The Efficacy of Negativity in Campaign Advertisements

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Collecting campaign contributions, establishing candidate recognition, and convincing the American voter are paramount for a political candidate's odds at winning on election day. This reality necessitates the fielding of campaign advertisements. It is the objective of this research project to determine the best ways for campaign advertisements to achieve their desired results. The purpose of this experiment is to test the apparent dominance of "negative campaigning" over "positive campaigning." A survey asks participants to consider the campaign advertisements for two fictional candidates running against each other in a local election. The survey tests four advertising methods with a positively and negatively framed campaign advertisement for each method. The four methods tested are funding, character, ethnic, and socioeconomic appeal-based advertisements. The results of the experiment show that in most criteria negative campaigning underperforms positive campaigning. Statistical testing reveals that varying campaign strategies have varying degrees of effectiveness in certain demographics.

In the United States, elections at multiple levels of the state and federal governments are used to determine which candidates will fill various offices. While several candidates run unopposed in certain offices, many candidates compete against each other for one office. In these competitive elections, collecting campaign contributions, establishing candidate recognition, and convincing the American voter are paramount for a political candidate's odds at winning on election day. Candidates typically utilize campaign advertisements to achieve these goals. Political advertisements and the success with which they communicate their message are critical to the outcome of election campaigns. Fundraising is often the end goal of political advertisements, suggesting that money is paramount to a successful campaign. This thesis intends to identify the most efficient campaigning strategies and measure their ability to garner support with a survey.

Elections, especially presidential elections, are extremely important to the American system and are the most direct way American citizens can shape their societies and the policies that limit and protect their liberties. Presidents are particularly

Appendix may be found online at: https://www.cpp.edu/class/political-science/participate/ undergraduatejournal/vol4/gregoryappendix.pdf

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Undergraduate Journal of Political Science, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 2021. Pp. 25-46 ©2021, Department of Political Science, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona important as they have the power to appoint federal judges with the most critical appointments being those to the United States Supreme Court. Former President Trump has appointed Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrette, as Justices to the Supreme Court. With this currently Republican dominated supreme court, it is possible that federal protections regarding reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights, as well as other important rights might be removed. For those with a vested interest in influencing the nation's laws and policies at all levels, it should be of paramount importance to them that the candidates they back are employing the most effective campaign strategies. This paper thus seeks to ask what the most effective campaign strategies are. As the literature review will show, funding is crucial to elections, candidates and their teams can find varying pros and cons for both negative and positive campaigning, and candidates can effectively use group and identity appeals in their campaigns. More specifically, the question this paper seeks to address is: do positively framed campaign advertisements outperform negatively framed campaign advertisements? Based on information obtained while completing the literature review, four hypotheses were created.

- Hypothesis 1: Negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be donated to.
- Hypothesis 2: Negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be "liked" on social media.
- Hypothesis 3: Negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be shared with others.
- Hypothesis 4: Negatively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to grab the respondent's attention.

Hypothesis 1, as the first section of the literature review will show, is important as the amount of funds available to a campaign is of vital importance to a candidate's odds at winning on election day. Hypothesis 2 is important as the more "likes" a political advertisement receives on popular social media sites, the more visible it becomes to users of that particular social media site. When more people see your campaign materials, more people can become aware of your campaign and you are therefore more likely to receive donations from more contributors. Similarly to hypothesis 2, hypothesis 3 is significant as more people deliberately sharing a candidate's campaign materials would result in more people seeing them and becoming potential contributors. Finally, hypothesis 4 feeds into the previous three hypotheses. The more interesting campaign materials are, the more likely they are to be distributed and attract campaign contributions.

Including this introduction, this project will be split into five sections for the purposes of testing and explaining these hypotheses, as well as answering the central research question. Following the introduction section, a literature review will examine the role of money in elections, the pros and cons of negative campaigning, and group and identity appeals in electoral campaigning. The literature review will provide insight to the predictions made in the hypotheses. After the literature review, a methodology section will explain how these hypotheses will be tested through the use of fictional campaign advertisements and questions pertinent to the hypotheses. The methodology will also show how SPSS will be used to complete statistical analysis for the sake of answering this paper's secondary research question: how do these varying campaign strategies impact different demographics? The methodology will also cover how fictional advertisements of the experiment were derived from themes of the literature review. The results section will examine the outcomes of the experiment and statistically significant findings. Lastly, the conclusion section will discuss tentative findings based on the results, return verdicts on the hypotheses, and discuss possible ways future studies can contribute to the literature of negative and positive campaigning.

Literature Review

This literature review assesses the scholarly understandings of three topics pertinent to electioneering. The first section assesses the importance of money in the outcome of elections. These scholars tout fundraising success as a powerful indicator of the balance of the election. The second section dissects the pros and cons of negative and positive campaigning in electoral campaigns. It is accepted that negative campaigning is effective, but some challenge that it may have spurious undesirable impacts. The final section assesses the effectiveness of group and identity appeals.

Section 1: The Role of Money in Elections

A cursory search of scholarly materials yields no doubt about the importance of capital in several levels of government election campaigns. Ferguson et al.'s (2019) findings on money have quite alarming implications for all but the wealthiest of society. Their conclusions find that democracy has rapidly deteriorated to a contemporary balance in favor of the interest of the rich. This phenomenon was observed to be extremely common in state and local elections, suggesting capital has a weaker grip on federal elections. They essentially conclude that the democratic system has failed and that higher institutions would be wise to recognize that the American government is a money-driven political system (Ferguson et al., 2019).

Scholars also find significance based on what kind of candidate is receiving contributions. Campaign contributions are critically important to challengers opposing incumbent offices. Jacobson's (2006) study on campaign spending found that candidates challenging an incumbent could reliably expect their public support to increase in direct proportion to their expenditure. The same study found that challengers could bridge gaps in candidate familiarity by increasing the amount of money they spent on their campaign, while also finding the inverse; reducing campaign expenditures increased the incumbent office's familiarity advantage (Jacobson, 2006). Lastly, it found that changes in challenger expenditure had a greater impact on shaping election figures than the expenditure changes of the incumbent office (Jacobson, 2006).

