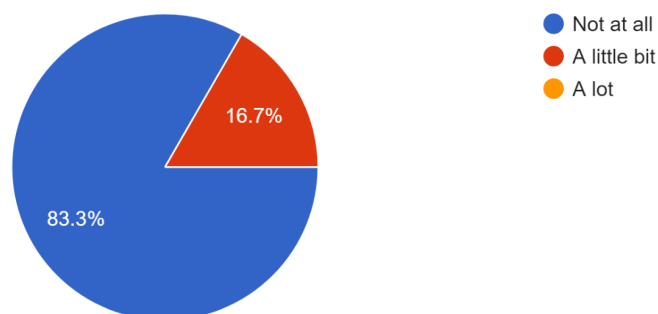


Figure 8: Surprise Chart of JFK Advertisement

These other emotions could be attributed to the fact that some participants felt the advertisement was loud and overwhelming. This can be seen in some participants' feelings of "surprise" and "sadness." The emotions of sadness and surprise may be attributed to the gun noises and the heavy and graphic imagery. As the feedback suggests, people weren't expecting to see such visually vivid imagery, which hurt the advertisement, as it caught people off guard and surprised them.

The second advertisement's goal was to use the background of war to instill fear in audiences. This is because the advertisement has a lot of heavy imagery and loud gun noises. As seen in the polling below, the most prevalent emotion was fear. This was because the advertisement was focused on the war at hand. There were also some overlapping emotions of fear and sadness. This was the intention of the advertisement, as it was built upon instilling fear while also ensuring they were patriotic, which would have caused more people to vote for Mondale. Despite this, there were some people who were angry and sad and weren't patriotic,

which can be attributed to the fact that in the feedback, some people felt as if the imagery and the volume were too loud and startled them. The emotional breakdown can be seen below:

Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

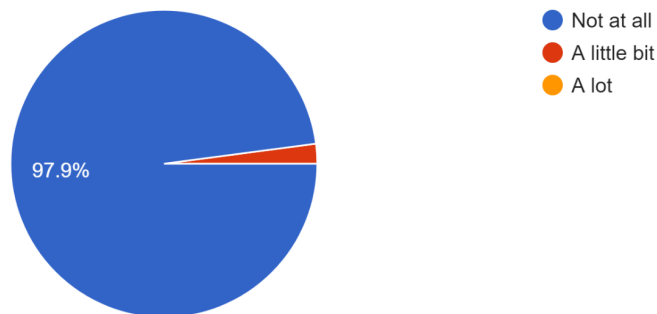


Figure 9: Happiness Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

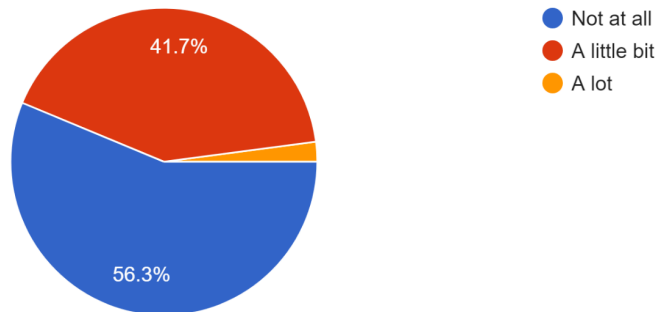


Figure 10: Sadness Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

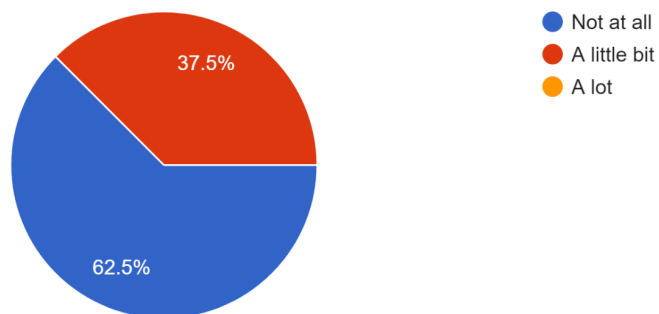


Figure 11: Anger Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

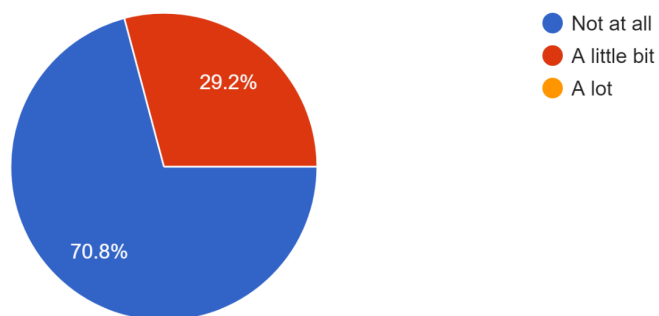


Figure 12: Patriotism Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

47 responses

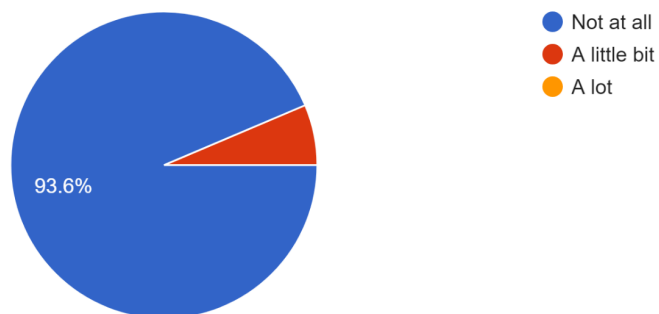


Figure 13: Hope Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

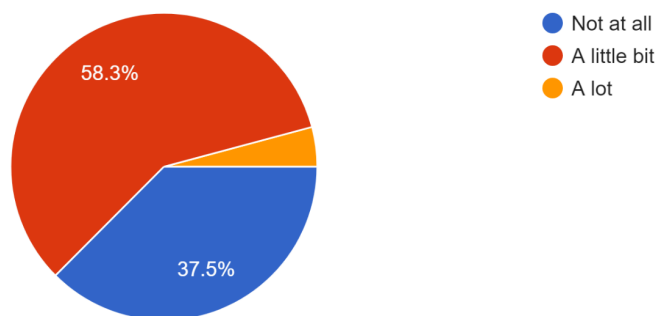


Figure 14: Fear Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

48 responses

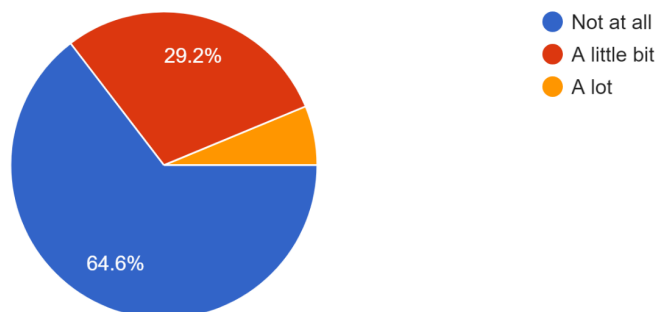


Figure 15: Surprise Chart of Mondale Advertisement

Surprisingly, this advertisement managed to stir the audience's emotions, albeit not in the expected manner. Instead of invoking a sense of patriotism, as the campaigners had hoped, it instilled fear in most viewers. The emotion of surprise is still there, but it also wasn't as the campaign intended as a lot of feedback negatively rated the gun noises, as they were startled by it. This unexpected emotional response could have significant implications for the advertisement's influence on voting choices.

Looking at George W. Bush's advertisement, emotions were much more everywhere. Many people felt different emotions, which is what the Bush advertisement was going for. Not only were there many people who felt happy, but the majority of people felt patriotic. This was the goal of the advertisement, and through this data, it succeeded very well. A lot of people felt patriotic and happy. These two emotions were the main goals of the advertisement. So, with over 50% of people feeling some kind of happiness and patriotism, the advertisement succeeded in engendering and activating emotions among their audience. Looking at the graphs below, there is also something to be said about the other emotions:

Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

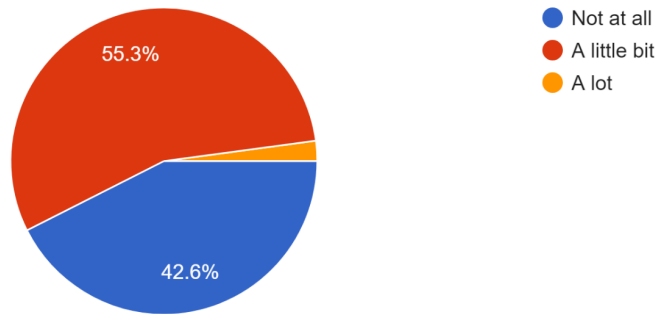


Figure 16: Happiness Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

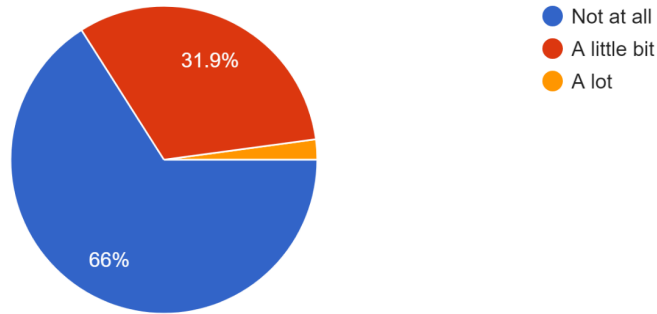


Figure 17: Sadness Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

46 responses

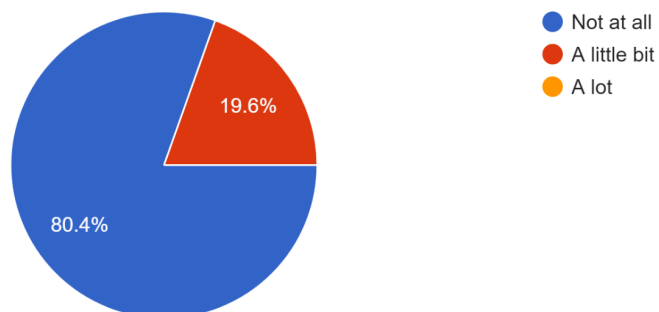


Figure 18: Anger Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

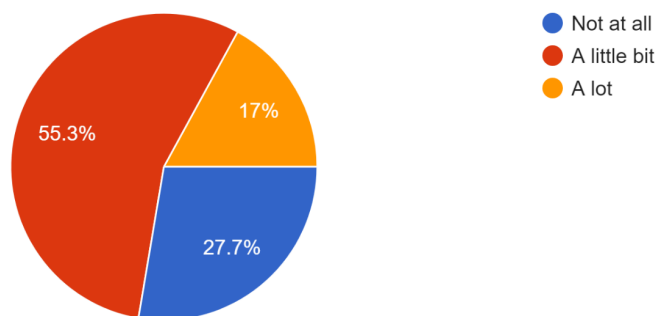


Figure 19: Patriotism Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

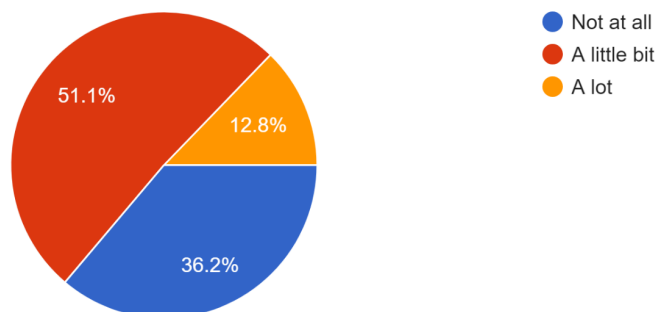


Figure 20: Hope Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

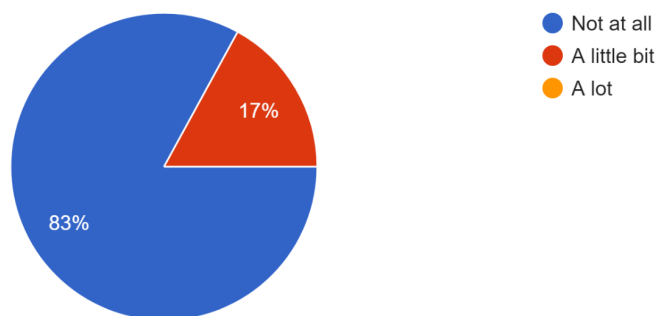


Figure 21: Fear Chart of Bush Advertisement

Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?

47 responses

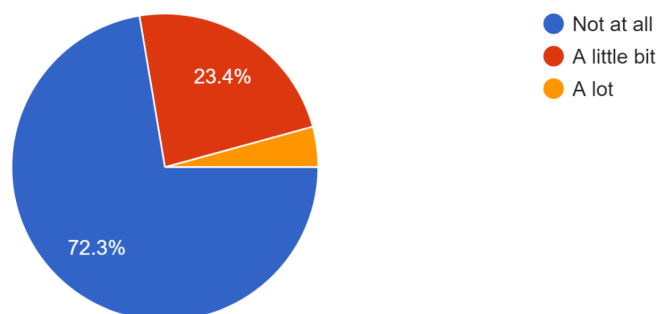


Figure 22: Surprise Chart of Bush Advertisement

The array of emotions could be attributed to how, in the video, Bush discusses the problem that America is facing, which makes people feel afraid, sad, and angry, but also how the uplifting music and message would then turn those emotions around to surprise, hopeful, and even happy. In this sense, Bush's advertisement set out to create an advertisement that touched on many emotions, and through this data, we can see that the advertisement successfully did so.

Looking at the advertisement where Bush targets Gore, an exciting thing happened: everyone said the same thing for the first time in the survey. This can be seen in the "Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore," where everyone said no. This was the first time this had ever happened in this survey, so looking at this anomaly, we can infer that the idea of attacking another candidate makes people feel less patriotic. Not only that but looking at the other emotions and how people responded, we can find something interesting:

Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?

47 responses

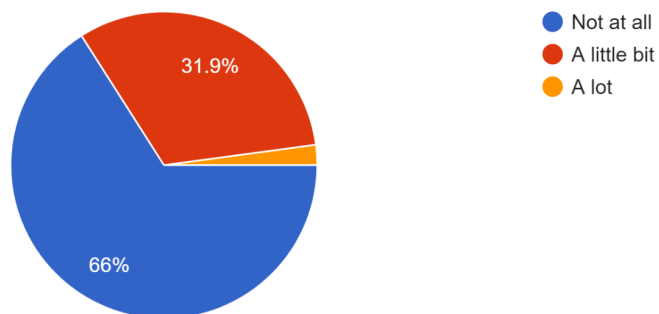


Figure 23: Happiness Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?

47 responses

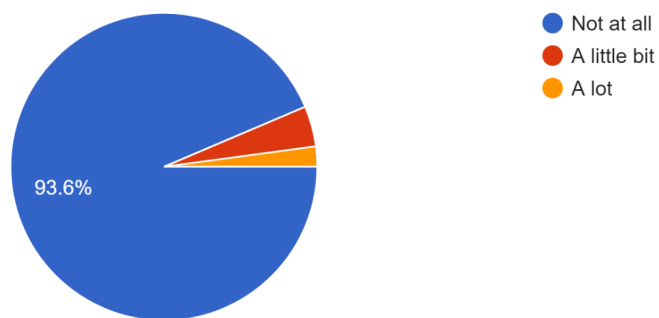


Figure 24: Sadness Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore ?
46 responses

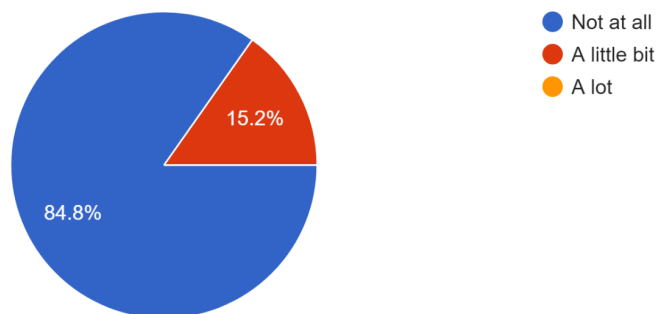


Figure 25: Anger Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?
47 responses

