APPLYING THE INOCULATION MESSAGE STRATEGY TO THE 1990 ILLINOIS GUBERNATORIAL RACE

by

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(ABSTRACT)

The 1988 presidential campaign was considered by many members of the news media as one of the most negative presidential campaigns in twenty years. Since then a good deal of attention has focused on negative televised political commercials. Negative televised political commercials are commercials which attack or criticize opponents and often only towards the end remind the voter of the alternative candidate. The goal of negative ads is to affect voters on both a rational and emotional level.

Critics of negative political advertising believe negative ads are detrimental to the democratic process because they create a negative atmosphere which may engulf the campaign, dissuade voters from participating in the democratic process, impair the ability of voters to make informed decisions, and they often play on the prejudices and fears of the voters. Critics have offered various solutions which would curb the use or help candidates protect themselves against negative attacks, and one such solution is the "inoculation message strategy." In their book Attack Politics, Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski offer the "inoculation
message strategy" as a method in the defense of negative advertising. The inoculation message strategy uses two-sided arguments to defend against attack messages. In Pfau and Kenski’s research they used written attack messages in their experiments. This thesis will test the ability of the inoculation message strategy to defend against actual televised political commercials.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: .................................................. 1

CHAPTER ONE: The Influence and Impact of Television.... 5
  1.1 Influence of Television on Politics........... 7
  1.2 Political Advertising......................... 10
  1.3 Phases of Campaigns......................... 14
  1.4 Negative Televised Advertising.............. 15
  1.5 Why is Negative Advertising Employed?...... 22
  1.6 Lessons Learned From Negative Advertising... 25
  1.7 Negative Advertising and the Visual......... 29
  1.8 Criticisms of Negative Televised Political Advertising........................................... 32

CHAPTER TWO: INOCULATION........................................... 36
  2.1 Inoculation Experiments...................... 40
  2.2 Applying the Inoculation Message Strategy to Politics........................................... 45
  2.3 Critique of Pfau and Kenski.................. 49

CHAPTER THREE: INOCULATION EXPERIMENT USING ACTUAL POLITICAL ADS................................. 52
  3.1 Sample.............................................. 54
  3.2 Experimental Design........................... 55
  3.3 Hypotheses........................................ 62

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT.................... 65
  4.1 General Information............................. 65
  4.2 Simulated Election Results..................... 66
  4.3 Hypothesis 1......................................... 67
4.4 Hypothesis 2................................................. 69
4.5 Party Identification and Final Vote.............. 70
4.6 Liberal/Conservative Self-Assessment
by Final Vote............................................. 73
4.7 Attitudes Towards Taxes and Candidate
Preference................................................. 74
4.8 Conclusions.................................................. 78
4.9 Limitations of the Experiment.................. 81

CHAPTER FIVE: FINAL DISCUSSION...................... 85
5.1 Future Research........................................... 89

APPENDIX:.................................................... 91
WORKSCITED:................................................. 115
VITA......................................................... 121
INTRODUCTION

The increased importance of television has profoundly affected the way in which political candidates and elected officials communicate to the American public. With the rise of television and the technologies associated with it, new campaign strategies have emerged. The role of the political consultant and televised political advertisements have changed the electoral politics of our nation.

The 1988 presidential election was considered by many members of the news media as one of the most negative presidential campaigns in twenty years. Since then a good deal of attention has focused on negative televised political advertisements. Negative televised political commercials are commercials which attack or criticize opponents and often only towards the end remind the voter of the alternative candidate. The goal of negative ads is to affect voters on both a rational and emotional level.

Critics of negative political advertising believe negative political advertisements can be detrimental to the democratic process because they create a negative atmosphere which may engulf the campaign and dissuade voters from participating in the electoral process. Critics also fear that negative ads may promote misinformation and falsehoods which may hamper the ability of voters to make an informed
decision at the polls. Others fear that many of the negative commercials exploit the prejudices and fears of the electorate to gain votes. They believe negative ads playing on the irrational fears of the voters are bad for the democratic process and have introduced various solutions which would curb the use of or help candidates protect themselves against negative attacks. One such solution is the "inoculation message strategy" offered by Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski.

The concept of the inoculation message strategy, which has been around since the 1950s, comes from both the social psychology and communications fields. The inoculation message strategy uses two-sided arguments to defend against attack messages. Only recently has the inoculation message strategy been applied to a political situation by Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski. Pfau and Kenski's research found that the inoculation message strategy was a viable solution to defending against negative attacks.

For this thesis, an experiment was conducted to determine the ability of the inoculation message strategy to defend against actual televised political commercials. The research found that the inoculation message strategy was not effective in defending against negative attacks. This thesis will attempt to determine why the findings of Pfau and Kenski's research differed from my own and determine if
the inoculation message strategy is a viable defense against actual negative televised political advertisements.

The first chapter will briefly discuss the influence of television on America and American politics. The role televised political advertisements play in campaigns and an attempt to define what is meant by negative political advertising will also be discussed in this chapter. Chapter One will also provide an explanation of why critics of negative advertising want to curb its use or help protect candidates from negative attacks.

Chapter Two will examine the concept of inoculation as it relates to politics. A description and explanation of the inoculation message strategy will be given. This chapter will also review experiments which have been executed to test the viability of the inoculation message strategy. An account and critique of Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski’s field experiments, which were the first to apply the inoculation message strategy to a political setting, will also be discussed.

Chapters Three and Four will focus on my own experiment concerning the inoculation message strategy and its inability to neutralize actual negative televised political advertisements. Chapter Three will describe the experiment, and Chapter Four will discuss the findings of the experiment.
The fifth and final chapter will contain concluding remarks and suggestions for further research in the area of inoculation.
1.0 The Influence and Impact of Television

Since the debut of television, the U.S. has witnessed an increase in the importance of television in American society. Today, television brings global events into our homes instantaneously through the utilization of advanced communications technologies such as satellites, portable video cameras, and computers. Television acts as a major source of both entertainment and information for our nation. The way in which individuals perceive society, the world and themselves has been transformed through the introduction and expansion of television.

In the 1920s television had been perfected to the form we know today but was of little importance until the late 1940s. During the 1950s, television fast became an intricate and significant component of the American household. According to Peggy Noonan:

In the eighties television reached critical mass, reached the place of the fireplace, the thing we gathered around to hear the myth and story; TV had by the eighties become not the final arbiter of reality, but reality itself...TV has not only changed our habits and social customs and our way of looking at the world—it has, I believe, changed our way of experiencing life (Noonan, 1990, pp. 141-142).

Television has become the most popular way for Americans to acquire information concerning local, regional, national and global events. Prior to the prominence of
television, daily newspapers were the number one source of news for citizens. However, with the increased importance of television, America has witnessed a steady decline in newspaper readership. During the 1960s, daily newspaper circulation equaled one newspaper for every three persons. In 1984, the circulation of daily newspapers had dropped to one newspaper for every four persons (Kern, 1989, p.10).

The decline in newspaper readership can be associated with Tony Schwartz’s assertion that American society is increasingly becoming a "post-literate" society (Kern, 1989, p.11). A "post-literate" society is one in which it is not vitally important for individuals to utilize reading and writing skills to function. Television’s use and coordination of words, sounds and visual images creates an uncomplicated medium requiring less effort to receive and process information as compared to books, newspapers or magazines.

According to Neil Postman, "Reading is an ordered process requiring us to sit at a table, consume ideas from left to right, and make judgements of truth and falsehood. By its nature, reading teaches us to reason" (Postman & Paglia, 1991, p.44). Because television requires less time and effort for individuals to gather "information" as compared to reading, many critics of television fear the public’s ability to critically process information is
diminished.

1.1 Influence of Television on Politics

The escalation and increased importance of television has profoundly affected the way in which political candidates and elected officials communicate to the public. Today, candidates and elected officials at the national and state levels use the medium of television as their primary method of communicating to the electorate (Jamieson, 1984, p.446).

With the rise of television came a rise in the role of political consultants and visual politics. In the American political system, there has always been, in one form or another, political consultants. Before television, many politicians employed close friends to advise them on political strategy and issue positions (Sabato & Beiler, 1988, p.5). The complex technologies of television, along with the sophisticated polling techniques required by candidates today, demands special knowledge and talent to manage a successful political campaign. Consultants often employ motivational analysis techniques from the field of social psychology to tap the subconsciousness of voters to uncover what they desire in a candidate (Denton & Woodward, 1990, p.51).
Political consultants are direct descendants of public relations and marketing professionals (Nimmo, 1970, p.35). The growth of political consultants is directly related to the increase in mass media communications (Sabato & Beiler, 1988, p.5). Political consultants have brought the tools of the marketing profession into the realm of politics. Like marketers, sophisticated polling techniques are used by political candidates to determine which issues or positions will appeal to a particular target audience. According to Robert Westbrook, marketers and political consultants search for what the consumer desires and then tailor the product to coincide with the demands of the consumer (1983). This may help explain why many candidates have reversed their stands on the abortion issue in the 1988 and 1990 state elections, as it became apparent through public opinion polls that a candidate's position on abortion had become a salient issue with the public.

According to Westbrook, "Media campaigning is by definition mediated communication, communication by means of a technology that permits the consultant to control to a degree the package and context in which it will be presented to the voter" (1983, p.167). Communication employed by television is a monologue in which the person speaking on the television communicates to the viewer but the viewer does not directly communicate with the speaker. This has
created a shift in the relationship of the candidate and the political supporter, in which the supporter may never speak or have any personal contact with the candidate whatsoever (Lunch, 1987, p.49).

With the rise of television, political campaigns and the electorate have changed over the past few decades. America has moved away from an old party-based mode of electoral politics to a new media-based mode of electioneering (Luke, 1989, p.129). The weakening of the political parties and the increased importance of the mass media have led to more candidate-oriented campaigns, in which candidates do not necessarily need party assistance to win elections.

Television offers candidates both free and paid media which assists candidates in getting their messages across to the electorate. Consultants are instrumental in offering advice or direction to a candidate as to how to stand at the podium, gesture with their hands, emphasize phrases and speak in a manner which is easily edited for the 15-second sound bite used on the local and national nightly news programs (Mickelson, 1989, pp.106-107). Local and national news networks create free media for the candidate. The free media generated by the four major news networks, (NBC, ABC, CBS and CNN) can reach over 95 million Americans in one evening (Diamond & Martin, 1989, p.387).
Nightly news organizations tend to use a great deal of visuals in their reporting. Visuals tend to keep an audience's attention and lend credibility to the story, as in the old axiom "seeing is believing." A task of a candidate's media consultant is to stage or provide "promotional stunts" or photo opportunities depicting the candidate donning a hard-hat, shaking hands with factory workers or reading a story to school children to insure candidate coverage on the evening news (Mickelson, 1989, p.107). These photo opportunities covered by the news media are an example of free media which can benefit candidates.

1.2 Political Advertising

The most effective way for candidates to control and present the message or image they wish to portray is through the paid media or televised political advertising. Political advertising is the most useful weapon in the world of visual politics because the candidate has complete control over how, when, and what is presented. Many of the goals, rules, and techniques that apply to selling a commodity such as soap can be applied to political advertising. However, there are some facets of political advertising that are not often employed by advertisers of consumer goods which make political advertising unique.
Political advertising in one form or another has been around ever since the U.S. started holding elections for public office. Prior to 1928, candidates used partisan newspapers and flyers to proclaim their accomplishments and their opponents' shortcomings (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, pp.5-6). Today, many of these advertisements would be unequivocally characterized as negative. During the campaign of 1800 between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, the Federalist party portrayed Jefferson as "a radical and predicted that if he became President all Bibles would be burned, property rights destroyed, and the marriage institution abolished" (Boller, 1982, p.35). The election of 1928 witnessed the premiere of radio in political campaigns and advertising. The presidential election of 1952 between Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson was the first presidential campaign in which ads were utilized on television (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, p.6).

Since the first televised political ad in 1952, the importance of televised political commercials has dramatically increased. Political campaigns deposit a large proportion of their campaign funds into TV advertising, due to the fact that they can communicate with a large segment of the population as compared to personal campaign stops. In the last twenty years, the amount of funds spent on televised political advertising has increased substantially.
In 1972, political campaigns across the country spent a total of $24.5 million on major television networks and local markets. In 1980, the total escalated to $90.5 million. The total spent on television advertising increased to $153 million in 1984 and $162 million in 1986 (Swerdlow, 1988, pp. 83-84).

In the 1988 general election, George Bush spent approximately $35 million on televised political advertising, while the Republican party spent nearly $12.5 million on generic televised advertising. The Dukakis campaign spent around $30 million on televised political advertising and the Democratic party spent only $1.5 million for generic ads (Devlin, 1989, p.391). Therefore, a total of $79 million alone was spent on the 1988 general election.