Jacobson (2006) is not alone in his assessment that political campaign expenditure is not the same for incumbent offices and challengers. Holbrook and Weinschenk's (2014) study on mayoral elections found that incumbents were advantaged but agreed that the expenditure of the challenging candidate has the greatest impact on election outcomes. Holbrook and Weinschenk (2014) seem to potentially disagree with Ferguson et al., as they found that mayoral elections were similar to elections at other levels while Ferguson et al. (2019) believed spending was particularly important below the federal level.

Biersack et al. (1993) provides additional assessment on the incumbency-challenger relationship. These scholars are opportunistic for challengers with experience in elected office (Biersack et al., 1993). Such candidates will see more seed contributions in the infancy of their campaigns than vulnerable incumbents which typically predicts success in acquiring donations on the tail end of their campaign (Biersack et al., 1993). Biersack et al. (1993) also found that early contributors are more likely to be repeat donors, which is in line with Hassell et al's (2013) findings on why people are habitual donors.

Squire's (1995) study on congressional elections concludes with findings similar to that of Biersack et al (1993). Squire (1995) similarly concluded that candidates challenging an incumbent of lower relative quality were better able to raise money. Squire (1995) agreed with Jacobson's (2006) study as well in that increased expenditure on behalf of the challenger increased the overall recognition of the challenger's campaign and identity.

Other scholars have noted that money is so paramount that campaigns have strategized on the most effective ways to secure campaign contributions for their candidates. Hassell and Monson (2013) explain that campaigns have been fielding the practice of soliciting habitual donors for campaign contributions. They theorize that contributors donate for the sake of solidarity, ideological, and material motivations (Hassell & Monson, 2013). The materially motivated donors donate out of vested interest in altering legislation so that they are somehow rewarded for their contributions (Hassell & Monson, 2013). These donors tend to be wealthier and more partisan, so campaigns lopsidedly send solicitations to these donors, and this perpetuation on focusing on repeat wealthy donors has been successful for these campaigns (Hassell & Monson, 2013). They argue this can create a dominance of influence over a campaign by the wealthy which is in line with Ferguson et al.'s (2019) insistence that the American political

system is money driven (Hassell & Monson, 2013). When soliciting individuals with no contribution record, campaigns will resort to solidarity, ideological, and material appeals in an attempt to secure their donation and potentially develop a habitual donor (Hassell & Monson, 2013).

Section 2: Pros and Cons of Negative and Positive Campaigning

Cited scholars who have written on the topic of negative campaigning can find common ground in that desired outcomes are attainable through fielding negative press and advertisements about opponents. Vargo and Hopp (2020) analyzed Russia's Internet Research Agency's usage of negative language and how specific types of language positively or negatively impacted click through rates on its advertisements. Advertisements with negative identity-based language had a negative relationship to click through rate (Vargo & Hopp, 2020). However, advertisements with language coded as inflammatory, obscene, or threatening had a positive relationship to click through rates (Vargo & Hopp, 2020). Essentially, people were less likely to click on bigoted advertisements but were significantly attentive to other negative advertisements. These findings were critical to the creation of hypothesis 4 which predicts that negatively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to capture a viewer's attention than a positively framed campaign advertisement.

Brader's (2005) study found that political advertisements appeal to the emotions of the intended viewer. Brader (2005) additionally finds that negative advertising can be beneficial to its creators, and that emotional appeals of either kind can shape polls favorably. It was found that enthusiastic content encourages participation and loyalty while negative fear-based content was more likely to persuade (Brader, 2005). Brader's (2005) conclusions were heavily influential on the development of Hypotheses 2 and 3, which will test if positively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to be "liked" on social media and shared with others. "Liking" and sharing campaign materials are arguably ways of both participating in and showing loyalty to a campaign as both actions show to an

individual's peers that they support and are behind a campaign. This, combined with Brader's findings that positive content encourages participation and loyalty is why Hypotheses 2 and 3 predict positively framed campaign advertisements will be more likely to be "liked" on social media and shared with others.

Freedman and Goldstein (1999) concluded that negative advertising in practice does not reduce voter turnout, and that they increase one's likelihood of casting their vote. They affirm the notion that more attention is given to negative information than positive information of similar polarization (Freedman et al., 1999). This conclusion along with that of Vargo and Hopp's (2020) contributed to the establishment of hypothesis 4 which predicts that negatively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to capture a viewer's attention than a positively framed campaign advertisement. Barton et al. (2016) found that negative campaigning does not suppress voter turnout, but actually increases it. Perhaps most critically to this paper's proposed survey, these scholars found that negative content in campaign advertisements were not more likely to secure contributions from potential donors than advertisements with positive content (Barton et al., 2016). This finding was the basis for Hypothesis 1, which will test whether positive or negative framing will be more likely to secure donations. A candidate should definitely be fielding negative campaigning as their study found that such content was more likely to mobilize their partisan base to the polls (Barton et al., 2016).

In the findings of Gandhi et al.'s (2015) research, campaigns faced the highest incentive to field negative campaign advertisements in races with just two candidates. Campaigns tended to field less negative content against opponents as the number of candidates in their race increased (Gandhi et al., 2016). They reported that campaigns were twice as likely to run negative campaigning in a duopoly race such as the 2020 presidential election between Donald Trump and Joe Biden (Gandhi et al., 2016). The findings of Bernhardt and Ghosh (2020) are in line with the findings of Gandhi et al (2016). They found that negative campaigning was more common in general elections and that primary elections are dominated by positive campaign ing (Bernhardt & Ghosh, 2020). This is consistent with Gandhi et al.'s (2016) findings as primary elections tend to have more candidates and general elections are more likely to be duopolies.