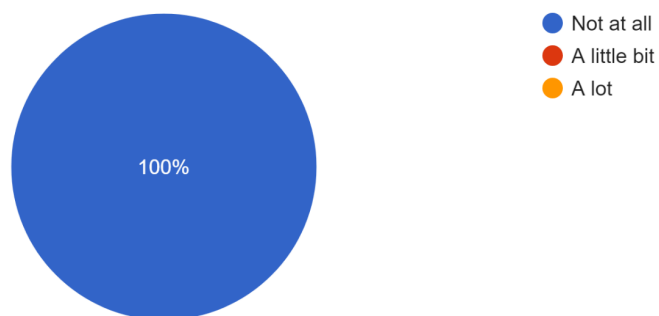


Figure 26: Patriotism Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?
47 responses

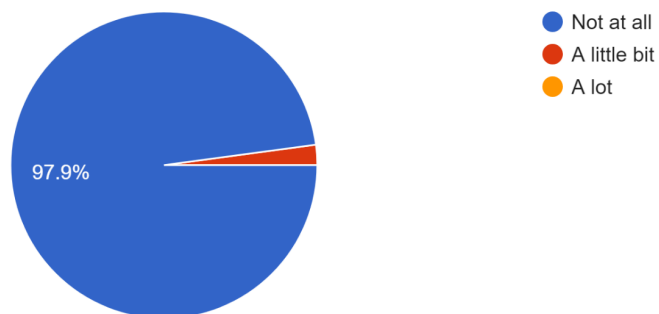


Figure 27: Hope Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?
47 responses

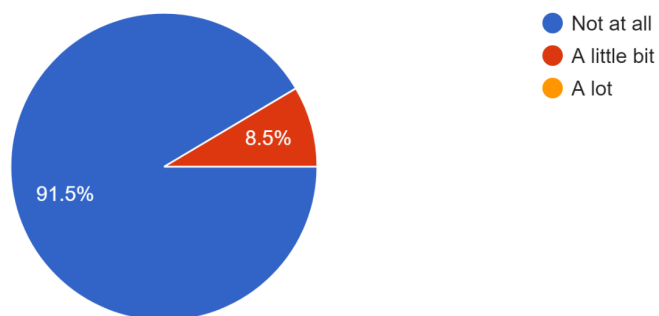


Figure 28: Fear Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush targeting Al Gore?

46 responses

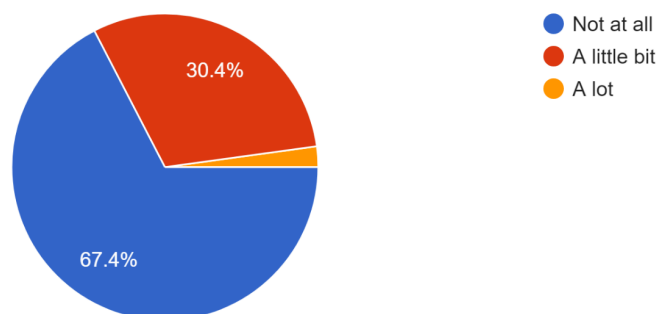


Figure 29: Surprised Chart of Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement

We can infer from these pie charts that most people felt no emotions. Even emotions like sadness and anger have very little correspondence, with happiness being the emotion most people think. This can be ascertained by the humor and the punchline, which many people commented on as their favorite part of the advertisement. The positive reassurance about Bush was highlighted by attacking Gore's position. By humorously doing this, there was no need to activate emotions like anger and sadness, which can be seen in how little people felt angry and sad about the advertisement (See Figures 25 and 28). Because of this, what we can infer from the data is that a negative advertisement doesn't always have to activate negative emotions. However, instead, it can activate positive reinforcement and emotions for the candidate while still being able to simultaneously attack the opposition. Doing this is a tricky balance, but as we can see with this advertisement and its resounding positives, it can be worth it.

Looking at the third question. "Which do participants prefer: Negative ads or Positive ads? (Q3), we must first examine what counts as a negative and positive advertisement. In this survey, I only included two negative advertisements, one negative about Republicans and one negative about Democrats. In this case, both advertisements were created by the other party. In

this survey, I asked participants to rank advertisements from most favorite to least favorite, which can be seen below:

Rank the ads in order of your favorite to least favorite:

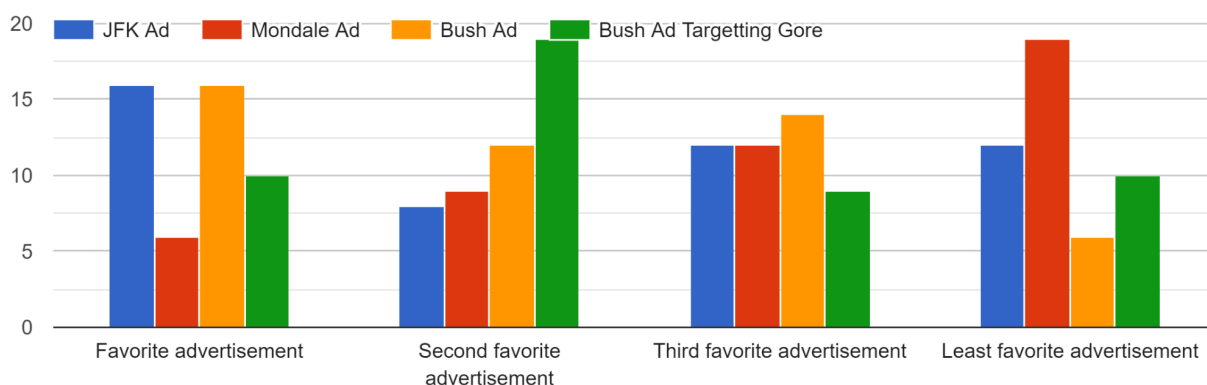


Figure 1: Participants' Ranking of Advertisements

When compiling and calculating the data from this bar graph, we get a ranking of advertisements that look like this:

1. Bush Advertisement
2. JFK Advertisement
3. Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement
4. Mondale Advertisement

This data yields interesting results because both positive advertisements outperformed negative advertisements. Both positive advertisements had over 15 people rating them as their favorite advertisement, while both negative advertisements had the least. Not only that but the

negative advertisement by Mondale performed the worst. It is easy to say that people prefer positive advertisements after seeing this data, but a closer look at it shows that this isn't necessarily the case. The Bush advertisement that targeted Al Gore was the second most favorite advertisement among the participants. This means that even though a person might be more inclined to pick either the positive JFK or Bush advertisement, their second choice, more likely than not, would be the Bush advertisement targeting Gore advertisement. This suggests that even though people prefer positive advertisements, they won't always choose positive ones over negative ones.

This data helps answer Q3 but can also be used in answering Q4 ("How do advertisements communicate their central message, and how easily can participants pick up on these messages?). This is because when an advertisement has a clear message, it is easier for people to pick up, thus making them enjoy the advertisement better. This is because if there is a clear message and people pick it up quickly, then they can use the rest of the time to look at the other parts of an advertisement, such as visual and audio means. Because of this, I want to take a closer look at each advertisement's message and how this relates to how people felt about each advertisement.

When looking at the JFK advertisement, it is easy to see what the message is about. Even though he doesn't pick much nuance or any actual sides, the idea of being overwhelmingly pro-JFK is quickly decided upon. This message is so easy to understand because it is so simple. This simplicity helps with the fact that there is a catchy song and drawings, which drives home the fact that this advertisement was meant for any audience. This makes it easier for people to like it, too, as there isn't much to be negative about. Despite this, the simplicity, in my opinion, is what holds it back. The simple message didn't move people, as in their feedback, some people

mentioned how there wasn't a strong message. This is shown through the data, as the JFK advertisement was the second most-liked advertisement out of the four.

Looking at the Mondale advertisement, one can see that this was the advertisement that people liked the least. This could be due to several reasons, as many people felt the war imagery was too graphic and loud. These audio and visual cues are due to the message being anti-war and critical of the previous administration's handling of the war. In this sense, the message got across a bit too well. Despite the clear messaging, the feedback told how much people disliked the advertisement. For this, the feedback tells me that people want a clear message, but not too in your face, primarily through visual and audio means. The message should be eased into people's minds instead of confronting them immediately. Especially if it is a television advertisement, where people aren't paying a lot of attention, and they get surprised by gun noises and war footage, it can cause people's emotions to be more sad, angry, or even afraid of the advertisement. Thus, this Mondale advertisement is ranked least by the majority of people.

The Bush advertisement was, on average, what people felt was their favorite advertisement. It is easy to see how this became a lot of people's favorite advertisement. The pro-American message is clear, and Bush is all over the advertisement as he gives the speech. This makes people relate not only to the message but also to Bush himself. Because of this, people felt as if he was speaking directly to them. This sentiment is felt through the advertisement's feedback, as many people said the advertisement was very personal and personable. I think this advertisement struck a good balance between ensuring the message is clear and the candidate is also front and center. Due to these factors, the Bush advertisement was ranked the favorite.

Looking at the Bush advertisement targeting Gore, the opposite problem occurs. In this sense, both the message and the candidate aren't very clear. The advertisement was making fun of Gore, but it also didn't mention any of Bush's positions that opposed Gore. This can also be seen in the confusion in the feedback, as people were unclear about Bush's position. Also, Bush himself doesn't appear at all, so people couldn't relate the message, or lack thereof, to a face. Despite this, the reason this ranked above Mondale, according to the data and the answers, is the humorous aspect, as many people found it funny. This is what made it the third most liked.

Finally, the last question is one that has stumped scholars to this day, "Is there such a thing as the perfect advertisement?" (Q5). The obvious answer is no, as nothing is perfect, but I think it goes much deeper. The reason why there is no such thing as a perfect advertisement is because people will react differently to something than someone else, no matter what. People's backgrounds and personalities make it so appealing to everyone that it is impossible, as even though you might appeal to one side, the other side will dislike it. So the answer is that even though there is no such thing as a perfect advertisement, you have to appeal to as many people as possible. With what we have learned through the data and the feedback, not only do you have to appeal to as many people as possible, but you also have to make sure that the message is clear, the candidate is known, and it also needs to have appropriate visual and audio components. Not only that, but it also has to engender and activate their emotions. Emotions play a huge role in politics, so when an advertisement can stir something in someone, it will make them resonate more with the advertisement. Many campaigns strive for the makeup of the perfect advertisement despite the idea that the perfect advertisement may be impossible. So, campaigns try to create the ideal advertisement; to do this, they use emotions to engender and activate their audience.

Discussion and Conclusion

When I did this experiment, I came into it expecting to learn very little. I expected this study to reinforce what I already knew about advertisements and their role in elections and politics as a whole. Looking at this survey as a whole, coming away with the data and the newfound understanding has not only helped me learn more about advertising but also people's reactions and emotions to advertising. Looking at the questions I posed at the beginning of my research, the answers seemed obvious to me, but as the data came in, my hypotheses were not only questioned but upended.