According to Montague Kern, there are three components in televised political advertising. The first, like advertising any consumer product, is an entertainment device contrived to stimulate and keep the viewers' attention. If the political spot is entertaining, then it may help stimulate recall within the electorate. Secondly, advertisements serve to inform or give a message from the candidate concerning issue stands. Many studies have suggested that political ads are often very informative as to the issue positions of the candidates. Voters often gain more campaign information from political spots than from the
evening news. Thirdly, televised political ads are meant to provoke a reaction in which one will go out and vote either for or against a candidate (Kern, 1989, p.57).

Televised political advertisements serve many different functions throughout the campaign. The following is a list of functions for which political ads are used (Devlin, 1986, pp.22-24).

1. To gain name recognition
2. To sway late deciding voters
3. To reinforce political base
4. To attack opponent
5. To help develop and explain issue stands
6. To redefine an image
7. To target certain populations or regions
8. To raise money
9. To adapt to changes
10. To compete with the opponent

Political ads also function as a tool for political candidates in agenda setting. Political commercials often inform voters as to a candidate’s issue positions or attack one’s opponent on issues which are often picked up by the media. Ads can help candidates focus attention away from themselves, with the help of the media, onto their opponents. Political ads are unlike a "magic bullet" where individuals are persuaded by the ad right after exposure. The news media and many other factors determine how one will react to an ad. Therefore, one of the functions of political advertising is to get the media and voters to discuss or focus on the issues which are beneficial to the
candidate responsible for the advertising.

1.3 Phases of campaigns

According to Montague Kern, there are traditionally four stages of a political campaign and within these four stages particular types of political spots are used. The first stage is the primary stage in which documentary, cinema verité, and biographical ads are used to increase name identification. The second stage of a campaign is the phase in which candidates inform the electorate as to their stands on the major issues. A third stage of campaigns is when candidates use attack or negative ads in an attempt to raise their opponents' negative ratings. Candidates in the final stage of the campaign employ positive "visionary" appeals towards the conclusion of the campaign in hopes of ending the campaign on a positive note (Kern, 1989, p.6). As with most things in life, there are often exceptions to the rule. Some campaigns start with attack ads from the opening bell and maintain a relentless attack until the final bell.

Consumer activist Ralph Nader has written "Information is the currency of democracy" (1991, p.24). In the early days of televised political advertising, political ads often contained a good deal of information which the electorate
could use in making a decision as for whom to vote. For example, in 1952 half-hour political spots were the norm. Later in 1956 and 1960, five-minute ads had become the norm. As our nation "progressed" into a more video-oriented political environment in the 1970s and 1980s, an escalation in the importance of 30- and 60-second political advertisements has emerged (Jamieson, 1986, p.13). These 30- and 60-second spots are often not as informative as the 5- or 30-minute spots of the past, but due to the increased cost of advertising since the 1950s, candidates have been forced by economic pressures to utilize 30- and 60-second commercials.

1.4 Negative Televised Advertising

Negative political advertising has gained a great deal of attention over the last few years. The use of negative advertising has increased in relation to the proportion of ads shown. According to Michael Young, "Experts estimate 1 in 2 political ads are negative [today]; as compared to twenty years ago when approximately 1 in 5 were" (cited in Pfau and Kenski, 1990, p.3).

But what do we mean then by negative advertising? Negative political ads are ads which criticize an opponent and may only towards the end remind the voter of
the alternative candidate. Negative ads often come from one of the two major philosophies of political advertising: the informational and the emotional schools (Kern, 1989, p.12). The informational school focuses on what many consider the substantive issues of a campaign. Commercials from this school can be both positive and negative. When these ads are negative, they often employ "compare and contrast" messages which contrast the voting records or position stands of the candidates. The "compare and contrast" spots are negative because they criticize opponents for position stands on issues which are often controversial. One popular form of this type of "compare and contrast" commercial is the "flip-flop" ad.

The "flip-flop" ad makes known that a particular candidate has changed their position on an important issue. The "flip-flop" ad serves not only to compare and contrast the positions of the candidates, but also to create doubt among the electorate that the opponent’s reversal concerning position stands was done to serve the candidate’s own interests (Kern, 1989, p.105). Therefore, the commercial is negative because it questions the credibility of the opponent.

Ads which come out of the emotional school, as the name implies, attempt to affect the audience with emotional appeals (Kern, 1989, p.12). Commercials categorized as
coming from the emotional school also contain information. However, the information contained in an advertisement from the emotional school attempts to persuade voters using emotional rather than information-oriented appeals. The goal of these commercials is to make the public feel "good" or "bad" towards a particular candidate. Many of the "feel good" ads use popular political symbols such as the American flag or the American eagle to persuade voters. An excellent example of the "feel good" commercial is Ronald Reagan's "It's Morning Again in America" spot, which was designed to make people feel proud to be an American (Diamond & Bates, 1988, pp. 25-26). The "feel bad" ads often attack opponents for not having the same "values" as the electorate, be it "American," "southern," or "religious" values. A good example of this came from the 1990 North Carolina Senate race between incumbent Jesse Helms and challenger Harvey Gant. In Helms's ads, Harvey Gant was labeled as one who possessed "Extreme Liberal Values," while Jesse Helms was characterized as having "North Carolina Values" (C-SPAN).

Emotional-school ads can be negative when they focus on issues which cause people to vote out of fear. Many of these ads use emotional ploys to persuade individuals to vote against a particular candidate due to an existing fear they may have. For some it may be racism or the fear that a woman's right to an abortion may be taken away. The ad on
the surface may target a specific issue such as abortion, crime, or affirmative action, but the underlying meaning of the ad may play on the fears people have about these issues.

A problem with the classification of commercials as either coming from the informational or emotional schools is that there is obviously going to be some overlapping of the two, due to the fact that voters are often highly emotional towards the key issues of a campaign. For example, an ad that compares and contrasts two candidates' positions on abortion may seem to fall in the informational category. However, the issue of abortion is a very strong issue to many and may play more on their emotions than rationale.

In the 1990 Senate race between Jesse Helms and Harvey Gant, Helms was criticized for airing an ad claiming many qualified workers lose jobs or are not promoted due to racial hiring quotas (Edsall, 1990, p.A1). The ad can be seen as coming from the informational school because it does inform the voter that on the issue of quotas or affirmative action Helms is opposed while Harvey Gant is in support of such policies.

However, the same Helms ad can also be classified as coming from the emotional school. Many whites feel affirmative action and hiring quotas are a form of reverse discrimination. The use of the word "quota" in itself is meant to cause an emotional response. The commercial also
showed a pair of hands from a white male tearing up a notice informing him that he had been past over due to hiring quotas. The ad was intended to create anxiety among white voters that Gant, who happens to be black, may vote against their interest by favoring minorities.

The Helms ad is a good example of how the two schools overlap. The issue of affirmative action is an important issue to the voting public and may help voters make an informed decision concerning their choice. The ad can be seen as very negative when one looks at the emotional ploy used which plays on people’s fears and prejudices.

Frank Luntz claims negative ads can take the form of "negative-on-positive", "negative-on-negative," "not-on-the-job," and "hit-and-run" ads. The "negative-on-positive" ad is one that uses an opponent’s positive ad against the opponent. Claims made by a candidate in positive commercials are discredited in an opponent’s negative ad.

A good example of the "negative-on-positive" ad can be found in the 1986 Florida Senate race between incumbent Paula Hawkins and Bob Graham. One of Hawkins’ ads proclaimed that she had met with Deng Xiaoping (the leader of China in 1982) to discuss the suspension of illegal drug exports from his country. The ad was intended to portray Hawkins as a strong leader leading the fight against illegal drugs. Graham ran an ad which claimed that "two of Hawkins’
own aides admit the meeting [between Hawkins and Xiaoping] never took place...If the people who work for Hawkins now say they don’t believe her, how can we? " (Luntz, 1988, p.98) The advertisement by Graham took a positive claim by Hawkins and used the ad to discredit her, weakening her credibility on the drug issue (Luntz, 1988, p.98).

One other example of the "negative-on-positive" ad can be seen in the 1988 presidential election. Michael Dukakis aired an ad which claimed that his administration helped turn Massachusetts around and created what many called the "Massachusetts’ Miracle." Bush effectively discredited the "Massachusetts Miracle" by attacking Dukakis on his handling of Massachusetts' environment, furlough program and tax increases during his administration. Many of George Bush's ads concluded with the phrase, "And Michael Dukakis says he wants to do for America what he’s done for Massachusetts" (ABC).

When a candidate uses a "negative-on-negative" spot, they often will use their opponent’s actual ad in their commercial. They will often claim that the attack by the opponent is "a distortion of the record" or "an outright lie." The commercial will then proceed to attack the opponent for using "dirty" campaign tactics or attack the opponent on some other grounds.

The "not-on-the-job" spots often assert the incumbent
candidate has missed votes or is not working towards the interest of his/her constituency. These ads can attack an incumbent for being absent from Washington or they can attack incumbents for not spending enough time in their congressional district. Like many negative ads, the "not-on-the-job" ad often employs humor, which can be an effective way to increase voter recall (Luntz, 1988, p.97-98). Paul Wellstone used a few humorous "not-on-the-job" ads to upset incumbent Rudy Boschwitz in the 1990 Minnesota Senate race.

One final type of negative ad is the "hit-and-run" ad. These ads attempt to identify candidates with unpopular public figures (Luntz, 1988, p.101). An example of this type of ad was used by Ronald Reagan in 1984 to remind the American public that Walter Mondale was vice president under the unpopular Jimmy Carter. This type of ad was also used in the 1990 Senate race in Massachusetts between Senator John Kerry and challenger James Rappaport. Rappaport aired an ad which claimed Kerry was another Michael Dukakis (C-SPAN). Rappaport was hoping to link Kerry with the unpopular governor of Massachusetts.

Negative ads can also attack candidates on personal grounds. These ads often suggest a candidate is unfit for office because of immoral, unethical or scandalous behavior. Negative spots often attempt to scare people into voting
against a candidate rather than voting for a candidate. As one can see, negative televised commercials can focus on issue positions taken by a candidate, personal attacks, or emotional ploys.

1.5 Why is Negative Advertising Employed?

According to Pfau and Kenski, "One of the fundamental facts of psychology is that negative information is processed more deeply than positive information" (1990, p.3).

"A 'negativity effect' refers to the greater weight given to negative information relative to equally extreme and equally likely positive information in a variety of information-processing tasks" (Lau, 1982, p.119).

Richard Lau offers two explanations for negativity effects in political behavior. The first explanation is the "figure-ground hypothesis." According to the figure-ground hypothesis, we live in a relatively positive world. In our positive world, negatives tend to stand out or are a "figural against a positive background" (Lau, 1982, p.121). This may explain why the great bulk of what we consider "news" consists of negative events. Normal, everyday events and behavior are not considered news while unexpected or abnormal behavior generates interest and is considered newsworthy.
According to Edward Jones and Keith Davis, individuals often attribute their own personal characteristics to others. If an individual perceives another as performing as expected, this tells them little about the individual. However, if an individual perceives another in a manner that runs counter to their expectations or norms, this "tells" or "informs" the individual as to some aspect of the other person's character. Because negative information tends to be unexpected and therefore more informative, it is considered more credible than positive information (cited in Lau, 1982, p.121-124).

The second explanation of the negativity effects on political behavior is the "cost-orientation" or "rational hypothesis." According to the cost-orientation model, people are motivated to avoid costs rather than to seek gains. Negative information about a particular candidate, according to the cost orientation model, will force the electorate to weigh the risk of electing the particular candidate. If voters feel the candidate is a risk to their interests, they will vote against a candidate instead of for a candidate. "Unlike the figure-ground hypothesis, then, which is a perceptual explanation, the cost orientation hypothesis is a motivational explanation for negativity" (Lau, 1982, p.122).

Many studies have revealed that voters pay more
attention and have a higher recall when it comes to negative advertising as compared to positive advertising. Because negative advertisements have a higher recall among voters as compared to positive advertising, it has become more cost-effective to use negative spots than positive spots. As the cost of televised advertising escalates, it would make economic sense for a candidate to employ attack ads.

Most television commercials tend to be ultra-positive about their products. However, according to Michael Young, about half of the televised political commercials are negative (cited in Pfau & Kenski, 1990, p.3). This is one of the fundamental differences between product advertising and political advertising. The only instance where manufacturers use negative advertising is when there are only two competitors or a small number of competitors in a particular market (Merritt, 1984, p.27). The reason negative ads are used in these sectors is simple; in a two-product market consumers have a choice between product X or product Y. If product X produces an ad that portrays product Y in a bad light and customers believe these ads, the only alternative to product Y is product X. This explains why the only negative ads we see which use the competitor’s name within their commercials are products such as Coke and Pepsi, Domino’s Pizza and Pizza Hut, which operate largely in a one-on-one market. When consumers have
many different choices concerning the same type product, (an example being laundry detergent), they will not reveal competitors' names but refer to them as "the leading brand" (Merritt, 1984, p.27).