Bhattacharya (2016) is among the very few scholars to cast doubt on the supposed unquestionable effectiveness of negative advertising. According to Bhattacharya's (2016) findings, campaigns must carefully consider whether to run negative advertisements, especially if the target is running a positive campaign on their own behalf. Running a negative campaign on someone who is running a self-positive campaign are the parameters necessary to yield the maximum amount of information about that candidate to the public (Bhattacharya, 2016). This surplus of information may be favorable to that candidate, so negative advertisements have potentially brought attention to the target candidate that is contrary to the desires of the attacking candidate (Bhattacharya, 2016). Nai and Martinez (2019) also somewhat challenge the dominance of negative campaigning. Nai and Martinez (2019) found that the decision for a campaign to field negative campaigning is the mark of a campaign plagued with failing polls and a short or shortened expected lifespan. Despite other scholars' assertiveness to negative campaigning's efficacy, Nai and Martinez (2019) hold that attack politics are seen unfavorably by the citizenry, so frontrunners should refrain from using negative campaigning to optimize their image. If a candidate has been running exclusively on positive campaigning, yet is still failing at the polls, it is argued that they should shift to negative campaigning in a last-ditch attempt at poll recovery as they have nothing to lose if their current strategy is failing anyway (Nai and Martinez, 2019).

Elmelund-Præstekær (2011), like Nai, Martinez (2019), and Bhattacharya (2016), stresses the importance of spurious contextual factors that impact the degree of positive and negative advertising present in a candidate's electoral campaign. Such factors include how close it is to the end of the election and poll data (Elmelund-Præstekær, 2011). These factors also include whether a candidate is an incumbent and how much they can expend as similarly discussed by Jacobson (2006), Holbrook et al (2014), Biersack et al (1993), and Squire (1995) (Elmelund-Præstekær, 2011). Elmelund-Præstekær (2011) also uniquely brings up the topic of "issue ownership" and found that campaigns have certain policy issues they "own" and subsequently run positive campaigning on and issues their opponents "own" which they subsequently run negative campaigning on.

Lau et al. (2007) agree with other scholars that negative campaigning is beneficial. Like others their study found negative campaigning did not suppress voter turnout (Lau et al., 2007). They did however find that negative campaigning may have negative effects outside the considerations of a candidate's success, namely that it reduces trust in the government, lowers interpreted levels of political efficacy, and can potentially sully the mood of the public (Lau et al., 2007). What they found in favor of negativity is that negative commentary in campaign materials is more memorable to the viewer and provides them with greater knowledge about the campaign (Lau et al., 2007). The findings from Lau et al. (2007), Vargo and Hopp (2020), and Freedman and Goldstein (1999) were all critical to the creation of hypothesis 4 which predicts that negatively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to capture a viewer's attention than a positively framed campaign advertisement.

Section 3: Group and Identity Appeals in Electoral Campaigning

Group appeals include campaign statements, speeches, or materials that target groups implicitly or explicitly, and along any "group" boundaries. Valenzuela and Michelson (2016) found "that identity appeals can have a powerful impact on turnout, provided they are targeted at the appropriate individuals and communities." If the specific material targets ethnic identities, they will be most effective on populations with significant ethnic attachments (Valenzuela & Michelson, 2016). Because of this logical reality, Campaigns must assure that their materials using identity appeals must accurately represent the actual identity of the voter, not the desired identity (Valenzuela & Michelson, 2016). Essentially, appeals to ethnicity are wasted on populations who are disconnected from their ethnic culture, as are nationality appeals to populations who are connected more to their ethnic ties than to their nation of residence (Valenzuela & Michelson, 2016).

Lamont et al. focused their observation on former President Trump's electoral speeches. They found that Donald Trump successfully appealed to the white working class and other groups with various compliments and promises (Lamont et al., 2017). He targeted industry workers with statements promising major victories for workers and assuring them they would be heard again (Lamont et al., 2017). He capitalized on Hillary Clinton's controversial "deplorables" comment by affirming to his supporters that Hillary had insulted them while assuring them that he respected them as hardworking Americans and assuring them that they were entitled to that respect (Lamont et al., 2017). To further appeal to the working class, he commented that he felt more comfortable around blue-collar workers than "people above" such as Wall Street executives (Lamont et al., 2017). He also promised to combat poverty and connected poverty to specific low-income African American communities like Chicago and Detroit in an effort to appeal to African American voters (Lamont et al., 2017). The study includes various appeals that Donald Trump used during his campaign and concluded that these appeals led him to his 2016 victory (Lamont et al., 2017).

Dickson and Scheve (2006) in their study argued that candidates for elected offices will engage in group-based rhetoric under certain conditions. A group's population size and their typical policy preferences are major determinants for if a leader will apply group-appeals to them (Dickson & Scheve, 2016). Such findings may explain the group appeals Donald Trump used that were assessed by Lamont et al. (2017). It is likely that then candidate Trump and or his campaign strategists saw in the white working class a significant share of the American vote, whose policy interests aligned with that of his campaign. This would explain Trump's focus on that base. Such a theory would be affirmed by the research of Doering (2019). Doering (2019) found that campaigns explicitly appeal to white and non-white ethnic groups in an effort to foster their mobilization to the polls. Such practice was covered in Lamont et al.'s (2017)

observations on Trump's statements. Further in line with Lamont et al. 's (2017) assessments is that Doering (2019) found that candidates will pledge to pursue the rights of specific racial groups to win them to their side. Leaders can also attack groups to win over their opponents (Doering, 2019). This can be interpreted as Trump's strategy in fielding anti-immigrant rhetoric to win over opponents of undocumented immigrants.

