

FROM DEWEY TO DUKAKIS, FROM CHECKERS TO HORTON: STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TV POLITICAL SPOT

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ABSTRACT

The tremendous amount of television advertising used during a presidential campaign is the result of an historical process that began over forty years ago and has emerged into the sophisticated political spot.

INTRODUCTION

In the recent presidential campaign, television (TV) was flooded again with hundreds of political spots. It might be of interest to look back to the beginning of the TV era and follow the development of political advertising during the past forty years. This paper discusses the emergence of, and the different stages the political spot went through as it developed and evolved in the forties; the fifties, when it began to push the half hour long TV speeches away; through the sixties and seventies, when there was no difference between selling the president and selling soap or automobiles; until finally the early eighties when Cable TV became standard in American households and offer new possibilities for campaign managers to reach voters; and in the late eighties when the negative spot came early and often with media manipulation and process over content. A whole new political ball game has emerged as a result of the slick sophisticated political spot.

The stress will be on the various advertising concepts used by presidential candidates to get the support of the electorate. Before reviewing the history of political advertising on TV it might be wise to recall the purposes of political ad in general. First, political ads can make an unknown candidate better known, they develop and explain issues and they are used to soften or redefine the image of a political contestant. Second, more ads are aimed at late-deciding or uninterested voters, they are a means to reinforce supporters and partisans and to attack the opponent. Third, ads help the candidates to raise money so that the tremendous costs of the presidential campaigns, especially the expensive political spots themselves, can be financed (Devlin 1986).

The Forties

The 1940's saw the evolution toward the use of the TV political spot. One TV spot was created and TV covered the political conventions and ensuing campaign in a manner which made the emergence of the TV political spot inevitable. Philadelphia was chosen by both political parties because it was centrally located on the recently laid TV cable. This portends the dominating role TV would have in the future. The coverage at each convention was extensive. The political process, for the first time, made an accommodation for the TV.

According to press reports, the TV coverage at the Democratic convention was a better technical job than the one at the Republican convention. This refers to the video directors, technicians and reporters. Accordingly, direction and relaxation replaced indecision and nerves. The networks also managed to make interviews more interesting. Instead of giving 15 or 30 minutes sessions to one headliner, the networks split a half-hour into a variety of 3 to 4 minute spots.

Both candidates, Harry Truman (Democrat) and Thomas Dewey (Republican) did not like the idea of using television advertising in their campaign, so in the months following the political conventions

there were no TV spots for advertising purposes. Thomas Reeves, an advertising professional, claimed at the time that effective use of TV by Dewey could have made the difference. Realizing the potential of TV advertising, and the potential of selling a politician as selling a consumer product, Reeves suggested to Dewey the use of television. Dewey dismissed the suggestion, and said that he did not think it was dignified.

Truman has a low opinion of broadcasting in general. He believed in personal contact. As he said after the victory, "I traveled 31,000 miles, made 356 speeches, shook hands with half a million people, talked to 15 to 20 million in person." Truman's campaign did produce a single short spot, but records do not indicate whether it was shown either on TV or in the movie theaters. Eventually TV was used during the 1948 campaign period mainly as a news coverage vehicle.

The political sport began to emerge in the forties. TV was used extensively to cover the conventions and ensuing campaign. In its technical use, TV comes close to the "spot" and the democrats even created one.

The Fifties

The presidential campaign in 1952 differed in one crucial point from previous campaigns. For the first time TV was used as a political tool and since television had become America's dominant mass media. (In 1952 there were an estimated 19 million TV sets, approximately 40% of American households could be reached by television, and the percentage in specific areas was even higher, e.g. 62% in the northeastern part of the United States) None of the candidates could do without it. Although the importance of political advertising on TV was recognized by both candidates they used different concepts to bring their messages to the electorates. Whereas the Democratic candidate Adlai Stevenson focused on half hour speeches, the Republicans around General Dwight D. Eisenhower put emphasis on the major innovation in the 1952 campaign: "The spot".

The TV speeches of Stevenson were at bottom nothing other than those given by political candidates for centuries with only one difference, a change of surrounding (i.e. instead of making a speech in the street in front of people, the same speech was now delivered on TV). By contrast the Republicans took advantage of the possibilities of the new medium. Using especially 20 second spots (beside the 30 minute programs) Eisenhower tried to convince the Americans that he was the most appropriate for the presidency.