1.6 Lessons Learned From Negative Advertising

Old conventional wisdom maintained that if one used negative campaign techniques and mud-slinging it would backfire (Guskind & Hagstrom, 1988, p.2788). The new conventional wisdom is that negative ads and attack politics can be highly effective. Note that just because one uses a larger number of negative political ads as compared to their opponent does not insure victory at the polls.

One of the lessons learned from negative advertising is that negative attacks must be credible or they can become ineffective or can create a backlash against the candidate who aired the negative spot. According to Gina Garramore, "Research indicates that the more credible a source, the more persuasive the message. Thus, the more truthful negative advertising is perceived, the greater should be its impact" (p.251).

A good example of this can be seen in the 1988 Ohio Senate race between incumbent Senator Howard Metzenbaum and then Cleveland Mayor George Voinovich. During this
campaign, Mayor Voinovich ran three ads accusing Senator Metzenbaum of being soft on child pornography. Soon after these ads were aired, many of Ohio's newspapers ran articles critical of Voinovich's tactics. According to pollster Mark Mellman, the negative ads were unsuccessful because "the kiddie porn charges were simply unbelievable. You can't go out and beat someone over the head caveman style" (Guskind & Hagstrom, 1988, p.2788).

One other lesson learned from negative attacks is that using negative attacks may be especially useful in efforts to oust an incumbent. Senators and Representatives have incredibly high re-election rates. In the 1990 congressional elections, House incumbents enjoyed a 97% re-election rate. Only one incumbent Senator, Rudy Boschwitz of Minnesota, lost in his bid for re-election in 1990 (Gibbs, 1990, p.32). The electoral process is stacked in the incumbent's favor due to name recognition, free media, money, and other resources. Running a totally positive campaign against an incumbent is futile unless the incumbent in some way self-destructs. When running against an incumbent, one must give reasons for voters to reject the incumbent.

When candidates are attacked by an opponent or a Political Action Committee (PAC) they are often caught in a Catch-22 situation. Because political spots are so costly,
one has to choose between responding to the opponent’s attack or letting it go by without a rebuttal. If a candidate uses valuable time and resources to reply to the negative attack, they may not have enough time or money to put forth one’s own message. However, if a candidate does not reply to a negative attack, the negative image portrayed may stay in the minds of the voters (Garramone, 1985, pp.149-150).

A final lesson learned from attack ads is that even if it may take away from one’s own message, one must respond quickly and persuasively if one is attacked by an opponent or a PAC, or the negative image portrayed may stay with the electorate. One must keep in mind that it is easier for the electorate to retain rather than alter their beliefs. Therefore, if a negative attack goes without a quick and persuasive response, it will become more difficult as time goes by to refute the negative perception held by the public (Garramone, 1985, p.150).

As mentioned earlier, negative ads may create a backlash if they are not perceived by the voters as credible. With this in mind, it is still in the candidate’s best interest to respond to an attack which does not seem credible. The conventional wisdom would indicate a candidate should respond to the attack because it is often difficult for the candidate to assess what is or is not a
credible attack. Also, by responding to an attack which may be deemed dubious by the voters, it may actually help the candidate project the message that his/her opponent has been using "dirty tactics," which may play well with the voters.

No better example of how not responding can seriously weaken one's campaign can be found than in the 1988 presidential campaign between George Bush and Michael Dukakis. Throughout the campaign the Bush team attacked Dukakis as being weak on defense, incompetent and a "tax-and-spend Democrat." Other attacks involved Willie Horton and the Massachusetts' furlough program, Dukakis's membership in the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the Pledge of Allegiance (Goldman and Mathews, 1989, p.305). A reason why Dukakis did not respond quickly was because he might have thought these attacks would not be seen as credible by the American public, and he wanted to appear to be above negative political tactics. One other reason why he did not respond to these attacks until it was too late may have been because his campaign never had the organization which would allow one person to make the decisions necessary for a quick response. Douglas Kellner suggests Michael Dukakis failed in his attempt for the presidency because he and his team "failed to understand the dynamics of image politics" (1990, p.153). Whatever reason, not responding to these attacks seriously diminished Michael
Dukakis's ability to define himself and push forth with the issues and agenda he had hoped to discuss during the campaign.

1.7 Negative Advertising and the Visual

As stated earlier, one of the most effective ways for candidates to control and present the message or image they wish to convey is through televised political advertisements. One reason why television is the preferred choice of candidates to relay messages to the voters is because of the power of the visual. According to one study, "80-85 percent of the information that is retained about TV commercials is visual" (Burnham, 1983, p.A6).

Political ads are often employed not to clarify or present a candidate's position stands, but are used to project a positive self image or a negative image of one's opponents. The "issues" contained in political ads often have a limited meaning and the actual purpose in using the "issue" is to help project an appropriate image which will appeal to the voters (Denton, 1982).

The use of graphics, color, and even black and white images can be effective at setting a desired mood. The black and white images and the use of a revolving door by the Bush media team in the "Dukakis's Prison Furlough" ad
were effective tools used to portray the image that Michael Dukakis was soft on crime. The "Tank" ad used by Bush, was another ad which used a strong visual that painted an unfavorable image of Dukakis. The audio of the "Tank" as dealt with the weapon systems which Dukakis opposed, but the most memorable element of the ad was the visual which showed Dukakis riding on a tank with a silly expression on his face (ABC). The aim of the ad was not to make voters move away from Dukakis because of his position stands on proposed or existing weapons systems, the real aim was to project an image that Dukakis was a "clown" and could not be trusted with the highest office in the land.

Politicians are very much aware of the power of non-verbal or visual communication. A good example of how important the visual has become in campaigns can be seen in Bruce Babbitt’s bid for the Democratic nomination in 1988. Babbitt was arguably the most straight-forward and detailed candidate when it came to issues, but was also arguably the most ill-suited candidate when it came to television. After a disastrous showing in a debate early in the Democratic primaries, Babbitt came to realize the tremendous importance of television in a presidential campaign and hired a media coach to help better his television image (Goldman & Mathews, 1989, pp.101-104). What Babbitt did was not in any way new, media coaches have become an intricate part of
modern day campaigning. However, many, such as Babbitt himself, worry that style has become more important than substance on the campaign trail.

Another example of how important television's visuals have become can be seen in the administration of President Reagan. In 1984, journalist Leslie Stahl ran a report highly critical of the Reagan Administrations use of visuals. The report was an attempt to inform the American public that President Reagan's television appearances were almost always well orchestrated by media handlers, and these appearances often times conflicted with the President's policy positions. The report employed many visuals of Reagan "with handicapped Olympians, at a senior citizen housing project, at home riding horses and cutting wood, in visions from Normandy, with the Vietnam Unknown Soldier, and comforting families of dead marines" (Denton, 1988, P. 70). Although the report was highly critical of the President, a staff member of the Administration called to thank Stahl for airing the show, because according to him all that the audience would remember were the great visuals of Reagan.

As alluded to earlier when discussing the "Dukakis's Prison Furlough" and the "Tank" ads, visuals can be highly effective in projecting a negative image of one's opponent. Jesse Helm's "Quota" ad against Harvey Gant employed the use of a pair of hands from a white male tearing up a notice
informing him that he had been past over due to a racial hiring quota. The ad never directly claimed that "white males" were being past over because of hiring quotas, but the visual relayed the message. As one can see the visual is often more important than what is actually being said.

1.8 Criticisms of Negative Televised Political Advertising

In *Packaging the Presidency*, Kathleen Jamieson concluded that the rise and significance of negative televised political advertising is not as big a threat as many critics have made it out to be. Jamieson writes, "Political advertising legitimizes our political institutions by affirming that change is possible within the political system" (1984, p.452). Political advertising in her view emphasizes the power of the electorate to vote the existing government out of power. The existence of political advertising demonstrates that there is competition and democracy in place throughout our nation (Jamieson, 1984, p.53). However, the increase and emphasis of negative televised political commercials by candidates in the U.S. has now become a concern to Jamieson and she has recently recanted her position that televised political ads are nothing to fear (Pfau & Kinski, 1990, p.62).

One of the criticisms of negative advertising is that
it focuses so much attention and criticism on the opponent's record and position stands, that one does not often know the stand or ideas concerning governmental policies and programs of the attacking candidate (Joslyn, 1986). Often the reason for using negative ads is not to get voters to vote for a candidate per se, but to vote against a candidate. Some would argue that this creates an atmosphere in which position stands are blurred and the voters are forced to choose among the lesser evil.

The use of attacks, counter-attack, counter-counter-attacks, distortion of facts, and untruths can lead to confusion among the voters and result in non-participation. Many feel an informed electorate is essential in a democracy and misinformation created by negative ads can cause the electorate to make decisions based on "poor" information (Joslyn, 1986).

Negative ads can also play on the fears and prejudices of voters instead of the real issues of governing. Again, by directing attention to an opponent and away from themselves, candidates are not forced to disclose their own issue positions. Many feel, due to the concerns mentioned above, negative ads do little to promote participation and democracy and they can actually diminish the process (Joslyn, 1986).

Many take the opposite view: Negative advertising is
not harmful to the democratic process and should not be taken so seriously. Many would argue that political advertising in general has little effect on voting and therefore should not be of major concern (Berlson, Lazerfeld & McPhee, 1954; Campbell, Converse, Miller & Stokes, 1960). The fact that negative advertising in one form or another has been around since the beginning of our republic demonstrates that it's a part of our political culture. Some would argue that negative ads are often good for the democratic process because they often employ, compare, and contrast messages which voters find informative when making a candidate selection. Concerning the misinformation offered by negative ads, some may argue that the American public is probably more informed or that the opportunity to be informed concerning the issues in a campaign are greater now than at any other time in our nation's history. And the responsibility to inform the public concerning political affairs should not be left to the candidates but to the public themselves.

The debate over whether negative political advertising is detrimental to the democratic process will continue for years to come. However, since many do consider negative advertising a problem, solutions or defenses have been offered to help curb the use of negative commercials.

Solutions include legislation which would increase the
length of televised political ads, providing equal time to candidates to respond to negative attacks, and strengthening the ability to sue for false claims made during the campaign. Other solutions include the promotion of pre-election agreements by political parties and the candidates not to use negative tactics. Another would include the news media playing more of a role in refereeing negative attacks made by candidates. For a number of reasons, these solutions have major problems which make them unattractive solutions. However, a new solution in defending against negative ads has been introduced by Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski and is called the "inoculation message strategy."
2.0 Inoculation

In the field of medicine, an inoculation is the introduction of microorganisms into a patient in order build up a resistance to a particular disease. The inoculation is suppose to act as protection against a disease in the future.

When political scientists think of inoculation, they typically think of preemptive attacks or "priming." Scott Paine would consider both a preemptive attack and priming as techniques of the "manipulation of dimensions." The manipulation of dimensions is similar to agenda setting in which the goal of rhetoric is not to change people's minds per se, but "to force the target (opponent) to choose among alternatives chosen by the manipulator; that choice puts the manipulator in a position of strategic advantage" (Paine, 1989, p.38). The purpose of manipulation of dimensions is to pressure one's opponent to focus on issues on which an opponent is not prepared or does not want to face.

A preemptive attack is an attack which directs attention away from a candidate and onto the opponent. This can serve as an inoculation because it protects the candidate by directing attention to the opponent, forcing the opponent to go on the defensive.

Priming is a technique used by candidates to get the
press to focus on a specific issue. The issue on which the
candidate wants the news media to focus is one in which they
feel they have a clear advantage over the opponent. In the
case of abortion, if a candidate feels his/her position on
abortion is more popular with voters and can help the
chances of election, he/she will attempt to get the media to
focus on the abortion issue. Candidates hope the attention
paid by the news media to abortion will help sway voters in
his/her favor. Priming, similar to a preemptive attack,
acts as an inoculation against negative attacks by forcing
the opponent to focus on issues which are not in their best
interest. However, priming, unlike a preemptive attack,
does not have to be negative.

Some have argued that George Bush used both preemptive
attacks and priming to inoculate himself against Michael
Dukakis in the 1988 presidential election. A good example
of a preemptive attack, used by the Bush campaign in 1988,
was the attack on Governor Dukakis’s environmental record.
Concerns about clean water, global warming, acid rain, off-
shore drilling, and medical waste and sewage washing up on
costlines across the country elevated the public’s
awareness about the environment. One of the major campaign
issues of the 1988 election concerned how the next president
would handle the environmental crisis.