Methodology

The Survey Experiment

This study relies on the results of survey research and data analysis. The survey was created and distributed using Qualtrics online survey software. The units of observation are residents of southern California and 64 participants have completed the survey. These participants are assessed on 47 variables including demographics, likelihood of interacting with several campaign advertisements, whether they were shown the positive or negative version of each advertisement, and attentional preference of negative or positive campaign advertisements. An anonymous link was distributed to friends, family members, and all current Cal Poly Pomona Political Science students via the department email system. From this sample, it cannot be determined if the findings of this study apply to residents from other parts of the United States. Surveys were collected from March 8th 2021 to April 1st 2021. The average participant was Hispanic or Latino, with 48.4% of respondents being Hispanic or Latino. Participants were most likely to be aged 18-24 years old, with 65.6% of participants being in the 18-24 year old age group. For most participants, the highest level of education achieved was "some college," with those with some college making up 71.9% of all respondents. Politically, the typical respondent answered they had a mostly liberal political ideology, with those who were mostly liberal making up 34.4% of participants. The average participant was most likely to be female, with females being 51.6% of respondents. The average participant was most likely to be in the middle class, with 56.3% reporting that they were a member of the middle class.

In the literature review, I established that money is extremely influential on the outcome of elections at several levels, that negative advertising is proven to be an effective campaign strategy, and that campaigns can successfully utilize group and identity appeals to win elections. To complete my experiment, I fielded surveys with hypothetical advertisements that consider these conclusions to determine their effectiveness and completed quantitative analysis on the yielded results. The experiment was designed to determine how negativity impacts campaign advertisements that utilize funding, personal, and group appeals. Participants were asked to respond to questions about campaign advertisements regarding Supported Sam and Opposition Oliver, two fictional mayoral candidates. Eight fictional campaign advertisements "types" were created to test negativity's impact on these three appeal types. There was a positive and negative fictional campaign advertisement that included funding appeals, a positive and negative fictional campaign advertisement that included character appeals, a positive and negative fictional advertisement that included socioeconomic group appeals, and a positive and negative fictional advertisement that included ethnic group appeals. More simply, the intention of this design was to determine if participants showed a preference for negative or positive funding appeal-based, personal appeal-based, socioeconomic group appeal-based, and ethnic group appeal-based campaign advertisements. Each participant will only see the positive or the negative advertisement for each appeal type and will therefore only see four of the eight fictional campaign advertisements. Half of the participants will be asked to respond to questions after being shown positively framed funding and socioeconomic group appeal-based advertisements and negatively framed character and ethnic group appeal-based advertisements. The other half of the participants will be asked to respond to questions after being shown negatively framed funding and socioeconomic group appeal-based advertisements and positively framed character and ethnic group appeal-based advertisements. The purpose of designing the experiment this way was so that of the two test groups, neither would be asked to assess exclusively positive or exclusively negative campaign advertisements.

Part 1 of the Survey Experiment

Part 1 of the survey asked participants to answer six demographic questions. Participants were asked to report their ethnicity, age group, highest level of education, political ideology, gender, and socioeconomic class. The design of the survey required that demographic questions be asked before other questions as answers to the ethnicity and socioeconomic class questions impacted the campaign advertisements shown to the participant in part 2 of the survey. Participants were then shown instructions for completing the experiment. The instructions informed the participants that they would be asked about campaign advertisements regarding Supported Sam and Opposition Oliver, two fictional mayoral candidates. They were then informed that all the campaign advertisements were for Supported Sam's campaign. For the sake of the experiment, they were asked to assume they have supported "Supported Sam" and opposed "Opposition Oliver" in past elections, assume they support the policies of "Supported Sam" and oppose the policies of "Opposition Oliver," and to carefully read the text of all the questions and advertisement shown to them.

Part 2 of the Survey Experiment

Part 2 of the survey is the longest section and contains two test groups. As described earlier, half of the participants were asked to respond to questions after being shown positively framed funding and socioeconomic group appeal-based advertisements and negatively framed character and ethnic group appeal-based advertisements. The other half of the participants were asked to respond to questions after being shown negatively framed funding and socioeconomic group appeal-based advertisements and positively framed character and ethnic group appeal-based advertisements. The purpose of testing two groups like this is to determine if people prefer the negative or positive versions of otherwise similar advertisements. Creating these two test groups for the survey required the usage of a "randomizer" element within the "survey flow"

menu of the Qualtrics survey editor. A block of questions was created for each test group according to the parameters described, placed within the randomizer element, and the randomizer was set to evenly present both blocks of questions among the participants.

Advertisement 1 of the survey pertained to funding appeals. The advertisement shown had common elements for the positive and negative version of the advertisements. Both the negative and positive advertisements included a depiction of Supported Sam seated at a bench, a banner reading "SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR," and a banner reading "Click or tap the links below to contribute \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, or any amount to help secure victory for meaningful policy change!" The negative advertisement included banners that read "OPPOSITION OLIVER OUTRAISED US" and "If we can't beat him in donations, we can't beat him at the polls!!!" The positive advertisement included banners that read "WE CRUSHED OP-POSITION OLIVER IN FUNDRAISING !!!" and "To beat him at the polls we must continue to outraise him in donations!!!"

Advertisement 2 of the survey pertained to character appeals. The negative advertisement depicted a man with his fingers crossed and listed in red text on a dark background that Opposition Oliver "Failed to keep campaign promises, raised a family of addicts, was too hard on light crime, was too soft on hard crime, accomplished little during his time in office, and neglected locals like you." There were three additional banners that read "To find out more or to donate to Supported Sam visit www.TruthAboutOliver.com," "#KeepOliverOut," and "Brought to you by SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR." The positive advertisement depicted Supported Sam smiling in bright natural light. The advertisement then listed that Supported Sam "Is A family man that has raised three successful children, has a proven record of supporting policies beneficial to locals, makes the most of his time in office, and is honorable on addressing crime." There were three additional banners that read "SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR," "Click or tap the links below to contribute \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, or any amount to help secure victory for meaningful policy change!," and "www.SupportedSamForMayor.com."