The most effective selling method was considered to be USP (Unique Selling Proposition) by Eisenhower's advertising agency and a trio of USP's were selected: Korea, Communism, and Corruption. The result was a series of spots called "Eisenhower answers America!" Although in these spots the editing capacity of TV was used - for instance Eisenhower's answers were recorded before questions had been asked and the questioners could not actually see Eisenhower nor he them - these early spots are considered as "primitive spots" because of their simplicity and the fact that most of them consisted of the candidate speaking directly to the viewing audience or the viewing audience eavesdropping on the candidate as he addressed a rally (Devlin 1986).

In contrast to the half hour TV speeches which required the preemption of scheduled programming and in consequence were very expensive, the Republicans found a more cost efficient strategy which also brought a larger average audience than the half hour programs. They bought advertising time between famous television shows with top talents and glittering names, such as Jack Benny, Eddie Cantor or Fred Allen, which were sponsored by big advertiser and which attracted a big audience. So these spots reached more of the electorate for a smaller sum of money.

The advantages of the spots could not be ignored by the Democrats either, so that in 1956 most of the thirty minute programs were replaced by the shorter spots, especially by those lasting five minutes

called "hitchhikers" referring to free rides on somebody else's audience (Diamond and Bates 1984). Besides the lower costs of the five minute spots - costing around \$10,000 as supposed to a half hour program at approximately \$80,000 - politicians were also convinced that an increasingly restless audience was not willing to sit through a 30 minute political speech and that only the short TV spot could hold the attention of the viewers. Furthermore, there was no need for preempting scheduled programming any more.

An often used style not only in the early years of television but also throughout the whole development of political advertising on TV is the so called endorsement or testimonial spot. These have either prominent politicians, movie stars, and television personalities or family members speaking on behalf of the candidate. A case in point was the endorsement by Senator Estes Kefauver for Stevenson in 1952. Some other examples out of the list of endorsement spots are Harry Belafonte, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Adlai Stevenson for Kennedy (1960), Duke Ellington for Nixon (1972), Pearl Baily for Ford (1976), and Mary Tyler Moore for Carter (1980).

In addition to the shift from 30 minute programs to 5 minute, 60 and 30 second spots, the election campaign in 1956 brought another innovation. The Democrats behind Stevenson introduced the concept of the negative commercial, a theme that would be repeated in years to come and is a controversy still discussed in the media today. (Sheridan 1990; Kamber 1991; Stengel 1988; Levin 1990; Konard and Walczak 1988; Whereas candidates in the past put emphasis on their own positives, achievements and reasons why they should be elected, things changed with negative ads. The main task of these ads was to tear down were real or imagined) and finally to ask voters not to choose the best candidate but to choose "the lesser of two evils" (Konard and Walczak 1988).

The techniques to achieve these goals are manifold. First, negative spots can use films of the opponent to attack the opponent. To illustrate this point let's look at the "How's that again, General?" ads aired by the Democrats in 1956. In this spot footage of Eisenhower making promises in 1952 was juxtaposed with claims by the Democratic vice-presidential candidate Kefauver that those promises had not been kept.

Secondly, it is a common way of attacking the other candidate by putting arguments in the mouths of everyday voters. These "man-on-the street" spots (News Prospectives 1986) are used to reinforce perceptions of candidates that develop from polling. In this style the media managers tape dozens of brief interviews with ordinary people. Those that raise the desired point, in the desired language, with the desired demographic mix, are then edited together into a fast-paced spot. In order not to give the impression that the asked people are paid actors, but actual citizens voicing unscripted opinions, these attack ads show the name of their hometown when they speak.

A third characteristic of negative spots is that the presidential candidate stay above the battle, that means that he doesn't show up in spots attacking the opponent. The presidential candidate leaves the fighting to his running mate, because in this way he avoids appearing presidential by attacking his opponent directly which could significantly damage his chances. An example in point is the above mentioned "How's that again, General" spot, in which not Stevenson, but his vice-presidential candidate Kefauver attacked Eisenhower. These "generic ads" (Jamieson 1986) in which the candidate is unseen, unheard, and sometimes even unmentioned have been a chief component of all presidential campaigns since 1956.

The reason for the massive application of the concept of the negative might be their high effectiveness. For studies show that people process negative information more thoroughly than positive statements (Stengel 1988). Furthermore, if the attack spot is negative and controversial enough, so that the opponent complains about its unfairness, it can happen that networks replay the commercial and the press pays more attention to it. In this case you get more publicity at no extra costs so that you can almost speak of a multiplier effect of the real though negative ads. Therefore negative - of in the euphemism of the day, "comparative" - ads are a wide spread means to distinguish oneself from the

other side.