The Reagan Administration’s environmental record over
an eight-year period had been a sensitive issue to the Bush campaign. Many felt the Democrats would have an easy opportunity to attack Bush on the environmental question. Bush, realizing the saliency of the issue, attacked Michael Dukakis on the environmental question first. Roger Ailes, Bush’s media advisor, launched advertisements featuring the polluted Boston harbor and the state of Massachusetts’ planned dumping of waste off the coast of New Jersey, which effectively questioned Michael Dukakis’s conviction towards the protection of the environment (Goldman & Matthews, 1989, p.363).

A new and distinct approach to fighting attack ads is offered by Michael Pfau and Kenski in their book, *Attack Politics*. Pfau and Kenski feel a strategy called the "inoculation message strategy" may prove useful in fending off negative attacks. The inoculation Pfau and Kenski propose comes from using two-sided arguments. A two-sided argument is one which refers or alludes to the opposition’s viewpoint or the weaknesses within one’s own argument. A one-sided argument only presents one position and does not mention counter-arguments.

An example of a one-sided argument would be: Football is the most popular sport in America. An example of a two-sided argument would be: Although more people attend baseball and basketball games than football games, football
is still the most popular sport in America. This would be considered a two-sided argument because it informs the reader of a possible argument against football being the most popular sport in America.

One of the results found in studies concerning one-sided versus two-sided arguments was that groups which were exposed to a prior two-sided argument (which supported a previous belief held by the group) were more likely to retain their original beliefs after an attack message than groups which were exposed to a one-sided argument which supported their original belief (Lumsdaine & Janis, 1953; McGuire & Papageorgis, 1961; Miller & Burgoon, 1973; Anderson & McGuire, 1961; Macaulay & Norris, 1966). In other words, groups exposed to two-sided arguments were less likely to believe an attack message than groups which were exposed to only a one-sided argument. Many of these early experiments were performed to discover ways in which to defend against propaganda.

The strategy is called inoculation because the two-sided argument is supposed to act like a biological immunization. In a biological immunization, a small dose of the bacteria or virus is given to the patient to build up his/her resistance to it. In the case of the inoculation message strategy, the two-sided argument acts as the immunization. With a medical immunization, the patient is
only protected against the virus or bacteria which the immunization was meant to defend. Research has shown the inoculation message strategy will not only defend against an attack for which one was inoculated, but also against attacks for which one was not inoculated (McGuire & Papageorgis, 1962, p.25). Seemingly, using a two-sided argument makes one’s own argument appear to be more honest and truthful. According to Michael Kamins and Henry Assael, "After inoculation, refutation triggers the subject’s cognitive defense stimulating support arguments" (1987, p.239).

As stated earlier, it is often difficult to change individuals’ beliefs once they are in place. What the inoculation message strategy attempts to do is promote resistance to attitude change. Therefore, the inoculation message strategy attempts to place a belief in an individual, or reinforce a preexisting belief and reinforce this belief with a two-sided argument, making the belief less vulnerable to future attacks. Like a medical inoculation, the message inoculation is intended to last into the future.

2.1 Inoculation Experiments

Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski applied the inoculation
message strategy to a political campaign. This section will focus on some of the various ways in which others applied the inoculation message strategy in the past. Section 2.2 will concentrate on Pfau and Kenski’s application of the inoculation message strategy to a political situation.

To test the effectiveness of the inoculation in the inoculation message strategy, researchers perform experiments in which a short period of time is allowed between the inoculation and the attack, to determine whether the inoculation functions in the future. In the Cold War era of the 1950s, many were concerned about "brain washing" and propaganda. Arthur A. Lumsdaine and Irving L. Janis applied the inoculation message strategy to build resistance to propaganda by using two-sided propaganda presentations.

Before the announcement by President Truman that the Soviet Union had successfully tested its first atomic explosive device, Lumsdaine and Janis had set up an experiment testing the inoculation message strategy using different classrooms within a high school. Two different radio programs were presented to two different groups of students. Each radio program was propaganda to instill the belief that the Soviet Union would not be able to complete an atomic bomb in the next five years.

The first radio program utilized a one-sided argument. The propaganda of this one-sided argument program proclaimed
the Soviet Union could not develop an atomic bomb within the next five years because its scientists lacked the knowledge and it did not have adequate supplies of uranium needed in the production of an atomic bomb.

The second radio program presented to students also concluded that the Soviets could not produce an atomic device within the next five years. However, the radio program used an inoculation or two-sided argument: although the Soviets had excellent scientists and an abundance of uranium from Siberia, they would not be able to create an atomic device within five years. This message acted as a two-sided argument because it informed the students that the Soviets did have the means to produce an atomic bomb, but they still would not be able to complete one in the next five years.

One week later, groups of students who were exposed to both the one-sided and the two-sided arguments were exposed to another radio program which functioned as counter-propaganda or an attack on their previous beliefs which took the opposite point of view. The counter-propaganda or attack message used a one-sided argument that concluded that the Soviets would have an atomic bomb within the next two years. The attack message described four plants within the Soviet Union allegedly producing atomic bombs (Lumsdaine & Janis, 1953, pp. 311-314).
After being exposed to the counter-propaganda or attack message, the students were given a questionnaire asking whether they believed the Soviet Union would have an A-bomb within the next five years. The groups that had received the treatment or two-sided inoculation were found to be less likely to believe the counter-persuasion that the groups not exposed to the two-sided inoculation.

Michael A. Kamins and Henry Assael utilized the inoculation message strategy in the marketing of a consumer product. The consumer product they chose was a ballpoint pen. Kamins and Assael used six different half-page, professionally designed black and white advertisements. One-sided ads were presented in a positive manner: "The Pensive (name of product) pen is well constructed with contemporary styling" (Kamins & Assael, 1987, p.245). The two-sided ads followed a similar pattern: "Despite having a plastic as opposed to a metal barrel the pen is well constructed, and although it is not uniquely styled, the styling is contemporary" (Kamins & Assael, 1987, p. 245).

Kamins and Assael used 106 college students as subjects in their experiment. Students were divided at random into four different treatment groups. Groups were then exposed to either a two-sided advertisement or a one-sided advertisement. Students were later asked to rate the performance of the product on how well it was styled, how
comfortable it was to write with, and the consistency of the ink flow. Kamins and Assael wanted to determine the impact of two-sided arguments versus one-sided arguments in student perceptions of the product after they had used the product. In other words, did the two-sided argument make the subject less critical of the pen after using it than subjects who were presented with only a one-sided argument?

Kamins and Assael also wanted to see how effective one-side and two-sided advertisements were when they went from realistic to greatly exaggerated expectations. It was found in the experiment that two-sided ads were more effective than one-sided ads in keeping down negative perceptions of the pen. However, when expectations of the product were greatly exaggerated, the two-sided ads only had a moderate effect.

The study concluded that advertisers should strongly consider using two-sided arguments within their advertising campaigns. Advertisers have been reluctant to use two-sided ads because when they use two-sided argument they are often admitting a weakness. Advertisers only like to focus on strengths; to them, mentioning their weakness goes against the rules.

The researchers, however, warn that using two-sided appeals may have its limits. Kamins and Assael concluded that companies which employ two-sided arguments first will
reap most of the benefits such appeals have to offer. However, the authors believe after the novelty of two-sided ads wears off and two-sided appeals become commonplace, the credibility of advertisers may be in question. Two-sided arguments only help create or maintain a positive image of a product; they cannot affect product performance in the long-run (Kamins & Assael, 1987, p.251).

2.2 Applying the Inoculation Message Strategy to Politics

Michael Pfau and Henry Kenski believe the inoculation message strategy would be a viable strategy to defend against negative political spots used in political campaigns. Pfau and Kenski were the first to apply the inoculation message strategy to a political situation. Pfau and Kenski conducted an experiment to test the effectiveness of the inoculation message strategy in the 1986 South Dakota Senate race between Republican incumbent James Abdnor and Democratic challenger Tom Daschle. They also ran a similar study involving the 1988 presidential campaign between Michael Dukakis and George Bush.

Pfau and Kenski drew their subjects for both the senate and presidential experiments from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. There were 733 participants in the senate experiment and 314 in the presidential experiment (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, p.86).
Subjects for both studies were potential voters selected at random from each voting precinct in Sioux Falls. Subjects were randomly placed in control and treatment groups. Those within the treatment group either received an inoculation and reinforcement message prior to the attack or they received an attack followed by a rebuttal to the content of the attack. Subjects in the control group received no inoculation or rebuttal (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, pp.86-87).

The first phase of the 1986 study was conducted from October 1 to October 8, approximately one month before the election. Subjects were given written attack messages concerning the candidates and asked their opinions concerning issue positions and candidate preference. Also during the first phase, subjects in some of the treatment groups were given an inoculation message consistent with their expressed candidate preference. In other words, if subject A in a previous survey preferred Abdnor to Daschle, then he/she would be given an inoculation for Abdnor, and vice versa (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, p.90).

After a ten-day waiting period to measure the effects of the inoculation, the second phase of the experiment was conducted from October 11 through October 28. In the second phase, subjects were given written attacks on the candidate they had previously supported. They were then given a survey to determine if they had changed their candidate
preference (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, pp.91-94).

Diagram 1

Layout of 1986 Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 (Bush)</td>
<td>0   X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2 (Bush)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3 (Dukakis)</td>
<td>0   X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 4 (Dukakis)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

0 = Observations and X = Inoculations

The 1988 study was very similar to the 1986 study; however, there were some distinct differences. The first phase of the 1988 study was conducted between September 12 and September 24, almost two months before the election. Interviewers called 529 households to determine issue positions and candidate preference. The second phase of the experiment was conducted on September 28. Researchers mailed inoculation and attack messages to 95 Bush supporters and 114 Dukakis supporters who were included in the treatment groups. Also on the 28th, 34 Bush supporters and 33 Dukakis supporters who were included in the control group were mailed attack messages. The third phase of the study was completed on October 5, approximately one month before the election. In the third phase of the study, researchers mailed reinforcement messages to 47 of the Bush supporters.
and 56 of the Dukakis supporters who were included in the treatment groups. On the same day, researchers mailed refutation messages to the 33 Dukakis supporters and 34 Bush supporters who were included in the control groups.

Phase four of the study was conducted less than a month before the election, from October 10 to October 22, in the homes of the subjects. There were three different steps involved in phase four. The first step was to administer an attack message to subjects who were included in the initial treatment groups. The second step consisted of administering an attack message to 52 Bush supporters and 55 Dukakis supporters who were included in the control groups which had received no inoculation. The third step surveyed the 33 Dukakis supporters and 34 Bush supporters who had previously received both an attack and refutation message through the mail, to determine if these subjects had changed candidate preference. Subjects who were interviewed and had no candidate preference were excluded from the study (N=146) (Pfau & Kenski, 1990, pp.93-97).
### Diagram 2

**Layout of the 1988 Study**

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<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bush</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
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<td>Group 2</td>
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<td>Group 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dukakis</strong></td>
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<td>Group 1</td>
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*0 = Observations  X1 = Inoculation  X2 = Reinforcement  X3 = Refutation*

The results of both the 1986 and 1988 found that inoculation messages helped prevent subjects from changing candidate preference. Pfau and Kenski concluded that the inoculation message strategy is a viable tool in which to counter attack messages.

#### 2.3 Critique of Pfau and Kenski

In the beginning of *Attack Politics*, Pfau and Kenski focus on the growing concern with the increase in negative televised political advertisements. They mention several suggestions and solutions by others to help curb the use of
negative televised political ads. Pfau and Kenski conclude that many of these solutions have major problems and they offer a new solution, the inoculation message strategy, to help defend against negative attacks.

Later in their work they focus their attention on attack messages. When they ran their experiments, the attack messages were written rather than televised. One major criticism of Pfau and Kenski’s experiments is that they concentrated on defenses for negative televised political attacks in the first chapters of their book, but excluded them in their experiments. Television, with the power of the visual along with the added dimension of sound, may make negative messages more effective than the written ones. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to use television messages instead of written messages.

Pfau and Kenski’s experiment used the mail to dispense inoculation and attack messages. By using the mail, they really could not determine who actually read the inoculation or attack messages. Pfau and Kenski also never addressed the impact that history may have had on their experiments.

When the researchers inoculated the subjects, many also received a reinforcement of the inoculation before the attack message. According to classic communication theory, this is a good practice because it reinforces a subject’s previous belief. Pfau and Kenski run into a problem with
external validity concerning the reinforcement of an inoculation. In the real world it may be difficult to reinforce an inoculation when one does not know if and when an attack will come.