Advertisement 3 pertained to socioeconomic class appeals. This section utilized Qualtrics's "display logic" function so that participants would be shown advertisements that targeted the socioeconomic class they reported they were a member of. Had the participant claimed to be a part of the working-class and was selected to view the negative version of the advertisement, they would be shown an advertisement depicting Opposition Oliver with a remorseful expression. It would include text over a dark background that alleged that "Oliver supported policies which HARMED Working-Class Americans," "#WorkingClassJustice," and "to find out more or to donate to Supported Sam visit www. TruthAboutOliver.com." A bright banner that reads "Brought to you by SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR" is included in this advertisement as well." The positive version of the advertisement depicts a focused Supported Sam and a banner that claims that Supported Sam "supported policies which BENEFITED Working-Class Americans." This positive version includes banners that read "SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR," "#Sam-Cares," and "Contribute \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, or any amount to help secure victory for meaningful policy change!" Had the participant answered that they were in another socioeconomic class, they would be shown the same advertisements but with text accurate to their reported socioeconomic class. Setting up the survey this way was necessary so that participants were shown advertisements that targeted their specific socioeconomic class rather than advertisements that targeted a socioeconomic class that did not match the participant's identity. The intent of this design was to assess the respondent on their response to socioeconomic appeals accurate to their assumed bias.

Advertisement 4 pertained to ethnicity appeals. This section also utilized Qualtrics's "display logic" capability to display a campaign advertisement that appealed to the specific ethnicity that the participant had answered they were a member of in part 1 of the survey. Accordingly, this section required creating six versions of the same positive advertisement and six versions of the same negative advertisement, one for each of the six possible answers to the ethnicity question in part 1. For example, had the participant answered that they were Asian and were selected to view the negative version of the advertisement they would be shown an advertisement depicting a remorseful man labeled Opposition Oliver which claimed Oliver "backed legislation which HARMED Asian employment, Asian enrollment, Asian businesses, Asian neighborhoods, and Asian families." This participant would see in the same advertisement banners that read "#OliverHurtsAsianVoters," "to find out more or to donate to Supported Sam visit www. TruthAboutOliver.com," and "Brought to you by SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR." The positive version of the advertisement depicts a focused Supported Sam and a banner that claims that Supported Sam "backed legislation supporting Asian employment, Asian enrollment, Asian businesses, Asian neighborhoods, and Asian families." This positive version includes banners that read "SUPPORTED SAM FOR MAYOR," "#Sam-Cares," and "Contribute \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, or any amount to help secure victory for meaningful policy change!" Had the participant answered that they were another ethnicity, they would be shown the same advertisements but with text accurate to their reported ethnicity. Setting up the survey this way was necessary so that participants were shown advertisements that targeted their specific ethnicity rather than advertisements that targeted an ethnicity that did not match the participant's identity. The intent of this design was to assess the respondent on their response to ethnic appeals accurate to their assumed bias.

Participants were asked after viewing each advertisement "How likely are you to donate to the advertisement depicted above?," "How likely are you to 'like' the advertisement depicted above on social media?," and "How likely are you to share the advertisement depicted above with others?" These three questions were asked after each of the four advertisements in each experiment group for a total of 12 variables being yielded from each experiment group in this part of the survey experiment.

The overall findings about the importance of money in elections discussed in the first section in the literature review, as wells as various political advertisements from the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections featuring candidates like Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump requesting, celebrating, or regretting various amounts of campaign contributions provided the justification for the inclusion of the mock "funding appeal" advertisements respondents were shown and asked about during the survey. The scholars who championed the usage of negative campaigning in the second section of the literature review provided the interest for the inclusion of the mock "character appeal" advertisements respondents were shown during the experiment. Findings about group and identity appeals from scholars discussed in the third section of the literature review established the basis for including the "socioeconomic appeal" and "ethnic appeal" advertisements in the experiment. The scholarly disagreement about the overall efficacy of negativity discussed in the second section of the literature review inspired the decision to create a positively framed and negatively framed campaign advertisement for each of these appeal types. All the mock campaign advertisements shown in the experiment can be viewed in Appendix A following the conclusion.

Part 3 of the Survey Experiment

The final part of this survey is significantly shorter than part 2. Both experiment groups answered the same 4 questions in this part. Instead of asking participants to view specific advertisements, they were each asked what type of advertisement is more likely to capture their attention. Participants were first asked if "news that a candidate you support is raising more money than a rival candidate" is more interesting than "news that a candidate you support is raising less money than a rival candidate." Next participants were asked if "A campaign advertisement which lists the accomplishments of a candidate you support" is more interesting than "A campaign advertisement which lists the failures or shortcomings of a candidate you oppose." Then participants were asked if "A campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is beneficial to your economic class" is more interesting than "A campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is detrimental to your economic class." Lastly, participants were asked if "A campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is beneficial to your ethnic group" is more interesting than "A campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is detrimental to your ethnic group."

Hypotheses Testing and Answering the Research Questions

To return verdicts on the first three hypotheses, the average donation, share, and "like" likelihoods for the positively framed and negatively framed advertisements of each appeal type will be compared to each other. The objective is to determine whether positive or negative framing was more likely to secure donations, be shared, or be "liked" for the funding, character, socioeconomic, and ethnic appeal advertisements. To return a verdict on hypothesis 4, the number of participants who reported that the positively framed advertisement would be more likely to grab their attention will be compared to the number of participants who reported that the negatively framed advertisement would be more likely to grab their attention. This will be repeated for all appeal type advertisements shown. With four questions asked for four appeal types, sixteen criteria will be available to assess the comparative performance between positive and negative framing. This will answer the research question about whether positively framed campaign advertisements outperform negatively framed campaign advertisements. Lastly ANOVA and Chi-square testing will be conducted using SPSS to determine how these campaign strategies impact different demographics across these 16 different criteria.