For the first question, "What factors distinguish an effective television advertisement for a presidential candidate?" I hypothesized that the factors would be a good style, a hook, and, most importantly, a message that people can easily find and understand. In this case, understanding and agreeing are two different things, as many advertisements are attack-heavy, so people might not agree with them. When comparing my three top factors to the three top factors of the actual results, I only got one correct. The correct one was vital in both cases, as an advertisement has to have clear messaging. Despite this, what I failed to account for was the fact that having the face of the candidate was important. This factor is crucial in what makes a television advertisement effective, as the face allows people to relate to the message. Not only that, but the appearance of the candidate humanizes them and makes the advertisement more personal and personable. Another factor that I didn't take into consideration is the music. The JFK advertisement had music, and it was positive overall. Most of the feedback touched on the music and how it made the advertisement lively. I almost got this when I talked about having a good hook, but I was generally more inclined toward the style rather than any substance. Both style and substance lend itself to help activate and engender emotions, which is also a major

factor in how an advertisement becomes effective. Because of this, the factors that appeared during the results were much more about how a candidate presented themselves and their message.

Seeing the face, in my opinion, is the biggest factor out of the three in deciding whether or not an advertisement is effective. As we have seen historically, seeing the candidate is crucial in getting their message across. An example that I would like to discuss when JFK and Nixon had their debate both over the radio and also across television. People who listened to the radio thought that Nixon won, as his calm and direct tone was felt through the audio waves. On the other hand, when looking at people who watched television, they thought that JFK won, as his demeanor was much more relaxed, while Nixon was seen as nervous and uptight. Due to this, the visual and audio medium was much more effective, compared to just the audio medium. Because of this, you would need to have both parts in an advertisement. Not only that, but through the visual means, seeing the candidate is required in order to have an effective advertisement.

For the second question, “How do effective advertisements engender and activate emotions among their intended audience?” I want to discuss what it means to have an intended audience. Of course, every advertisement strives to appeal to as many people as possible, as with the increase in eyes, the likelier your message and your candidate, as a whole, spread. I hypothesized that effective advertisements engender and activate emotions by playing into the fact that they are meant to make their audience feel sadness, anger, happiness, etc. I expected that people would feel strongly toward positive advertisements because people would understand and relate to them, while negative advertisements play towards negative emotions. My hypothesis was sort of correct in that I knew that political advertisements would play heavily into emotions. Still, I didn’t expect it to be more about how these advertisements would mobilize these

emotions. I thought that if there were an emotion that they would want to activate, they would tell their audience, but rather, these advertisements are more about making the audience feel it themselves. This autonomy makes the advertisement seem more subversive and easier for people to relate to and understand, as they aren't told just one thing. An example of this is that the Mondale ad, which was anti-war, could have just told people that war was terrible, which they would understand, and talk about how Mondale would change it. Instead, they played on the fact that emotions are important and used the emotions of fear and sadness mixed with audio and visual cues of battlefields and gun noises to make their audience feel the gravity of war. This makes the message much more potent and, in a way, makes the message resonate more. So, effective advertisements engender and activate emotions through visual and audio means for the audience to resonate more with the message and the candidate overall.

The third question is, "Which do participants prefer: negative ads or positive ads?" I mainly expected people to remember negative advertisements more than positive ones. I cited the most popular advertisements, like Daisy and George W. Bush's Wind Sailing advertisements, as they were very negative. I came to this conclusion because those were the only two I had heard in conversations before starting this research. I thought negative advertisements would stick with people more since they result in strong emotions like sadness and fear. Despite this, the data suggests that it isn't like that at all, as people seem to enjoy both negative and positive advertisements. In this sense, I don't think it matters whether it is negative or positive, but rather how the message is conveyed. An example of this is that a negative advertisement like that Mondale advertisement suffered from too many factors against it. Factors like graphic imagery and loud sounds turn people off of the advertisement, no matter if it is positive or negative. In this sense, it doesn't matter if it is positive or negative, but rather, the message and the vehicle in

which the message is spread. Through the data, I can see that rather than the negative advertisements I mentioned being famous because they're negative, they're popular due to how their message was conveyed and how it stuck to the general population.

The fourth question, "How do advertisements communicate their main message, and how easily can participants pick up on these messages?" is two-pronged. From a general perspective, advertisements communicate their main message through visual and audio cues that make their message apparent and simple for people to understand. This may be the case, but how these participants pick up on these messages is an entirely different issue. Participants, themselves, are more likely to look at the style of the advertisement first. This is because thematically, the style is what people notice first, rather than the message itself. So the way that advertisers try to communicate their main message is to have a hook. This hook could be seen as a catchy tune (JFK Advertisement) or a humorous punchline (Bush Targeting Gore Advertisement). For this, I feel like advertisements that communicate their main message well have a good time resonating with audiences, as there is a direct correlation between communicating the message well, and how well participants pick up on the messages.

Finally, the fifth question is, "Is there such a thing as the perfect advertisement?" The answer might seem as simple as "no.", but there is something in that answer that deserves a closer look. When we look at advertisements about presidential candidates throughout history, why is it so hard for someone to create the perfect advertisement? Even advertisements that may seem popular amongst many, like the "Daisy" advertisement, had its detractors. So, even if there may be a perfect advertisement, campaigns try their best to reach as many people as possible. In this case, their target audience is an audience that takes their message and can spread it easily. This doesn't just mean their supporters, but also people that dislike the message. In both

situations, the message is still getting spread around. Sooner or later, it will reach someone that resonates with the message, who can then spread it to other like-minded people. For this, it is crucial to get as many eyes on the message as possible. This allows for emotions to get activated, and any emotion that is brought up helps with the spreadability of the message. The perfect advertisement is one that can mobilize the target audience. When it comes to the advertisement itself, there will always be people that dislike the advertisement. No matter if they disagree with the message, or just dislike the candidate, trying to appeal to everyone won't work. In this sense, a campaign shouldn't try to appeal to everyone, but rather as many people as possible.