The Sixties

The early Sixties confronted the presidential campaigns with two significant developments. On the other hand television had reached almost all Americans, 90 percent of American homes had TV sets in 1960, which made political advertising on TV highly effective, and on the other hand the cost of TV advertising had exploded over the years. Alarmed by these rising costs and at the broadcaster's suggestion the Congress suspended Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act which contains the equal-time rule. This rule prevented discrimination of candidates of minor parties by forcing the networks to provide equal airtime to every party.

Suspensions of Section 315 meant that the networks could give free air time only to serious presidential candidates which they did. They donated an estimated \$4 to \$5 million in air time (Diamond and Bates 1984).

Most spots of the 1960 election campaign between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon used the talking head format which had them speaking directly to the viewers. Whereas Nixon appeared in much more formal ads whose visual background was blank, Kennedy in contrast used the background for additional visual information, for example pictures of family members and award plaques.

Out of necessity, because Nixon preferred to visit all fifty states before election day and therefore did not have enough time to be filmed for spots, his filmmaker Gene Wyckoff created a new style of political advertising. He took still photographs of the candidate and an animation camera generated a sense of motion by a combination of zooming and panning actions. This technique, Wyckoff later declared, "was extraordinarily suitable for conveying an impression of heroic image, perhaps because each still photograph in itself is a slightly unreal impression, a moment frozen from life, that makes it easier for viewers to accept and be moved by an illusion of the candidate's heroic dimension" (Diamond and Bates 1984).

Another change can be noticed during the sixties, a move from hard sell to soft sell advertising. Had advertising agencies and admen been convinced in the past that the only way to sell products was to use brain-pounding repetition of the advantages, of the uniqueness and the importance of the particular product, the new advertising tried to reach customers by their emotions. Soft sell advertising depended on affect, on how the viewer felt about what he or she was seeing and hearing. The task of advertising should be, as Tony Schwartz, one of the representatives of this new advertising school, argued, to "reach the responsive chord in people" (Diamond and Bates 1984).

One way to reach this responsive chord was to present political arguments by visual association. The 1964 campaign, the Republican Barry Goldwater ran against the incumbent, President Lyndon B. Johnson, produced a good example for a spot which is directed to the viewer's emotions. The spot in point was called "Peace, little girl", but also known as "Daisy" spot, and produced by the Democrats. It even did not mention the name of Johnson's opponent, but only evoked still existing anxieties in the audience that Goldwater would be willing to use atomic weapons. The spot melded sights and sounds of a young girl pulling petals from a daisy with the countdown and launching of a nuclear warhead, and it dramatically underscored the consequences of reckless leadership in a nuclear age.

Tony Schwartz, the producer of this most celebrated and controversial commercial which was pulled off the air after being shown only once, described its effectiveness: "Many people, especially the Republicans, shouted that the spot accused Senator Goldwater of being trigger happy. But nowhere in the spot is Goldwater mentioned. There is not even an indirect reference to Goldwater... The commercial evoked a deep feeling in many people that Goldwater might actually use nuclear weapons.

This mistrust was not in the Daisy spot. It was in the people who viewed the commercial... Commercials that attempt to tell the listener something are inherently not as effective as those that attach to something that is already in him." (Schwartz 1973)

In contrast to negative associations visual associations can also be applied to build up a good image of candidate. A case in point would be president Ford's 1976 commercial "America's feeling good" which combined pictures of laughing children, glamorous parades, happy workers, and the Lady Liberty with the appropriate music of a "feeling' good" song.

The 1968 campaign used improved communication technology and was responsible for the first high tech election. For the first time color television was employed in presidential ad and increased the appeal of TV spots. The old style recording system of sound on film was replaced by the more flexible double chain method, where sound and sight were recorded separately and then mixed and synchronized. Finally sophisticated electronic equipment opened up new possibilities for generating words and graphics on the screen. Frames could be squeezed, zoomed, rotated and exploded on and off the picture tube and screens could be electronically split.

Besides these technical developments the campaign between Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey brought the introduction of a new concept in marketing political candidates, the "narrowcasting". Instead of producing spots which are directed to the whole nation and therefore aired throughout the country, narrowcasting broadcast spots only in specific regions for which these spots are tailor made. Nixon used this concept in his "Man in the Arena" programs. Comparable to "Eisenhower answers America" in these programs Nixon is responding to questions from panels selected to represent the various important demographic groups in each of the regions in which the panel shows appeared. Whereas the possibilities of narrowcasting in the late sixties were very limited, the increasing popularity of Cable TV in the eighties turned narrowcasting to a highly efficient marketing tool.