Results

Analysis for Funding Appeal Advertisements

Participants were more likely to donate to the negative advertisement with the average donation likelihood for the positive advertisement being 16.61% and the average donation likelihood for the negative advertisement being 19.91%. Participants were more likely to "like" the negative advertisement on social media with the average "like" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 19.10% and the average "like" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 26.67%. Participants were more likely to share the positive advertisement with others with the average "share" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 15.81% and the average "share" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 13.76%.

In part three of the survey experiment, participants were asked directly which version of the advertisement would be most likely to capture their attention. Results show that participants find news that a candidate they support is raising less money than a rival candidate to be more captivating than news that a candidate they support is raising more money than a rival candidate. 57.81% of participants reported that news that a candidate they support is raising less money than a rival candidate was more likely to grab their attention compared with 42.19% reporting that news that a candidate they support is raising more money than a rival candidate was more likely to grab their attention.

Analysis for Character Appeal Advertisements

Participants were more likely to donate to the positive advertisement with the average donation likelihood for the positive advertisement being 32.86% and the average donation likelihood for the negative advertisement being 17.29%. Participants were more likely to "like" the positive advertisement on social media with the average "like" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 42.67% and the average "like" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 26.97%. Participants were more likely to share the positive advertisement with others with the average "share" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 26.64% and the average "share" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 21.26%.

In part three of the survey experiment, participants were asked directly which version of the advertisement would be most likely to capture their attention. Participants reported they would pay more attention to a campaign advertisement which lists the accomplishments of a candidate they support than to a campaign advertisement that lists the failures or shortcoming of a candidate they oppose. 75% of participants reported they would pay more attention to a campaign advertisement which lists the accomplishments of a candidate they support while just 25% of participants reported they would pay more attention to a campaign advertisement that lists the failures or shortcoming of a candidate they oppose.

Analysis for Socioeconomic Appeal Advertisements

Participants were more likely to donate to the positive advertisement with the average donation likelihood for the positive advertisement being 22.29% and the average donation likelihood for the negative advertisement being 16.39%. Participants were more likely to "like" the positive advertisement on social media with the average "like" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 36.10% and the average "like" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 24.06%. Participants were more likely to share the positive advertisement with others with the average "share" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 24.52% and the average "share" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 20.00%.

In part three of the survey experiment, participants were asked directly which version of the advertisement would be most likely to capture their attention. Participants reported that a campaign advertisement that claims a candidate is beneficial to their economic class was more likely to grab their attention than a campaign advertisement that claims a candidate is detrimental to their economic class. 75% of participants reported that a campaign advertisement that claims a candidate is beneficial to their economic class was more likely to grab their attention while just 25% of participants reported that a campaign advertisement that claims a candidate is detrimental to their economic class was more likely to grab their attention.

Analysis for Ethnic Appeal Advertisements

Participants were more likely to donate to the positive advertisement with the average donation likelihood for the positive advertisement being 28.61% and the average donation likelihood for the negative advertisement being 20.94%. Participants were more likely to "like" the positive advertisement on social media with the average "like" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 38.39% and the average "like" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 27.10%. Participants were more likely to share the positive advertisement with others with the average "share" likelihood for the positive advertisement being 27.76% and the average "share" likelihood for the negative advertisement being 24.58%.

In part three of the survey experiment, participants were asked directly which version of the advertisement would be most likely to capture their attention. Results show that participants are more likely to be interested in a campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is beneficial to their ethnic group than campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is detrimental to their ethnic group. 70.31% of participants reported that a campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is beneficial to their ethnic group was more likely to grab their attention while just 29.69% of participants reported that a campaign advertisement which claims a candidate is detrimental to their ethnic group was more likely to grab their attention.

Statistical Analysis

The nominal variables yielded by the experiment's six demographic questions, as well as the

Chart 1: One-way ANOVA between age and interaction likelihood for positively framed campaign advertisement with ethnic appeal

	F-Value	Significance
Donation likelihood.	2.824	0.044

twelve interval-ratio variables yielded by the advertisement questions allowed for ANOVA testing to be conducted. The first variable assessed was age, which was tested against the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the 8 different advertisements shown to the survey respondents. As such 24 ANOVAs were conducted with age as the independent variable, and the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the positive and negative advertisements being the dependent variables. Of these 24 ANOVAs, there was only one significant difference amongst age groups observed.

There was a difference between age groups and their donation likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. As seen in chart 1 this relationship yielded a significance value of .044, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. Accordingly, there is a 4.4% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

The next variable assessed was ethnicity which, like age, was tested against the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the 8 different advertisements shown to the survey respondents. As such, 24 ANOVAs were conducted with ethnicity as the independent variable, and the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the positive and negative advertisements being the dependent variables. Of these 24 ANOVAs, there were 7 significant relationships observed.

Ethnic groups differed in their donation likelihood after viewing a negatively framed funding appeal advertisement. As seen in chart 1.1 this relationship yielded a significance value of .014, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. This means there is a 1.4% probability that this relationship is due to chance. There was a dissimilarity between ethnic groups and their share likelihood after viewing a negatively framed funding appeal advertisement. In chart 1.1 this relationship yielded a significance value of .008, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. There is a .8% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

Ethnic groups contrasted in their donation likelihood after viewing a positively framed socioeconomic appeal advertisement. As seen in chart 1.2, the relationship yielded a significance value of .043, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. The probability that this relationship is due to chance is 4.3%

A difference between ethnic groups was observed in their donation likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. Shown in chart 1.3 the relationship yielded a significance value of .040, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement.

Chart 1.1: One-way ANOVA between ethnicity and interaction likelihood for	r
negatively framed campaign advertisement with funding appeal	

	F-Value	Significance
Donation likelihood.	3.811	0.014
Share likelihood.	4.258	0.008

Chart 1.2: One-way ANOVA between ethnicity and interaction likelihood for positively framed campaign advertisement with socioeconomic appeal.