Pfau and Kenski also inoculated subjects by the subjects' stated candidate preference. This method is a good one in that a goal of advertising is to solidify one's political base. However, by excluding undecided voters, Pfau and Kenski missed the opportunity to see how these voters would respond to inoculation and attack messages. By excluding undecided voters Pfau and Kenski again run into the problem of external validity. Because undecided voters are often "swing voters" who decide elections, it seems more valid to include these voters in the study to make it more representative of the real world.
3.0 Inoculation Experiment Using Actual Political Ads

Chapter 3 will focus on my own experiment which tested the inoculation message strategy using actual televised negative political advertisements.

The experiment differed from Pfau and Kenski’s in three ways: 1. It employed actual negative televised political commercials, 2. Undecided voters were included, and 3. There was greater control over exposure to inoculation and attack messages.

For this experiment I wanted to test the effectiveness of the inoculation message strategy using actual televised political commercials used in the 1990 Illinois gubernatorial race in an extremely controlled environment to see whether there was any difference in attacking candidates with written ads as opposed to visual television ads. With a controlled environment, many of the factors which would normally influence an individual’s selection during a campaign would be eliminated.

The experiment employed political advertisements from the 1990 Illinois governor’s race between Republican Jim Edgar (then Secretary of State) and Democrat Neil Hartigan (then Attorney General). This campaign was chosen for a number of reasons. First, it was very negative. In order to complete the experiment, actual negative political ads
would be needed. Because the Illinois race was publicized as being extremely negative, I had to be sure that the videotape I ordered from the C-Span television network would contain negative ads. Fortunately, I chose an election which offered numerous negative ads from both campaigns.

The second reason the Illinois race was chosen was because undergraduate students from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University would most likely not know the results of the election. This was important because if the students had known who won, it is possible that many would not vote for the candidate they knew had lost.

Third, there was no incumbent running for the office. An incumbent candidate was not desired because there might have been a bias for or against an incumbent. Also, students might have recognized the incumbent by name and this, too, might have biased their candidate selection. And finally, the Illinois race was chosen because there was no party affiliation mentioned in the televised ads. Because there was such little information upon which to make a decision, and because party identification tends to be one of the most important factors on vote choice, I left out the candidates' political party to keep subjects from voting based solely on party identification. Party affiliation was also left out because there appeared to be a "role reversal" between the two candidates: traditionally the Republican
party supports tax cuts and a reduction in spending while the Democratic party often supports tax increases to maintain public programs. In the Illinois governor's race, the Democratic candidate, Neil Hartigan, supported tax cuts and reduced state spending, while Republican candidate Jim Edgar supported extending a temporary state income tax to maintain state programs. If one did not follow this race, it might have been easy to assume Neil Hartigan was the Republican and Jim Edgar the Democrat. Therefore, because of the "role reversal," I wanted to see how many subjects would assume Neil Hartigan was the Republican candidate and whether this would have any effect on their candidate selection.

3.1 Sample

A pre-test was conducted using 10 graduate students from the political science department at Virginia Tech. After ironing out some wrinkles, volunteers were taken from an introductory American government class, an introductory political economy class, and a public opinion class at Virginia Tech. The experiment consisted of 36 subjects overall. Forty-three students participated in the first phase of the experiment held on March 20. Seven students failed to show for the second phase of the experiment on
March 27. There were 20 subjects included in the treatment or inoculation groups and 16 subjects within the control group.

3.2 Experimental Design

The subjects were divided into four groups for two reasons. First, the study was to examine whether there were any differences among written and visual attacks. Therefore, two treatment groups, as well as two control groups, were needed to determine whether there was any difference between written and visual attacks. The treatment groups were the groups exposed to inoculation messages, and the control groups were the groups which received no inoculation. Control groups were needed to determine the effectiveness of the inoculation. The experiment was divided into two sessions to test the effects of the inoculation in the future. The first four sessions lasted from 25 to 30 minutes and the second four sessions averaged under 25 minutes.
Diagram 3

Layout of Experiment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 1</strong></td>
<td>O</td>
<td><strong>Visual</strong> Attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 2</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Visual</strong> Attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 3</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Written</strong> Attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group 4</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Written</strong> Attack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0 = Observations  X = Inoculation

At the first session every group was asked to read a 2 and 3/4-page paper concerning Neil Hartigan’s and a 3-page paper focusing on Jim Edgar’s position stands. Both position papers focused on the following eight issues: taxes, the environment, education and children, state-sanctioned gambling, constitutional amendments, crime, consumer protection, and abortion. The Edgar position paper was 637 words long and contained his name 25 times, in an attempt to generate name recognition. The Hartigan position paper was 557 words long and contained his name 26 times to again try to generate name recognition. Half of the students in each group read the Hartigan position paper first and half of the students read the Edgar position paper first.1

---
1 The variation in the order in which subjects read the position papers was an attempt to keep students from voting for the first candidate they read about.
The issue stands on the eight issues were as close as possible to the real stands taken by the candidates. The only differences on issue positions by the candidates concerned taxes and favoring a state constitutional amendment which would change the number of votes needed in the state legislature to override a governor’s veto. Because taxes were the major issue in the Illinois campaign, and because the negative ads used targeted the tax issue, positions concerning taxes were the first issue placed on each position paper (position papers can be found in the Appendix 1 and 2).

After the students had read both position papers they were asked to fill out a 27-item questionnaire. Each questionnaire had a different number at the top right hand corner. Students were asked to place this number, along with their group number on their answer-sheet. These numbers were used to keep track of each student as he/she went from the first to the second session. The questionnaire asked general questions pertaining to their sex, age, and grade level, as well as questions concerning political affiliation and issue positions. The survey helped determine the subject’s candidate preference and positions on many of the key issues within the governor’s race. Because taxes played such a dominant role in the
Illinois governor's race, three questions were included to find out how subjects viewed federal and state income taxes, as well as property taxes. Five questions were included to determine subjects' positions concerning abortion, government spending on education, protecting the environment, welfare, controlling crime, and dealing with drug addiction. These two sets of questions would help determine how important one's positions on issues were in relation to the selection of a candidate.

The questionnaire also included a question concerning political party affiliation, to judge whether party identification played a role in candidate preference. Also, a question concerning liberal/conservative self-assessment was included to ascertain if one's self-assessment played a role in candidate preference.

Question 26 of the survey asked students to pick the biggest issue of the campaign according to the readings. This question was put in to learn how well the students had read the position papers. The final question asked students to choose a candidate based on the information given. The choices for the final question listed Jim Edgar first, Neil Hartigan second and undecided third (a copy of the first survey is provided in Appendix 3).

After completing the first survey, students in groups 1 and 2 were exposed to an inoculation for candidate Jim
Edgar. Students in groups 3 and 4 were excused after the survey was completed, and they did not receive an inoculation. The decision to inoculate for Jim Edgar was made for three reasons. First, Jim Edgar had favored the extension of a temporary state tax increase, while his opponent had promised to let the temporary tax increase run out as well as to cut state spending. Secondly, because of Edgar’s stand on taxes, most of the negative attacks by Hartigan were directed towards the tax issue. Thirdly, Edgar was chosen because one of his own commercials was very similar to a two-sided argument. Because this ad was close to a two-sided argument, it was used to inoculate the students.

The inoculation given to the students in groups 1 and 2 (N=20) was an issue-oriented inoculation which contained a two-sided argument explaining why Jim Edgar supported an extension of the temporary income tax increase. Jim Edgar’s inoculation message was 106 words long and reported that he supported the tax increase because the new revenues were earmarked for education, and that in return for the extension of the income tax increase he would give property tax relief. Students were asked to read the inoculation message. After they read the inoculation message, they were twice shown one of Jim Edgar’s political ads which was very close to a two-sided argument. Subjects were then asked to
re-read the inoculation message. After reading the inoculation message a second time, the students were excused (the inoculation message and a transcript of Jim Edgar's ads are included in Appendix 4a and 4b).

During the second session, members of each group were given the original two-position papers to refresh their memories as to the two candidates. After each student had looked over the position papers again, an attack was administered. Groups 1 and 3 (N=18) were given a visual attack using Neil Hartigan's negative televised ads. Five ads were shown twice. Every commercial was 30 seconds long, except one that was only 15 seconds long, but which followed a 30-second ad which made these ads appear to be a 45-second commercial. The majority of these negative ads attacked Edgar for his position concerning taxes. One commercial, however, suggested Edgar was employing negative campaign tactics to cover up a scandal of job selling in his own office. A few commercials were "hit-and-run" spots which attempted to link Edgar to the outgoing governor, Jim Thompson. Even though the students may not have known who Jim Thompson was, the image portrayed in the ad gave one the impression that Thompson was not someone with whom Jim Edgar would want to be associated.

Groups 2 and 4 (N=18) were given two written attacks which were transcribed from Hartigan's five negative
political ads. The first written attack message was 117 words in length and the second message contained 80 words. These written ads were employed to determine whether there were differences between the effects of written political attacks versus visual political attacks. (Transcripts of the negative televised ads and the written negative are provided in Appendix 5-11.)

After students were exposed to the negative political attacks, they were asked to fill out a four-question survey. The first question asked which candidate they would choose based on the information given. This time the response "undecided" was omitted and Neil Hartigan's name was placed first within the survey. The response "undecided" was omitted to better simulate the actual election and to determine whether the inoculation had any effect on the undecided voters. Again, students were asked which issue, according to the information given, was the most important issue in the Illinois governor's race.

The last two items in the questionnaire were placed at first out of curiosity, but later served to determine if party identification played any role in the experiment. The next to last question asked which candidate they felt was the Republican. The final question asked the students to indicate how sure they were that the candidate they chose was the Republican.
3.3 Hypotheses

The two major hypotheses of the thesis are:

**Hypothesis 1:** Students within the treatment groups will be less likely to shift from Jim Edgar to Neil Hartigan than members of the non-inoculated groups.

According to the inoculation message strategy, subjects exposed to two-sided arguments are more likely to retain their original beliefs when these beliefs are attacked compared to groups not exposed to a two-sided argument. The inoculation message strategy could be considered an effective protection against negative advertising if the inoculation groups have a lesser shift compared to the non-inoculated groups.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individuals exposed to visual attacks will be more likely to shift from Jim Edgar to Neil Hartigan than those exposed to written attacks.

Because visual information is retained more than written information and because the non-verbal content of an advertisement is often just as or more important than what is actually being said, it is presumed that the visual attacks will be more effective than the written attacks and cause a shift from Edgar to Hartigan. Because Pfau and Kenski did not use actual (visual) televised political ads in their experiment, actual ads were used to determine if
there is any difference in visual versus written attacks.

The thesis also contains a number of auxiliary hypothesis which are listed below:

**Hypothesis 3:** Subjects will tend to vote for the candidate they believe is a member of their political party.

Even though the candidates’ party affiliation was left out, many students may have voted according to which candidate they perceived as being a member of their own political party. Item 7 of the questionnaire asked students their party affiliation and item 30 asked which candidate they thought was the Republican. Due to the "role reversal" encountered in the Illinois governor’s race, it was expected that most students would consider Neil Hartigan to be the Republican and Jim Edgar as the Democratic candidate. Therefore, if political party affiliation played a role in the experiment, even though it was never mentioned, Republicans would most likely support Hartigan and Democrats would most likely support Edgar.

**Hypothesis 4:** Both students who consider themselves "liberal" and "conservative" will shift to Hartigan after the attack messages.

Item 8 on the questionnaire dealt with the subjects' liberal/conservative self-assessment. The assumption is that the terms liberal and conservative are extremely ambiguous and after subjects are exposed to the attacks
against Edgar, both liberals and conservatives will shift support to Hartigan.

**Hypothesis 5:** Subjects that consider federal, state and property taxes "too high" will support Hartigan after the attack messages.

Items 16 through 18 on the questionnaire dealt with attitudes towards federal and state income taxes and property taxes. The belief is that subjects who believe taxes are "too high" will support Hartigan because he was against a tax increase. Because taxes played such an important role in the election and because the attack messages used in the experiment dealt with taxes, there is a need to determine if subjects' views on taxes had an impact on candidate preference. It is believed that the negative ads, which pertain to taxes, will increase the saliency of the tax issue and cause a shift towards Hartigan among the subjects who feel taxes are "too high."
4.0 Results of the Experiment

Chapter 4 will discuss the results of the inoculation experiment. Unlike Pfau and Kenski's findings, the results of the experiment did not indicate that the inoculation message strategy was effective in defending against negative attacks.

4.1 General Information

Of the 36 students, 21 were males and 15 were females. Eighty-six percent of the subjects were white. The average age of the subjects was between 19 and 20 years of age. The majority of the students were freshmen and sophomores. 58 percent of the students were from the South Atlantic region of the United States and 3 students were from outside the United States. 33 percent of the students were Protestant and 36% were Catholic, 17% claimed no religious affiliation, and 14% claimed an affiliation not listed. After recoding the standard seven point political party identification scale to a five point scale, it was found that 36% of the students considered themselves Democrats, 14% independents, 39% Republican; 3% chose the category "other party" and 8% were undecided. After recoding the seven point liberal/conservative self-assessment scale to a four point scale, 47% of the students considered themselves
"liberal," 19% considered themselves "moderate," 31% considered themselves "conservative," and 3% percent claimed not to know.