The Seventies

In 1972 George McGovern's principal ad creator, Charles Guggenheim, did not believe in the ethics or in the effectiveness of negative advertisements. Since he was an award winning documentary filmmaker it was not surprising that he was responsible for a new technique in producing TV commercials, the "cinema verite technique". Guggenheim filmed the Democratic candidate McGovern in real life settings interacting with real voters. This format allows the admaker to take footage of a candidate speaking with voters during the course of a day or several days. The footage is then edited down to thirty and sixty second snippets where the candidate concentrates on one issue.

This technique was refined in the following years with the aim to make spots look like news, so that viewers would have the impression that they were watching TV news and would not be aware that it was a paid political spot. In order to intensify this impression advertising agencies bought time slots for these commercials within or adjacent to news programs. It is interesting to notice that in later years an almost contrary development has been emerging: The resemblance of news to commercials. The news clip has become glitzier and pithier and more stories are developed with one theme by fast cutting from one spokesman to another, in contrast to the old fashioned way, when one spokesman told the whole story and explained the issues.

As far as the costs for presidential campaigns are concerned, 1972 brought new regulations. On February 7, Nixon signed the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) into law, which set a limit both on the amount candidates for federal office could spend on communication media and a limit on how much they could spend on broadcast advertising. FECA also required that within 45 days of a primary or general election, broadcasters not charge political candidates more than the lowest rate charged any advertiser for the same class and amount of time (Jessel 1990).

Whereas the latter measure increased the value of each dollar spent on a broadcast, FECA by placing the same spending limits on both candidate favored the incumbent. For as in all races against an incumbent, the challenger requires high expenditures in order to attain comparable exposure.

A new kind of negative advertisement (or attack ad) emerged during the 1976 campaign between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. The so called "neutral reporter" ads (Jamieson 1986) set forth a series of factual statements in a clean, unemotional way and then invite a judgement. In general this is a presentation of the negative record of the opponent (e.g. Carter indicted Ford for high inflation and specified its effect on food prices) and the most common form simply quoted a promise the other candidate had made, and documented that he had not kept it.

For the first time in presidential politics 1976 brought "slice of life" advertisements (Devlin 1986). These spots used paid actors in little theater settings who were talking about their favorite candidate in the same way they would talk about their favorite detergent or beer. Although the slice-product technique is so blatantly obvious and had so many product advertising association, it is a popular and wide spread concept of courting the electorate's favor.

The Eighties

In order to play down the perception of Ronald Reagan as an actor and to play up the perception of him as an effective governor, his advertising manager put most emphasis on documentary ads. These commercials provide the viewer with information about the candidate's past, his course of life and his accomplishments in various political functions. Especially to reach swing and late deciding voters the documentary spots were an appropriate means because of their crucial information.

As far as the length of the political spots is concerned it can be noticed that over the years the thirty second spot has become the standard format, although, however, a mix of lengths of spots is used in each presidential campaign. For instance, an analysis of Reagan's ads during his 1980 campaign shows the following picture: Between labor day and election day the Republicans aired 255 commercials, 140 of these were thirty second spots (55%), 74 five minute spots (29%) and 41 sixty second spots (16%). An interesting detail might be the distribution of the different styles used in these spots. 41% were documentary commercials, 33% talking head and 26% negative ads (Devlin 1986).

Another characteristic of the 1980 campaign was the emergence of independently financed ads. These spots are financed by individuals or organizations separate from the presidential candidates. Examples in point are the Republican Congressional committee, the National Conversation Political Action Committee. Most independent ads (sometimes the independence can be questioned) are hard-hitting, negative ads that are directed to create reaction regardless of whether it be negative or positive. As Terry Dolan, national director of NCPAC, said, "I don't care what Ronald Reagan, Jimmy Carter, or CBS says about our ads" (Devlin 1986). The results of this philosophy are some of the most scurrilous political ads so that voices have become audible which urge that the media should reject these messages when they stoop to mud slinging, and the candidates who are supposed to benefit from these commercials should denounce their use (Advertising Age 1988).