	F-Value	Significance
Donation likelihood.	2.86	0.043

Accordingly, there is a 4.0% probability that this relationship is due to chance. Ethnic groups varied in their "like" likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. As seen in chart 1.3 the relationship yielded a significance value of .004, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. As such there is just a .4% probability that this relationship is due to chance. There was a difference between ethnic groups and their share likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. Displayed in chart 1.3 the relationship yielded a significance value of .005, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. There is then just a .5% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

There was a contrast between ethnic groups and their share likelihood after viewing a negatively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. Shown in chart 1.4 the relationship yielded a significance value of .016, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. There is just a 1.6% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

The next variable assessed was gender which, like

age and ethnicity, was tested against the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the 8 different advertisements shown to the survey respondents. As such 24 ANOVAs were conducted with gender as the independent variable, and the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the positive and negative advertisements being the dependent variables. Of these 24 ANOVAs, there were 3 significant relationships observed.

Gender groups altered in their donation likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. Displayed in chart 1.5, the relationship yielded a significance value of .017, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. Accordingly, there is just a 1.7% probability that this relationship is due to chance. There was a difference between gender groups and their "like" likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal advertisement. Shown in chart 1.5, the relationship yielded a significance value of .023, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. As such there is just a 2.3% probability that this relationship is due to chance. A difference was observed between gender groups and their share likelihood after viewing a positively framed ethnic appeal ad-

Chart 1.3: One-way ANOVA b	between ethnicity and	interaction	likelihood for
positively framed campaign ad	vertisement with eth	nic appeal	

	F-Value	Significance
Donation likelihood.	2.891	0.04
Share likelihood.	4.628	0.005
"Like" likelihood.	5.004	0.004

Chart 1.4: One-way ANOVA between ethnicity and interaction likelihood for negatively framed campaign advertisement with ethnic appeal

	F-Value	Significance
Share likelihood.	3.703	0.016

vertisement. As seen in chart 1.5 the relationship yielded a significance value of .020, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. As such there is just a 2.0% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

The final variable assessed was socioeconomic class which, like the previous variables, was tested against the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the 8 different advertisements shown to the survey respondents. As such 24 ANOVAs were conducted with socioeconomic class as the independent variable, and the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the positive and negative advertisements being the dependent variables. Of these 24 ANO-VAs, there was just one significant relationship observed.

There was a difference between socioeconomic groups and their share likelihood after viewing a positively framed socioeconomic appeal advertise-

Chart 1.5: One-way ANOVA between gender and interaction likelihood for positively framed campaign advertisement with ethnic appeal

	F-Value	Significance
Donation likelihood.	6.337	.017
Share likelihood.	5.684	.023
"Like" likelihood.	5.976	.020

Chart 1.6: One-way ANOVA between socioeconomic groups and interaction likelihood for positively framed campaign advertisement with socioeconomic appeal

	F-Value	Significance
Share likelihood.	5.032	0.014

Chart 1.7: Chi-square between ethnicity and framing preference for campaign advertisements with socioeconomic appeals

	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	26.128	0.000

Chart 1.8: Chi-square between ethnicity and framing preference for campaign advertisements with ethnic appeals

	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.927	0.001

ment. Shown in chart 1.6, the relationship yielded a significance value of .014, confirming that the relationship is significant given the significance value is beneath the .05 significance value requirement. Therefore, there is just a 1.4% probability that this relationship is due to chance.

The education and political ideology variables were also assessed against the donation, like, and share likelihoods for the 8 different advertisements shown to the survey respondents. The 24 possible ANOVAs were performed for both of these independent variables, but no significant relationships were found. The nominal variables yielded by the experiment's six demographic questions, as well as the four nominal variables yielded by the advertisement preference questions allowed for chi-square testing to be conducted. With this combination of variables, it was possible to complete 24 total chisquare tests. The objective of these chi-square tests was to determine if there were any significant relationships between the collected demographic data, and framing preference of all the advertisement appeal types. Of the 24 possible chi-square tests, there were 5 significant relationships observed.

The first set of chi-square tests were between ethnicity and the preferred framing of each advertisement appeal type. For the chi-square between ethnicity and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement, as displayed in chart 1.7, the asymptotic significance of the relationship was .000. This value reveals that there is a 0.0% probability that this relationship is due to chance. We can thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement.

For the chi-square between ethnicity and framing preference for the ethnicity appeal advertisement, as shown in chart 1.8, the asymptotic significance of the relationship was .001. This value reveals that there is a 0.1% probability that this relationship is due to chance. We can thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity and framing preference for the ethnicity appeal advertisement.

The next set of chi-square tests were between education level and the preferred framing of each advertisement appeal type. For the chi-square between education level and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement, as seen in chart 1.9, the asymptotic significance of the relationship was .012. This value reveals that there is a 1.2% probability that this relationship is due to chance. We can thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between education level and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement.

For the chi-square between education level and framing preference for the ethnicity appeal advertisement, as displayed in chart 2, the asymptotic significance of the relationship was .015. This value

	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.705	0.012

Chart 1.9: Chi-square between education level and framing preference for campaign advertisements with socioeconomic appeals

Chart 2: Chi-square between education level and framing preference for campaign advertisements with ethnic appeals

	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.150	0.015

reveals that there is a 1.5% probability that this relationship is due to chance. We can thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between education and framing preference for the ethnicity appeal advertisement.

The next and final set of chi-square tests were between socioeconomic class and the preferred framing of each advertisement appeal type. For the chi-square between socioeconomic class and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement, as shown in chart 2.1, the asymptotic significance of the relationship was .005. This value reveals that there is a 0.5% probability that this relationship is due to chance. We can thus conclude that there is a significant relationship between socioeconomic class and framing preference for the socioeconomic appeal advertisement.