My research focuses on how emotions play a role in political television advertisements. For this, I felt like having a survey was the best option. A survey allowed me to get as many people as possible, and for them to express their opinions anonymously. This platform of a survey ran into some limitations and some problems however, as I was only able to get 48 responses. Not only that, but out of those 48 responses, some people skipped questions. This made it so not everyone answered thoroughly, or as they wanted, which makes it hard for some people to answer truthfully, in my opinion. I also ran into the problem of having too many people concentrated in areas that overlapped. I had a lot of Asian people, who were in their early to mid 20's, who were in college. This was because I sent it to my friends and family, who then sent it to their friends and family. Since I currently reside in a college and have friends in college, those friends would also have friends in college. Because of this, a limitation would be that the survey really only contacted people in very small circles, as opposed to a broad audience. I feel like if I had some sort of incentive, monetary or otherwise, I would have been able to get not only more people, but people who answered to the best of their ability more often. Another limit that I ran into was that I only opened the survey for about a month. This was short, in my opinion, as a

month didn't allow for people who couldn't do the survey in that time frame to complete it after the deadline. I feel like with that, and with more time, I can polish this survey and have more concrete findings. Despite the limitations that I ran into, I am still proud of the survey that I completed and can endorse the data that it produced as a microcosm of how a more significant audience feels. For this, I feel like even though the limitations are apparent, they aren't an issue in the greater scheme of answering my research questions.

Bias plays a significant role as well, as it always does in politics. I have a feeling that some people felt one way or another for a specific candidate, not just because of the message or the advertisement but also where their political party and allegiance lay. I feel like this was unavoidable, especially in a survey, and so the limitation there was just something I had to deal with. To combat this, I made the survey as anonymous as possible so people were in an environment where they were able to leave their bias behind and be as transparent as possible. Despite this, bias could and will be felt throughout not only this research but outside research as well. There is inherent bias, especially in politics, so in order to combat this, anonymity is important, but not the ultimate solution, as eliminating bias all together is something that is impossible.

Another factor that is worth discussing is the "presidential" part. The reason why I focused solely on presidential candidates and their advertisements is because presidential candidates and their advertisements have the best chance of reaching as many people as possible. Both local and state elections are more about getting their candidate out there rather than actually convincing people one way or another. Not only that, but presidential candidates and their advertising actually have the funds to change their style and presentation. Local and state elections and their advertisements are much more limited in their resources, so if they were to

implement the factors mentioned in my research, it could cost too much or be too much of a departure from their initial vision. Therefore, I feel like with my research questions and what my research offers can really only be implemented by presidential candidates and their advertisements.

To conclude this research paper, I want to take a step back and look at this topic more broadly. When looking at why presidential campaigns still use television advertisements despite the diminishing audience of television watchers, we have to look at what made them so attractive in the first place. Not only could millions of people see a candidate's face, but they could also see the message. Seeing a message is essential, but having a figure attached to it might be more critical. As we saw from an example like the Bush targeting Gore advertisement, it could cause confusion and a mismatch between the message and its audience if the candidate isn't shown at all. For this, I feel like having a vehicle to show the presidential candidate's face is vital in getting the message across and actually sticking to the audience. This is why platforms such as podcasts or radio don't really work, as there is no visual cue.

The Internet, on the other hand, is still an ever-growing medium. The problem with the Internet and getting an advertisement across is the vehicle. Where the advertisement would play is a big problem because if you use social media sites like Twitter and TikTok, the audience could easily just skip it without knowing anything about the candidate or the message. For this, it is almost impossible to grab the attention of an audience. Video sites like Vimeo and Youtube run into the same problem, as just the presence of an advertisement makes people automatically dislike it. They would just mute the site or go to a different page as the advertisement runs, which brings up the same problem as radio or podcasts. The thing with television, as a medium, is that audiences watch programs knowing that there are advertisements attached, no matter

what. For this, it is easy to grab the attention of an audience, as they are already expecting an advertisement. The Internet, on the other hand, is too unpredictable in terms of finding and holding an audience long enough to send a message.

This brings me back to television advertisements. The reason why they're still so prevalent, especially in this day and age, is because they have been proven to work. Television advertisements have proven to work in a political environment ever since televisions were invented. The reason why they're still so prevalent is because, with the added benefit of the Internet, advertisements can go viral. Viral media is something that sticks with an audience and can spread to other audiences. An example of this is Bernie Sanders' "I'm once again asking for your financial support." advertisement. This advertisement became viral and spawned a plethora of memes. This is what television advertisements are chasing. This virality makes the message spread and spreads it to audiences that otherwise might not have seen it. Television advertisements can get screenshots and spread around the Internet, which can help its stickiness to other audiences. In this sense, television presidential advertisements are still crucial in getting the message across. As the Internet continues to grow and evolve, it is only a matter of time before campaigns harness the Internet perfectly to get their message across. However, as of right now, television advertisements are still the best way to get the message across while also simultaneously, attaching the candidate's face to that message.

The idea of emotions is an interesting one to bring up. Playing into emotions to engender and activate emotions may seem manipulative and take advantage of its audience, but I feel like this is necessary. Advertisements do this already, especially ones that are trying to sell something like clothes or jewelry. All advertisements have some sort of message that they're trying to get across, and in the case of political advertisements, they're just trying to get the message and the

candidate across. This use of the audience to make them feel something is not uncommon amongst advertisements, as this just has a political spin to it. In this way, presidential television advertisements aren't doing anything more than other advertisements, so when they make their audience feel something and activate and engender their emotions, it is in service of something greater.