In contrast to this unpleasant development in political advertising the rise of cable TV in the eighties (by the end of 1987 one half of the homes owning a television sets subscribed to cable) enabled political consultant to refine the concept of narrowcasting, nowadays called "niche-marketing". David Garth, the media producer of independent John Anderson, realized the opportunities cable TV could offer. Cable enables candidates to tailor their message to narrow sections of the electorate, in a similar way to direct mail. That's the reason why cable television "has the impact of television and the targetability of direct mail" (Armstrong 1988).

There are basically three different types of targeting in cable television. The first is geographic

targeting, which is mainly applied to reach very crucial states (e.g. spots which are running only in Texas, California, or Florida) or to focus on special regional issues. A possible backlash of this method could strike a candidate who talks about a 50-state campaign but in reality allocates money and campaign time to targeted areas. When this targeting strategy becomes public it is not out of the question that the untargeted states, which are, for instance, written off to the other party, start to make trouble. Either the parisiens in these areas force you to abandon your strategy or, even worse, swing to the other candidate on the election day.

The second kind of targeting, the demographic targeting, refers to the fact that in general the American cable subscriber has a distinctly different demographic profile in comparison too the broadcast audience. A cable subscriber tends to be a much more active citizen than the average American, he is more likely to vote and more likely to contribute to a political campaign (Armstrong 1988). Therefore from a campaign manager's point of view the cable subscriber is a very important target group for political ads.

Finally, cable TV offers the possibility of psychographic targeting, that means presidential candidates can reach narrow defined audiences just by using different channels, because of the existence of channels for Blacks, Jews, Christians, women, Hispanics and so on.

In addition, targeting cable television has many other qualities that make it attractive to the political advertiser. It is cheap, has very few time constraints and permits much more freedom of expression than broadcast.

In 1984 two strategies were tried to resolve the problem, that it was almost impossible to attract and hold the attention of the audience with thirty minute programs. Although these programs gave more detailed information about special issues people were not willing to watch them, when other channels offered more entertainment. The Republicans purchased the same half hour block of prime time on each of the networks. This use of "roadblocking" deprived habitual viewers of first run alternatives to the Reagan message. Unlike Reagan's documentary, that of independent Democrat Lyndon LaRouche was aired at 11:30 p.m., well outside prime time. Borrowing a ploy from the networks, LaRouche encouraged viewers with spot ads that functioned as promos. The spots promised for instance that the documentary would provide details about a coming food shortage in America (Jamieson 1986).

The 1988 presidential campaign on TV had many unique characteristics which differentiated it form others in the past. The campaign will be remembered as one of the most negative. It was the first time that negative commercials came so early, compared to the historical pattern of first using ads to establish the candidate's positives.

It was the first time that many commercials were made almost exclusively to manipulate the news media. The manipulators learned that by controlling the pictures, you ended up controlling the content.

Commercials for Bush and Dukakis illustrated another feature of that television campaign, the emphasis of process over policy and what goes on behind the scenes. The ads became the issue which caused the media to cover them more than in prior years. Ad men for both camps controlled the images they wanted to present, and the media attention they would evoke.

Roger Ailes, media advisor for the Bush team was the one who defined more than any other, the strategy of the campaign. It can be summarized in three major rules:

1. People watch TV emotionally.
2. TV covers, and voters remember, only three things: visual, attacks, and mistakes.
3. In TV, confrontation would be less effective than manipulation. Or, as described by

the media consultant Bill Schutte, "a political campaign is no time for truth" (Garfield 1988).

Regarding the positive impact of the negative ads, The Los Angeles Times asked for a show of hands of people who believed the political ads were effective. About half the audience responded for the Bush ads; not one hand was raised in favor of the Dukakis spots. That can you and idea about the effectiveness of the negative spots. The negative commercials are:

1. Principal source of information about candidates. In this manner, TV is another extension of the democratic process, bringing the government back to the people.
2. Making arguments more effectively and efficiently.
3. Negativity gives messages power. People process negative information faster, with one or two exposures to a negative appeal as memorable as 5 to 10 exposures to a positive appeal.
4. In recent years, campaigns have been won with negative commercials because the public is more disposed to believe the worst about politicians.
5. The candidate cannot just promise everything the people want to hear at that time. He should be able to show all he did in the past to achieve these goals.
6. The public finds the campaign more interesting when candidates attack each other.
7. Sometimes the negative arguments are fair and justifiable (Guskind and Hagstrom 1988).

Because of the manner in which advertising was used by both campaigns in 1988, some of the commercials received double exposure. The media integrated stories about the commercials into its coverage of the campaign.