It would seem that the students picked up on the fact that the tax issue was the most important issue in the campaign. After the initial survey, 86.1 percent of the students responded that taxes were the biggest issue of the Illinois campaign. After the attack messages were administered, 100% of the students chose taxes as the most important issue.

4.2 Simulated Election Results

In the actual election, Republican Jim Edgar defeated Democrat Neil Hartigan in a very close race. Edgar received approximately 50.3% of the vote and Hartigan 48.5%. A third candidate, Jessie Fielder of the Illinois Solidarity party, captured 1.2% of the vote (Chicago Tribune, 1990, p.1A).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>19 (52%)</td>
<td>24 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>15 (42%)</td>
<td>12 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 9.497  p = .0087  Cramer's V = .5136

Table 1 shows the distribution of the students
candidate preferences before and after the attack messages. In the experimental election, Neil Hartigan easily defeated Jim Edgar. At the end of the experiment, 10 out of the 36 (28%) students changed candidate preference. Seven out of ten or 19% of all the students went from either Jim Edgar or undecided to Neil Hartigan. On the surface, this looks as if negative ads had an effect.

4.3 Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis was that students within the treatment groups would be less likely to shift from Jim Edgar to Neil Hartigan than the members of the non-inoculated groups. There was no support for this hypothesis; 4 out of the 20 students (20%) of those in the treatment group changed from either undecided or Edgar to Hartigan. Only one student in the treatment group changed to Edgar. Three out of the 16 (19%) of the students within the control group changed from Edgar to Hartigan; however, 2 out of the 16, or 12.5%, went from either undecided or Hartigan to Edgar.

As mentioned earlier there were a total of 10 subjects who changed their candidate preference after the attack ads were administered. Six students shifted from Edgar to Hartigan, 2 students shifted from Hartigan to Edgar and 1
Undecided voter shifted to Edgar while the other Undecided voter shifted to Hartigan.

Table 2
Inoculation Groups Before and After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Before Attack</th>
<th>After Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: There was one undecided student who shifted to Hartigan after the attack messages.

Chi Square = 7.25  p = .05  Phi = .2685

Table 2 was found to be statistically significant and the relationship seemed to be a strong one, but it was in the opposite direction to what was predicted. (Note: All tables used .05 level of significance to determine statistical significance.)

Table 3
Control Groups Before and After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Before Attack</th>
<th>After Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 9.58  p = .0083  Cramer’s V = .729

Table 3 was also found to be statistically significant and the relationship also appeared to be a strong one. Note: There was one undecided student who shifted to Edgar after the attack messages and one who shifted to Hartigan after the attack messages.
4.4 Hypothesis 2

The second major hypothesis was that individuals exposed to visual attacks would be more likely to shift from Jim Edgar to Neil Hartigan than those exposed to written advertisements. When comparing groups exposed to a visual attack (N=18) versus groups exposed to written attacks, it seems the visual attacks created more change in candidate preference. Six out of the 10 students who changed their candidate preference were in the visual groups. Four of the 7 students who changed their choice to Hartigan were from the visual groups. However, 2 of the 3 students who shifted from either Hartigan or Undecided to Edgar were also included in the visual groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidates</th>
<th>Before Attack</th>
<th>After Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: There was one undecided subject who shifted to Hartigan after the attack messages.

Chi Square = 7.25  p = .0266  Cramer's V = .602
Table 5
Change in Written Attack Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Before Attack</th>
<th>After Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: There was one undecided subject who shifted to Edgar after the attack messages.

Chi Square = 4.88  p = .0871  Cramer's V = .552

Table 4 was found to be statistically significant with a strong relationship. It would appear by examining tables 4 and 5 that visual and written messages were equally effective at changing students from Edgar to Hartigan. However, it is interesting to note that the only 2 students who changed from Hartigan to Edgar were from the visual group. It is possible that these students turned against Hartigan because of the visual attacks.

4.5 Party Identification and Final Vote

This section will focus on the subjects' party identification and their final vote. This section will also discuss the subjects' party identification and which candidate they believed was the Republican. These tables will help determine if party identification played any role in the experiment even though the candidates' party
affiliations were never given in the experiment.

Hypothesis 3 was that subjects will tend to vote for the candidate they believe is a member of their political party.

Table 6 shows the relationship between students' party identification and the way in which they voted the final time.

Table 6
Students' Party ID and Consistency of Final Vote

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Final Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote Consistent with Party ID</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote Inconsistent with Party ID</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 would seem to support the hypothesis that subjects would tend to support the candidate they believed was a member of their own party. However, 8 out of the 11 subjects who voted inconsistently with their political party affiliation considered themselves Democrats. This meant that 8 out of the 13 subjects who claimed to be Democrats voted against the candidate they thought was of their party. From this information it would seem that the hypothesis failed when you consider the Democrats.

Table 7 demonstrates the students' party identification in relation to which candidate they felt was the Republican
candidate.

Table 7
Party Identification and the Presumed Republican Candidate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Republican Candidate</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 7.04  p = .1338

Table 7 offers further evidence that subjects were often inconsistent in their voting according to their political party affiliation. Table 7 demonstrates that 69% of the students thought Neil Hartigan was the Republican candidate. This was to be expected due to the "role reversal" experienced by the two candidates. Table 7 also displays that 12 Republican students believed Neil Hartigan was the Republican candidate. Table 6 shows that 11 of the 14 Republicans ended up voting for Hartigan. This may lead one to believe that Republicans tended to vote for Hartigan because they thought he was a member of their own party.

Interestingly, the majority of students who thought Jim Edgar was the Republican were students who claimed to be Democrats. The Democrats seemed to split their vote between Edgar and Hartigan. Six Democrats thought Hartigan was the Republican, and eight Democrats in the end voted for
Hartigan. This would lead one to believe that some Democrats voted for Hartigan even though they thought he was a Republican. The evidence supports the hypothesis that a subjects' party identification played an important role in the experiment. However, party identification seemed to be stronger in those who claimed to be Republicans than those who claimed to be Democrats.

4.6 Liberal-Conservative Self-Assessment by Final Vote

This section will focus on liberal/conservative self-assessment and candidate preference to determine if self-assessment had any effect on candidate selection. Hypothesis 4 was that both students who consider themselves liberal and conservative will shift to Hartigan after the negative attacks.

Table 8
How Liberals Voted Before and After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 4.28  p = .1173
Table 9

How Conservatives Voted Before and After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservatives</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 2.35  p = .3077

Tables 8 and 9 support the hypothesis that both liberals and conservatives would shift to Hartigan after the attack messages. This would suggest that both liberals and conservatives were affected by the negative advertisements. This may also suggest that the terms liberal and conservative are very ambiguous and may explain the inconsistency in the subjects' vote in relation to their liberal/conservative self-assessment. Because the negative attacks focused specifically on Edgar's stand on taxes, the subjects' attitudes towards taxes were examined to determine if there was any relationship to their candidate selection.

4.7 Attitudes Towards Taxes and Candidate Preference

This section will focus on subjects' attitudes towards taxes to determine if there is any relation to candidate preference. Questions 16 through 18 on the survey dealt with taxes. Subjects were asked if they considered their or their parents' federal, state and property taxes to be too
high, about right or too low. Hypothesis 5 was that subjects who considered federal, state and property taxes "too high" would support Hartigan after exposure to the attack messages. Table 10 is a frequency distribution of how all the subjects viewed state and federal income tax as well as property tax.

Table 10
Attitudes Towards the Various Taxes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
<th>Do Not Pay</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 11 through 16 demonstrate subjects candidate preference and their attitude towards taxes before and after the attack messages.
Table 11
Attitudes Towards Federal Income Taxes and Candidate Choice Before Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 5.91 p = .6563

Table 12
Attitudes Towards Federal Income Taxes and Candidate Choice After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>12 (+2)</td>
<td>7 (+2)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>3 (-1)</td>
<td>6 (-1)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 4.66 p = .3238

Table 13
Attitudes Towards Property Taxes and Candidate Choice Before Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 4.91 p = .7670
Table 14

Attitudes Towards Property Taxes and Candidate Choice
After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>8 (+2)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>5 (-1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 4.6  p = .3304

Table 15

Attitudes Towards State Income Taxes and Candidate Choice
Before Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 5.995  p = .6477

Table 16

Attitudes Towards State Income Taxes and Candidate Choice
After Attack Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Too High</th>
<th>About Right</th>
<th>Too Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hartigan</td>
<td>10 (+4)</td>
<td>7 (-2)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar</td>
<td>0 (-3)</td>
<td>10 (+3)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi Square = 12.22  p = .0158  Cramer's V = .58263

Table 16 was found to be statistically significant, but the relationship was not a strong one. Tables 11 through 16
support the hypothesis that students who feel taxes are "too high" will support Hartigan. Tables 11 and 12 show that Hartigan gained two votes from subjects who felt federal income taxes were "too high". Tables 13 and 14 also show that Hartigan picked up two votes from subjects who felt property taxes were "too high". Hartigan also picked up two votes from subjects that claimed they did not know if taxes were "too high", "about right" or "too low". Tables 15 and 16 demonstrate that every subject who thought state taxes were "too high" selected Hartigan in the final vote. This added up to a gain of four votes for Hartigan. However, Hartigan lost two votes in the "about right" category which suggests that the political spots may have increased the saliency of the issue. It is also interesting to note that the largest shifts in candidate selection came in the state income tax category, once again suggesting that the political ads may have helped increase the saliency of the issue.

4.8 Conclusions

From the experiment it did not seem that the inoculation message strategy was successful at neutralizing the attack messages. Four out of the 20 or 20% of the students in the treatment groups changed from either
Undecided or Edgar to Hartigan. Only one student in the treatment groups who changed preference shifted from Hartigan to Edgar. The control groups had 3 out of 16 or 19% of the students shift from Edgar to Hartigan and 2 out of 16 or 12.5% shift from Undecided or Hartigan to Edgar.

When examining the differences between visual and written attacks, no apparent differences were found. The visual attacks did seem to create more change in candidate preference: 6 out of the 10 students who shifted candidate preference were in the visual group. However, when comparing the visual with the written attack groups, the visuals were no more effective in turning students away from Edgar, 2 out of the 3 subjects who shifted from either Hartigan or Undecided to Edgar were included in the visual group.

The tax issue seemed to play a major role in explaining why subjects changed from Jim Edgar to Neil Hartigan. The subjects who felt taxes were too high tended to vote for Hartigan. The negative ads seemed to be effective in increasing the saliency of the tax issue. Neil Hartigan’s ads were very specific, focusing in on the tax issue and explaining the differences among the two candidates. The majority of Neil Hartigan’s ads were believable, and he utilized quotes from state newspapers to increase the credibility of his attack ads.
One's liberal/conservative self-assessment seems to play a role in one's candidate selection before the attack ads. After the attack ads there was a shift by both "liberals" and "conservatives" to Hartigan. This is to be expected because the terms "liberal" and "conservative" are extremely ambiguous terms. One could claim to be liberal because of their position on abortion and conservative on fiscal issues. Another could claim to be conservative because of their view of fiscal issues, yet be liberal on social issues.

At first, it appeared as if party identification played a role in the experiment. Those who claimed to be Republican and believed Hartigan was the Republican tended to support him. It would also appear at first that party identification was not a major factor when it came to the Democrats. Some Democrats who thought Hartigan was the Republican still voted for him demonstrating they were willing to vote for a candidate of the Republican party. However, one must keep in mind that Edgar the candidate who 70% of the subjects thought was the Democrat and was the candidate that was being attacked. It may have been much easier for the Republicans to stick with the candidate they perceived as the Republican. If Hartigan was the candidate being attacked, the Republicans may have been just as willing as the Democrats to switch candidates due to
negative information received about the candidate of their party.

4.9 Limitations of the Experiment

One of the limitations of the experiment may have been a lack of reinforcement of the inoculation message. In the case of Pfau and Kenski's senate race study, it is very difficult to determine if reinforcement was actually any different from that of my experiment. In my experiment students were asked to read an inoculation message, then watch a video of one of Jim Edgar's ads which was similar to a two-sided argument, and finally re-read the inoculation message. In Pfau and Kenski's 1986 senate study, they only mailed the inoculation message. There is no reason to believe to participants in their study read these inoculation messages more than once if they read them at all. Therefore, it is not easy to determine by looking at the 1986 study if the reinforcement of the inoculation was insufficient. However, Pfau and Kenski did a much better job in reinforcing their inoculation in the 1988 presidential study than I did. In the 1988 study they mailed reinforcement messages to the previously inoculated participants.