So, where do we go from here? It is easy to do more research or have more people take my survey, but I think that that would just reinforce what I already knew. I feel like in order to take the next step in this research to actually recreate these advertisements and take out any indicator that it is one party or another. To attach a face to the message, you can just use a random person with no allegiance one way or another and who the participants don't know. In this way, all bias is gone, and instead, what you're left with are just the substance and the style. On this, people can just judge the advertisement based on its merits, rather than the candidate and which party to which the advertisements belong. I feel like this would be especially helpful in giving candidates and campaigns a way to look at what works and what doesn't in terms of advertisements.

Television advertisements have, and will continue to, such a stronghold and influence in politics. To perfect a television advertisement, one must understand how to spread a message and the candidate behind the message to entirely stick to its audience and for that audience to grow. For this, they must activate and engender emotions. Emotions play a huge role in politics as well, as people use emotions in order to guide their decisions. This combination of engendering and activating emotions with the vehicle of advertisements makes them a tool that any candidate needs to succeed in a campaign.

Appendix

The Survey:

Pre-Survey Before Watching Advertisement

1. What is your age?
2. Are you currently employed? If so, where?
3. Are you currently in school? If so, where and what is your major and year?
4. Do you identify with or lean towards a particular party?
 - a. Strongly identify with or lean towards Democratic
 - b. Moderately identify as Democratic
 - c. Weakly identify as Democratic
 - d. Don't identify with either
 - e. Weakly identify as Republican
 - f. Moderately identify with Republican
 - g. Strongly identify as Republican
 - h. Other
5. How often do you watch presidential television advertisements?
 - a. Not at all
 - b. Not Often
 - c. Sometimes
 - d. Often
 - e. Very Often

Campaign Advisement 1:

6. How familiar are you with John F. Kennedy?
- Not at all
 - Unfamiliar
 - Somewhat familiar
 - Familiar
 - Very Familiar
7. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of this figure and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

8. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards this figure based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

9. Are you familiar with any advertisements from John F. Kennedy?
- Not at all
 - Unfamiliar
 - Somewhat familiar
 - Familiar
 - Very familiar

The participant is then shown the JFK Advertisement: “Kennedy for Me” (1960)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z4naX15vC4g&ab_channel=New-YorkHistoricalSociety

10. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of John F. Kennedy and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

11. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards John F. Kennedy based on their character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

12. Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

13. Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

14. Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

15. Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

16. Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit

- c. A lot
17. Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
18. Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from John F. Kennedy?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
19. What did you like about the advertisement?
20. What did you dislike about the advertisement?

Campaign Advertisement 2:

21. How familiar are you with Walter Mondale?
- a. Not at all
 - b. Unfamiliar
 - c. Somewhat familiar
 - d. Familiar
 - e. Very Familiar
22. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of this figure and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

23. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards this figure based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

24. Are you familiar with any advertisements from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. Unfamiliar
- c. Somewhat familiar
- d. Familiar
- e. Very familiar

The participant is then shown the Walter Mondale Advertisement: “Failure” (1984)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oe8xoSGJoK0&ab_channel=AndreMorgado

25. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of Walter Mondale and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

26. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards Walter Mondale based on their character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

27. Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

28. Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

29. Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

30. Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

31. Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

32. Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from Walter Mondale?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

38. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards this figure based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

39. Are you familiar with any advertisements from George W. Bush?

- a. Not at all
- b. Unfamiliar
- c. Somewhat familiar
- d. Familiar
- e. Very familiar

The participant is then shown the George W. Bush Advertisement: “Whatever It Takes” (2004)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgS_qPsTfmQ&ab_channel=BattleCryOfFreedom

40. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of Walter Mondale and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

41. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards George W. Bush based on their character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

42. Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
43. Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
44. Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
45. Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
46. Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
47. Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot

53. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards this figure based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

54. Are you familiar with any advertisements from George W. Bush?

- a. Not at all
- b. Unfamiliar
- c. Somewhat familiar
- d. Familiar
- e. Very familiar

The participant is then shown the George W. Bush Advertisement: “Whatever It Takes” (2004)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgS_qPsTfmQ&ab_channel=BattleCryOfFreedom

55. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of George W. Bush and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

56. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards George W. Bush based on their character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

57. Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
58. Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
59. Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
60. Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
61. Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
62. Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from George W. Bush?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot

68. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards this figure based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

69. Are you familiar with any advertisements from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. Unfamiliar
- c. Somewhat familiar
- d. Familiar
- e. Very familiar

The participant is then shown the Al Gore Advertisement: "Really MD" (2000)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MH1_r0H1ltQ&ab_channel=MuseumoftheMovingImage

70. On a scale of 1-10, how much would you say you approve of Al Gore and his policy agenda?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fully disapprove Fully approve

71. On a scale of 1-10, how warmly do you feel towards Al Gore based on his character, or any other traits?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very coldly Very warmly

72. Did you feel happy when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

73. Did you feel sad when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

74. Did you feel angry when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

75. Did you feel patriotic when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

76. Did you feel hopeful when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

77. Did you feel afraid when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?

- a. Not at all
- b. A little bit
- c. A lot

78. Did you feel surprised when viewing this advertisement from Al Gore?
- a. Not at all
 - b. A little bit
 - c. A lot
79. What did you like about the advertisement?
80. What did you dislike about the advertisement?