In order to earn free network time on the evening news, prototype spots were hand delivered to news organizations and shown as part of the campaign news coverage. This helped their message to appear in a "neutral" environment. The Bush campaign has a much better idea to how to integrate the paid and free media. The result was the network news replaying Bush commercials much more than those of Dukakis.

TV is the most important influence on voters. Campaign ads have been examined, dissected, reviewed and reviled more than ever. People are making the choices largely on the basis if impressions they have gotten on TV. Commercials may work despite the act that people realize they are being manipulated. Malcolm Forbes said that political advertising is influential because of the decline in influence of political parties and it is a legitimate was to get your message across (Meyers 1988).

In general, not many commercials in the 1988 campaign dealt with issues and serious suggestions of how to solve America's problems. Issue and content were ignored in favor of image and emotion. The candidates knew that the public was willing to nod its approval to the man who looked the brightest on TV that evening. Bush and Dukakis trivialized their campaigns in order to meet the demands of commercial TV news.

The TV's need for pretty pictures cheapened the campaign and allowed the dominance of image over issue. The past had taught that although a candidate may deliver a thoughtful speech, if he tripped and fell as he left the stage, that was all anyone would see on the news. The manipulators learned that by controlling the picture you ended up controlling the content. On TV the image has a way of overpowering the commentary (Biocca 1991).

The Dukakis spots were designed to appeal to the economic doubts of the middle class. Can parents afford to send children to college. Can young couples afford to buy a house. In these spots he used the slogan "Bringing prosperity home." The Bush spots dealt with foreign policy and national security concerns. In one spot dealing directly with the Reagan defense build-up, Bush offered

continuity in the Reagan defense policy.

This was the first time that negative commercials came so early, compared with the historic pattern of first using ads to establish the candidate's positives. It was the first time that so many commercials were made almost exclusively to manipulate the news media. The manipulators learned that by controlling the pictures you ended up controlling the content. The emphasis of process over policy and what goes on behind the scenes was predominant. Dukakis made the ads an issue. That caused the media to cover, more intensively, the commercials and how they controlled the image they wanted to present.

CONCLUSION

In analyzing the election campaigns from 1948 to 1988 there seems to be a basic line in all advertising strategies, that means almost all campaign consisted of four phases and according to these phases of different types of TV spots. Phase one ensures that the voters have some sense of the candidate. This is done by ID spots which establish name identification and attempt to associate the candidate with certain implicit themes framing the candidate. ID spots usually contains compact narrative histories of the candidates life.

In the next phase, the argument stage of the media campaign, various spots, especially endorsements, talking head, or cinema verite spots, are used to tell the voters what the candidate stands for. Argument spots have three patterns in common. First of all, most spots do not get too specific. Second, appeals to emotion are more likely to be used than discursive arguments and finally, despite both the vagueness of the content and the frequent shortcoming of thought, many argument spots make serious, issue oriented points.

Once the candidate's name, history, and something of his or her personality and ideas are known, the campaign usually enters its third phase, the attack. Here all forms of negative advertising are applied (e.g. man on the street spots and generic ads) and it is this stage of political campaigns which has been the target of critique in the last years again and again. Many charge that negative advertising is the prime cause of declining voter turnout and increased alienation from the political process, trends that threaten the foundation of American democracy.

The fourth and last step on the way to the presidency through TV ads is the shortest and most quiet. The candidates sum up, appear on camera in response, thoughtful and dignified, and usually the election campaign ends with an election-eve program of thirty or sixty minutes.

After reviewing the rise of television to the most effective and most important advertising tool in presidential election campaigns, let me conclude by taking a look into the near future of political advertising on TV. There are two reasons that could diminish the effect of paid television. On the one hand the growing concern over the cost of campaigns may lead eventually to further legislation limiting the money spent of campaign advertising. And on the other hand the increasing number of Americans turning to videocassette recorders could change the future strategies of campaign managers.

Maybe direct mail videotapes will be the political advertising tool of the future, because the cost of producing a videotape in quantity is now competitive with television ad time, particularly in expensive media markets, such as New Jersey and California. Currently, 50,000 - 100,000 political videos would cost about \$2.00 each, excluding postage; one presidential candidate who has already used this method was Ronald Reagan in his 1984 campaign. Further decreasing costs will make this new form of direct mail a viable advertising weapon which might be a very important component of the coming presidential campaigns (Colford 1989).

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