Another limitation may be that the subjects in the
experiment really could not be inoculated from the attacks because they did not have a previously held belief. In my experiment, subjects may not have experienced the same type of previously held belief as in Pfau and Kenski's experiment because there was little information to base decisions upon. However, experiments such as the one performed by Assael and Kamins (which used two-sided versus one-sided advertising for a consumer product) experienced success with the inoculation message strategy; the previously held beliefs in their study were based on little information.

In the simulated election in my experiment, Neil Hartigan the Democratic candidate easily defeated the Republican candidate Jim Edgar. In the experiment Hartigan received 67% of the vote compared to Edgar's 33%. In the actual election, Jim Edgar defeated Neil Hartigan in a close election by less than 2 percentage points. How can this be explained?

An explanation as to why the results in the experiment and actual election differed was because in the actual election voters had more information to help determine their vote. In the actual election each candidate's party affiliation was known. Both candidates had lengthy political careers, which gave them name recognition. Media coverage, other political ads and historical factors all helped voters decide which candidate to support.
In the experiment the party affiliation of the candidates was left out, and for most students it was probably the first time they had ever heard of Jim Edgar and Neil Hartigan. Also only the political spots of Neil Hartigan were shown to the subjects. Jim Edgar’s commercials were left out of the experiment except for the one Edgar ad which was used in the inoculation. Many of the factors which went into making a decision as to which candidate to vote for during an election were left out or reduced in the experiment.

When examining the results of the simulated election and the actual election one may conclude that they have little in common. However, if one examines the actual election from beginning to end, one may find that the experiment and actual election have more in common than might initially appear. In the actual election Jim Edgar had a large lead at the outset. After Hartigan began airing the ads which were used in the experiment Edgar’s lead began to decrease and he eventually won by only a slim margin. This would suggest that the negative ads which appeared to have had an effect in the experiment also seemed to have an effect in the actual election. Therefore, the results found in the experiment were not as different from what was experienced in the actual election.

One of the major limitations of the experiment was the
fact that it only consisted of 36 subjects. With only 36 there were only a few results that were found to be statistically significant. Using undergraduate students at Virginia Tech is another limitation. The population included in the experiment was not representative of the population at large and therefore there is a problem of external validity. Students may have a much different view on the issues presented or be more inclined to believe the negative attacks compared to the general population. Therefore, the results of this experiment may not be applicable to the population as a whole. Students also may not have taken the experiment seriously and therefore the results may again not be as good as expected.
5.0 Final Discussion

The experiment demonstrated that the inoculation message strategy may not be as effective a strategy for neutralizing televised negative televised political advertisements as Pfau and Kenski have claimed. Pfau and Kenski had hoped that the inoculation message strategy could be proven effective in neutralizing negative ads, therefore reducing the effectiveness and use of negative ads.

One problem the inoculation message strategy will face in the real world is the reinforcement issue. A candidate may find it difficult to reinforce an inoculation.

Having to prepare an inoculation far in advance may be another problem concerning the inoculation message strategy. Because an inoculation must take place before an attack, candidates would have to prepare far in advance to establish an inoculation. This may cause a candidate to start campaigning even earlier than they already do. This would also lead to more expensive and an increase in the amount of money spent on campaigns.

In the 1988 presidential campaign Michael Dukakis was attacked on many different issues. One claim of the inoculation message strategy is that it is supposed to protect against other attacks which were not inoculated. It is unrealistic to believe an inoculation for one of these
attacks would have protected Dukakis against the others. One must also consider the undecided voters. Inoculation is supposed to keep voters who have made a candidate decision from changing candidates after an attack. How do the undecided voters, who are often the voters who decide elections, fit into the inoculation message strategy?

The whole concept of inoculation using two-sided arguments seems unrealistic in the world of political campaigns due to the fact that there must be a willingness on the part of the candidate to acknowledge weaknesses or mistakes. In the political world no one likes to admit failures; failures turn out to be liabilities. Also by admitting a weakness, it may actually lead to more negative ads by an opponent such as the "negative-on-positive" commercials discussed earlier. Candidates who use these ads take an opponent's positive ad, such as an inoculation message, and discredit it. In the case of a two-sided inoculation ad, candidates may be giving the opposition ammunition to be used against themselves.

One of the first assumptions of the inoculation message strategy is that it is difficult to change individual's beliefs once they are in place. This may make it difficult to inoculate individuals who already have a previously held position on an issue.

The inoculation message strategy which Pfau and Kenski
employed in their studies utilized two-sided arguments to neutralize attacks. This form of inoculation is relatively new to the political science community. When political scientist think of inoculation, they often think of preemptive attacks or priming. I think Bush did an excellent job inoculating himself from Dukakis's attacks by using both priming and preemptive attacks. Bush's preemptive attack on Dukakis's environmental record focused attention away from the Reagan/Bush administrations environmental record. Bush's attacks on Dukakis's membership in the ACLU, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Massachusetts prison furlough also inoculated Bush by keeping negative attention focused on the Dukakis campaign. I do not doubt that Pfau and Kenski feel preemptive attacks could work in inoculating a candidate against negative attack. I think Pfau and Kenski wanted to find a solution that would reduce the effectiveness and therefore use of negative ads by using a method which would not use the method they were arguing against.

Here the argument surfaces, over whether negative televised political ads are detrimental to the democratic process. With the news media's coverage of negative advertising many have consider all negative advertising as bad. In my opinion the great majority of negative televised political ads are not detrimental to the democratic process.
And in many cases negative advertising are actually "good" for the process. When negative ads take the form of "compare-and-contrast" ads, they can often provide useful information to the voters as to the position stands of the candidates. Negative ads do not always turn voters off to voting. Sometimes negative advertisements may generate interest in elections instead of turning voters off to an election. Challengers often need to use negative advertisements to help unseat an incumbent. Incumbents have so many advantages over challengers, negative ads give challengers at least a fighting chance.

I do, however, feel negative political advertising is bad for the democratic process when negative advertising totally dominates an election. When an election is filled with attacks, counter-attacks, and counter-counter-attacks voters may get fed up with the candidates and opt to stay home on election day. During elections of this type both candidates usually spend so much time and energy criticizing each other that they spend little time informing the voters what they will do once elected to office.

Negative political advertisements are detrimental to democracy when they employ tactics that are intended to play on the fears and prejudices of the voters. The Helms "Quota" ad in the 1990 North Carolina Senate race and a Willie Horton ad aired by National Security PAC on Bush's
behalf in the 1988 presidential election are good examples of how the ads played on racist fears within the U.S..
Throughout this thesis it has been said that if an ad goes too far or is perceived as dubious by the electorate there is a good chance there will be a backlash. Many of the ads which target prejudices and fears are directed at a particular audience. The ads may cause a backlash in certain groups but not in the target group.

I realize it is very difficult to look at an ad such as Jesse Helms’s "Quota" ad and say that there were was an underlying message of racism when affirmative action is an important issue to many "non-racist" Americans. I found the inoculation message strategy appealing because it offered a solution to curbing negative advertisements which did not include negative advertising or legislation which would restrict the traditional political speech of candidates. However, I do not advocate restricting the speech of candidates for public office. If a candidate uses tactics that play on the prejudices of the voters hopefully the voters themselves will hold the candidate accountable.

5.1 Future Research

For the future, I hope there will be more research applying inoculation techniques to political situations. Hopefully, more within the political science field will
engage in research involving negative political advertising and inoculation techniques. In the future, I would like to see more experiments employing the inoculation message strategy using actual political advertisements. I feel this type of research would be beneficial in an age where the medium of television dominates congressional, state-wide, and national campaigns. Also, for further inquiry into the effectiveness of the inoculation message strategy, I would hope to see undecided voters included in the experiments to determine if two-sided arguments can be effective at defending against negative attacks when there is no pre-existing candidate preference.

Because television has become so ingrained in American society and the American electoral process, I feel it would be interesting to see a study which would attempt to determine the effects of visual political advertisements on viewers based upon age. Because younger Americans have been brought-up on television and may tend to watch more compared to older Americans, negative televised commercials may have more of an effect on the younger generation compared to the older generation of Americans.

I feel it would also be beneficial to investigate the

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This thesis contained a large amount of communications literature because there is little research conducted concerning the effectiveness of negative advertisements by those in the field of Political Science.
possible use of preemptive attacks and priming as inoculation techniques to determine the effectiveness of these methods in defending against negative attacks. Although preemptive attacks would not limit the use of negative attacks and may even perpetuate the use of negative attacks, preemptive attacks used as an inoculation technique may prove more realistic than the inoculation message strategy.
Appendix 1

Jim Edgar
Candidate for Governor of Illinois

Jim Edgar is one of three candidates running for Governor of the state of Illinois. The governorship become vacant when Governor James Thompson announced his intentions not to run for a fifth term. Mr. Edgar is an attorney by profession, but has been a member of the Illinois General Assembly and has occupied the office of Illinois Secretary of State for the past nine years. Jim Edgar was raised in Charleton, Illinois, is happily married with a son and a daughter, and is affiliated with the Baptist church.

Issue Positions

Taxes

Taxes will be a major issue in the 1990 gubernatorial campaign. In June of 1989, a temporary two year, state income tax surcharge went into effect. Jim Edgar supported the 1989 income tax increase, and wants to extend it to continue the funding of education and other vital government programs. However, Jim Edgar wants to give citizens a break on their property taxes by supporting reduced rates.
Abortion

On the issue of abortion, Jim Edgar believes a woman has the right to an abortion until the later stages of pregnancy. After a certain amount of time, the state can intervene and prohibit an abortion.

Constitutional Amendments

If elected Jim Edgar will push for a constitutional amendment making it harder for the legislation to raise taxes. To free up the legislature for other issues besides the budget, Jim Edgar supports a constitutional amendment to change the current system of one year budget cycles to a two year budget cycle. He supports a constitutional amendment to change the legislature’s veto override procedure. At present, a 2/3 vote in the legislature is required to override a veto. Edgar desires a change to 3/5 vote of the legislature to override a Governor’s veto.

Consumer Protection

Jim Edgar believes the investors of our state should be protected from securities fraud. Therefore, Jim Edgar will propose legislation to beef up the State Securities Office and push for an Investor’s Bill of Rights.

Crime

Jim Edgar is tough on crime and wants to make our
communities safe for law abiding citizens. He supports the death penalty for murderers and wants to push for tougher penalties for drug dealers. To insure the safety of our streets and highways, Jim Edgar supports the institution of more rigorous licensing procedures for semi-trailer truck drivers and school bus drivers. Jim Edgar also supports legislation that would take away the driver’s licenses of persons convicted of drug related activities. Under an Edgar administration, convicted drunk drivers will stay off our roads. Persons convicted of drunk driving will have a tougher time obtaining driving privileges enabling them to go to and from work.

Education & Children

Jim Edgar leads the fight for higher education. The Illinois Education Association rated Jim Edgar the best among all of the candidates for governor. He pledges to place education among his top priorities. Children will also be one of Edgar’s priorities. Tougher penalties for child abusers and child pornographers will be enforced. Red tape will be reduced concerning the adoption of hard-to-adopt children and for child care facilities in order to make child care more affordable to working families.
Environment

Jim Edgar wants to keep our air and water clean for future generations and pledges to lead the fight against out-of-state dumping. He also supports new legislation to place tighter restrictions on the states landfills. Edgar enthusiastically supports recycling programs throughout the state. Anyone caught dumping toxic chemicals will be prosecuted and will serve mandatory jail terms under an Edgar administration.

State Sanctioned Gambling

Jim Edgar opposes the sanctioning of legalized gambling on professional sporting events in Illinois. Edgar believes that the sanctioning of gambling events would only lead to more organized crime activity within the state of Illinois.

"Let the future begin." Jim Edgar for governor.
Appendix 2

Neil Hartigan
Candidate for Governor
of
Illinois

Neil Hartigan is one of three candidates running for Governor of the state of Illinois. The governorship became vacant when Governor James Thompson announced his intentions not to run for a fifth term. Mr. Hartigan is a native of Chicago's North-Side and still resides only a few blocks from his childhood home. Neil Hartigan is an attorney by profession and has served as Lt. Governor of the state of Illinois. Neil Hartigan is currently serving his second term as the state's Attorney General. Neil Hartigan is 52, married with 3 children and is a Roman Catholic.

Issue Positions

Taxes

Taxes will be one of the most important issues in the 1990 gubernatorial race. In June of 1989, a temporary two year income tax surcharge of 20% went into effect. Half of the new revenues generated were earmarked for education. Neil Hartigan realizes that the citizens of Illinois have been asked to bare the burden of high taxes in the past to deal with the increase in government expenditures. Neil Hartigan opposed the income tax surcharge and proposes to let the temporary state income tax surcharge expire. Neil
Hartigan also proposes cutting state income taxes while at the same time cutting wasteful government spending. Neil Hartigan wants to see the government run more like a business.

Abortion

On religious grounds, Neil Hartigan is personally opposed to abortion, but feels the state should not restrict a woman’s right to an abortion until the later stages of pregnancy.

Constitutional Amendments

Neil Hartigan supports a constitutional amendment which would make it more difficult for the legislature to raise income taxes. He opposes a constitutional amendment that would change the override veto from a 2/3 vote to a 3/5 vote.

Consumer Protection

Neil Hartigan leads the fight for consumer protection. Mr. Hartigan has lead the fight against hidden charges used by new and used car dealers. As Attorney General, Neil Hartigan targeted nursing homes defrauding elderly patients. Neil Hartigan proposes stiff penalties for rip-off artists.

Crime

Neil Hartigan is tough on crime and wants to make Illinois safe for its citizens. He supports the death penalty for murderers and wants to increase sentences for
drug kingpins. Hartigan also wants to permit statewide
grand juries to indict drug dealers.

Education & Children

Neil Hartigan will lead the fight for higher education. The Chicago Teacher's Union endorsed Neil Hartigan because they felt he was the best choice among the gubernatorial candidates when it came to education policies for our children. Mr. Hartigan would like to see taxpayer dollars spent more wisely in the field of education. He wants money saved from cutting waste in other government programs to go directly to education.

Environment

Environmental protection is a major goal of Neil Hartigan. He plans to crack down on industrial polluters of our air and water. As Attorney General, Neil Hartigan opposed the dumping of radioactive thorium waste near residential areas. Hartigan supports recycling efforts, which will help relieve our overflowing landfills. Out-of-state dumping will not be tolerated during a Hartigan administration.
State Sanctioned Gambling

Neil Hartigan opposes state sanctioning of gambling on professional sporting events for the good of Illinois. He believes if the state sanctions gambling of professional sporting events other forms of gambling such as riverboat gambling would soon follow.

"It's time for a change."
Neil Hartigan
For Governor
1. **What is your sex?**
   1. Male
   2. Female

2. **What race do you consider yourself?**
   1. White
   2. African-American
   3. Asian
   4. Hispanic
   5. Other

3. **What is your age?**
   1. 17 through 18
   2. 19 through 20
   3. 21 through 22
   4. 22 through 23
   5. Over 23
   6. Under 17

4. **What is your grade level?**
   1. Freshman
   2. Sophomore
   3. Junior
   4. Senior
   5. Graduate

5. **Before coming to Va Tech, in what region of the country did you live?**
   1. New England
   2. Middle Atlantic
   3. East North Central
   4. West North Central
   5. South Atlantic
   6. East South Central
   7. West South Central
   8. Mountain
   9. Pacific
   10. Outside the United States
6. What is your religious affiliation?

1. Protestant
2. Catholic
3. Jewish
4. None
5. Other

7. What is your political party affiliation?

1. Strong Democrat
2. Not very strong Democrat
3. Independent close to Democrat
4. Independent
5. Independent close to Republicans
6. Not very strong Republican
7. Strong Republican
8. Other party
9. Undecided

8. On political issues, how would you place yourself?

1. Extremely liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly liberal
4. Moderate, middle of the road
5. Slightly conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely conservative
8. Don’t know

9. How often do you read the newspaper?

1. Everyday
2. A few times a week
3. Once a week
4. Less than once a week
5. Never

10. How often do you watch the nightly news?

1. Everyday
2. A few times a week
3. Once a week
4. Less than once a week
5. Never
11. On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?

1. 1 to 3 hours a day
2. 3 to 7 hours a day
3. 7 to 10 hours a day
4. More than 10 hours a day
5. Less than 1 hour a day
6. Never

12. On the average day, about how many hours do you personally listen to the radio?

1. 1 to 3 hours a day
2. 3 to 7 hours a day
3. 7 to 10 hours a day
4. More than 10 hours a day
5. Less than 1 hour a day
6. Never

13. Are you in favor of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t know

14. How important an issue is the death penalty to you? Would you say it is:

1. One of the most important
2. Important
3. Not very important
4. Not important at all

15. Would you support state sponsored gambling of professional sporting events?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don’t know
16. Do you consider the amount of federal income tax which you or your parents have to pay as:
   1. Too high
   2. About right
   3. Too low
   4. Don’t pay any federal income tax
   5. Don’t know

17. Do you consider the amount of state income tax which you or your parents have to pay as:
   1. Too high
   2. About right
   3. Too low
   4. Don’t pay any state income tax
   5. Don’t know

18. Do you consider the amount of property tax which you or your parents have to pay as:
   1. Too high
   2. About right
   3. Too low
   4. Don’t pay property taxes
   5. Don’t know

19. Do you think abortions should be legal:
   1. Under any circumstances
   2. Under some circumstances
   3. Never legal
   4. No opinion

20. Do you support the taking away of driver’s licenses of those convicted of drug related offenses?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Don’t know
We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. Listed are a few problems facing our nation. Please indicate whether you think we’re spending too much money, too little money, or about the right amount.

21. Improving and protecting the environment
   1. Too little
   2. About right
   3. Too much
   4. Don’t know

22. Improving the nation’s education system
   1. Too little
   2. About right
   3. Too much
   4. Don’t know

23. Welfare
   1. Too little
   2. About right
   3. Too much
   4. Don’t know

24. Halting the rising crime rate
   1. Too little
   2. About right
   3. Too much
   4. Don’t know

25. Dealing with drug addiction
   1. Too little
   2. About right
   3. Too much
   4. Don’t know
26. According to the readings, which seemed to be the biggest issue in the Illinois governor's race?

1. Abortion  
2. Crime  
3. Taxes  
4. State sponsored gambling  
5. Airport Expansion  
6. Consumer protection  
7. Education  
8. Other

27. From the information given concerning the candidates, which candidate would you choose?

1. Jim Edgar  
2. Neil Hartigan  
3. Undecided

28. From the information given, which candidate would you choose?

1. Neil Hartigan  
2. Jim Edgar

29. According to the information given, which seemed to be the most important issue in the Illinois governor's race?

1. Abortion  
2. Crime  
3. Taxes  
4. Religion  
5. Consumer protection  
6. Education  
7. Other

30. Which candidate do you feel was the Republican?

1. Neil Hartigan  
2. Jim Edgar

31. On a scale of one to seven, one being very sure and seven being not very sure at all, how sure are you that the candidate you picked was Republican?
Appendix 4A

Inoculation Message

Jim Edgar supports an extension of the two year state income tax surcharge which went into effect in June of 1989. Jim Edgar supports the extension because:

1. He feels the state budget has been cut as much as possible without severely threatening vital state programs.

2. Illinois' economic future depends on the quality of education for our youth. With half of the revenues generated from the 20% surcharge going towards, Edgar believes Illinois' students will be prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

In return for this extension in the state income tax surcharge, Jim Edgar proposes to cut property taxes which have increased substantially in the past ten years.
Appendix 4B

Inoculation Ad

**AUDIO**

*Voice of Jim Edgar:* A lot of politicians parade around and promise to cut your taxes. I’m not going to do that, it’s just not honest.

**VISUALS**

Jim Edgar is sitting talking with a group of citizens which includes one oriental female, one black male, one elderly white woman, one middle-aged white male, and one young white male.

But what we can do is enact safeguards, like putting a lid in skyrocketing property tax increases. Passing a constitutional amendment making it tougher for the legislature to raise taxes.

We must also set priorities such as improving education and making sure it’s adequately funded.

I’ve leveled with you about that and taken some heat for it too. By being honest and direct before the election, there won’t be any surprises after the election.

*Note: All underlined material was shown as a graphic. Time: 30-seconds*
Appendix 5

AUDIO

It’s happening, our families are being crushed by higher taxes,

and two incomes are not even enough.

Our roads crumbling.

Our jobs leaving.

Our schools failing.

Fourteen years of Jim Thompson and Jim Edgar, 25 tax increases and spending out of control.

No wonder Jim Thompson and Jim Edgar are pulling out 25 year old headlines

and making ugly personal attacks to cover up their own mess.

It’s the politics of the past, they’ve failed.

And it’s time for a change.

*Note: All underlined material appeared as a graphic. Announcer’s voice was not Neil Hartigan’s.

Time: 30-seconds.

VISUAL

Black and white shot of elderly couple looking sad.

B&W shot of young couple with child.

B&W shot of a road.

B&W shot of middle-aged man.

B&W shot of girl frowning.

B&W shot of black mother and child and another of a father with a child.

No wonder Jim Thompson and Jim Edgar

Are pulling out 25 year old headlines
And making ugly personal attacks
To cover up their own past

They’ve failed

Neil Hartigan
Governor
Audio

Jim Edgar says he's the only candidate to talk honestly about taxes.

The truth.

Jim Edgar's the only candidate for governor who wants to make last ears one time temporary tax increase a permanent tax increase. And Jim Edgar's the only candidate who says he may have to then raise income taxes even more.

Visual

Jim Edgar says he's the only candidate to talk honestly about taxes.

The truth.

Newspaper article displayed, headline reads "edgar backs permanent tax increase" "Edgar backs permanent tax increase." Alton Telegraph Wednesday, August 9, 1989

Newspaper article displayed, headline reads, "Edgar Opens Door to Income Tax Increases." "Edgar opens door to income tax increases." Chicago Tribune Tuesday, January 23 1990

The Choice

Hartigan shown walking with aides.

Hartigan shown speaking on the telephone.

Neil Hartigan Governor

*Note: All underlined material was presented as a graphic. Announcer was not the voice of Neil Hartigan. Time: 30-seconds

Neil Hartigan Governor
Appendix 7

AUDIO

Jim Edgar says if you let him have the largest tax increase in Illinois history he'll never have to raise them again.

Right

Jim Edgar thinks that the best way to lower your property taxes is to raise your income taxes.

Right

It's time for a change.

Neil Hartigan. Governor.

Jim Edgar's first response?

Raise Taxes

Neil Hartigan's?

Make government do more with the money it already has.

It's time for a change.

Neil Hartigan. Governor.
It's sad isn't it.

Now that Jim Edgar's campaign's in disarray-

Jim Edgar has gotten desperate and gone ugly.

It's not a pretty sight.

So why is Jim Edgar trying to muddy up this campaign?

Well maybe it's trying to cover up scandal of job selling in his own office or cover up his support for the largest permanent income tax in Illinois history.

The truth.

It's time for a change now more than ever. It's time for Neil Hartigan. Governor.

*Note: All underlined material appeared as a graphic. Voice was not Neil Hartigan's.

Time: 30-seconds

Scandal

Taxes

The truth

Neil Hartigan at the phone.

Neil Hartigan Governor
When given a choice, Jim Edgar's first response has always been raise taxes. As a legislator, he voted 13 times for higher state and property taxes. Now he wants the largest tax increase in Illinois history.

But he promises he'll never raise them again. Right.

It's time for a change. Neil Hartigan.

No to the 350 million dollar tax increase. Yes, to making government work harder with the money it already has.

That's the difference.

Neil Hartigan.

*Note; All underlined material appeared as a graphic. Voice was done by an announcer other than Neil Hartigan. Time: 30-seconds.
Appendix 10

It's happening, our families are being crushed by higher taxes and two incomes are not even enough. Our roads crumbling. Our schools failing. Our jobs leaving. When given a choice, Jim Edgar's first response has always been raise taxes. As a legislator, he voted 13 times for higher state and property taxes. Jim Edgar's the only candidate who wants to make last years one time temporary tax increase a permanent tax increase. And Jim Edgar's the only candidate who says he may then raise income taxes even more. Say no to the 350 million dollar tax increase. Say yes to making government work harder with the money it already has.

It's time for a change. Neil Hartigan for governor.
Appendix 11

It’s sad isn’t it. Now that Jim Edgar’s campaign’s in disarray, Jim Edgar has gotten disparate and gone ugly. It’s not a pretty sight. So why is Jim Edgar trying to muddy up this campaign? Well maybe it’s to try to cover up job selling in his own office or cover up his support for the largest permanent income tax in Illinois history.

The truth!

It’s time for a change now more than ever. It’s time for Neil Hartigan. Governor.
Works Cited


VITA

Eric P. Lashley was born in Wise County, Virginia on July 28th, 1966. He graduated from George Washington High School in Danville, Virginia in June 1984. In August 1984, he began his studies in Political Science and Criminal Justice at Radford University, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in May 1988. He came to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in August 1989 and completed the course requirements for a Master's of Arts degree in Political Science in July 1990.

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121