A variable was also created that explains whether the respondent was shown the positively framed or negatively framed advertisement for each advertisement appeal type. As there were 4 appeal types, there were 4 such variables created that were nominal with two categories (positive or negative). With interval-ratio data available for the donation, share, and like likelihoods for each appeal type, T-tests could be completed. This data allowed for 12 T-tests to be completed. The objective of these T-tests was to determine for all of the experimental advertisement appeal types if there was a difference between positively and negatively framed advertisements regarding their ability to secure donations, shares, and likes. Of the 12 possible T-tests performed, none of them revealed any significant differences between positively and negatively framed advertisements regarding their ability to secure donations, shares, and likes for all tested advertisement appeal types.

Conclusion

During this experiment, respondents were shown four different advertisements with unique appeal types. For each advertisement appeal type, there was a positively framed and negatively framed version of the advertisement. Two experiment groups thus were shown two positively framed advertisements and two negatively framed advertisements. They were asked how likely they were to donate to, "like," and share each advertisement. Lastly, they were asked whether they would find the positive framing or the negative framing of each appeal type more interesting. Four hypotheses were tested which focused on testing the efficacy of negatively framing campaign advertisements. Based on the research completed in the literature review, it was hypothesized that negative campaign advertisements are less likely to be donated to, more likely to be "liked" on social media, more likely to be shared with others, and more likely to grab the respondent's attention.

As displayed in graph 1, for three out of four advertisement appeal types, it was found that negatively framed campaign advertisements were less likely to be donated to, thus hypothesis 1 which predicted that negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be donated to is accepted. The positively framed version of the ethnic, socioeconomic, and character appeal advertisements were more likely to be donated to than their negatively framed counterparts. While the negatively framed version of the funding appeal advertisement was more likely to be donated to than its positively framed counterpart.

As shown in graph 1.1, for three out of four advertisement appeal types, it was found that positively framed advertisements were more likely

Chart 2.1: Chi-square between socioeconomic group and framing preference for campaign advertisements with socioeconomic appeals

	Value	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.730	0.005

to be "liked" on social media, thus hypothesis 2 which predicted that negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be "liked" on social media is accepted. The positively framed versions of the ethnic, socioeconomic, and character appeal advertisement were more likely to be "liked" on social media than their negatively framed counterparts. While the negatively framed version of the funding appeal advertisement was more likely to be "liked" on social media than its positively framed counterpart.

As seen in graph 1.2, for four out of four adver-





Graph 1.1: Histogram of average social media "like" likelihood for positively and negatively framed versions of all advertisement types



tisement appeal types, it was found that positive advertisements were more likely to be shared with others, thus hypothesis 3 which predicted that negatively framed campaign advertisements are less likely to be shared with others is accepted. The positively framed version of the ethnic, socioeconomic, character, and funding appeal advertisement were more likely to be shared with others than their negatively framed counterparts.

As displayed in graph 1.3, for three out of four advertisement appeal types, it was found that positive campaign advertisements were more likely to







Graph 1.3: Histogram of framing preference breakdown for all advertisement types

grab the respondent's attention, thus hypothesis 4 which predicted that negatively framed campaign advertisements are more likely to grab the respondent's attention is rejected. The positively framed version of the ethnic, socioeconomic, and character appeal advertisements were more likely to grab the respondent's attention than their negatively framed counterparts. While the negatively framed version of the funding appeal advertisement was more likely to grab the respondent's attention than its positively framed counterpart.

These four questions which asked about donation likelihood, "like" likelihood, share likelihood, and framing interest for the four different experimental appeal types created 16 different criteria for which the performance of positively and

negatively framed advertisements can be assessed. From the results of the experiment, it was found that positive advertisements outperformed negative advertisements in 13/16 criteria viewable in chart 2.2. From these findings we can answer the main research question and conclude that candidates should prioritize positive campaigning over negative campaigning. These findings are mostly consistent with the conclusions of existing literature. Brader's (2005) study concluded that enthusiastic content encourages participation and loyalty, which is consistent with the findings of this experiment where positive political advertisements were more likely than negative advertisements to be shared with others and more likely to be "liked" on social media. The experiment also found that

Advertisement Type	Question Asked	Framing
Funding Appeals	Donation Likelihood	Negative Preferred
	"Like" Likelihood	Negative Preferred
	Share Likelihood	Positive Preferred
Character Appeals	Donation Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	"Like" Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	Share Likelihood	Positive Preferred
Socioeconomic Appeals	Donation Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	"Like" Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	Share Likelihood	Positive Preferred
Ethnic Appeals	Donation Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	"Like" Likelihood	Positive Preferred
	Share Likelihood	Positive Preferred
Funding Appeals	Which advertisement is most likely to grab your attention?	Negative Preferred
Character Appeals		Positive Preferred
Socioeconomic Appeals		Positive Preferred
Ethnic Appeals		Positive Preferred

Chart 2.2: Performance breakdown of all advertisement types

positive advertisements were more likely to secure donations which is consistent with Barton et al. 's (2016) conclusions that negative content in campaign advertisements were not more likely to secure contributions from potential donors than advertisements with positive content. One area of this experiment's findings was inconsistent with existing literature on negative campaigning. Scholars found that negative advertisements were positively associated with "click through rate," negative information was more interesting, and that negative campaign materials were more memorable. (Freedman et al., 1999; Lau et al., 2007; Vargo & Hopp, 2020). Yet the results of this project's experiment found that positive advertisements were more likely to grab the respondent's attention in three out of four appeal types. It is logical to then inquire what may explain these contradictory findings.

Looking at the sample of the experiment, it is mostly young adults with 65.6% of participants being in the 18-24 year-old age group. Perhaps this would suggest that younger generations are simply evolving in their perceptions of positive and negative information, or that younger people pay more attention to positive information. The sample is also mostly college students with those with some college making up 71.9% of all respondents, suggesting that college students are more concerned with what a candidate has to offer that is positive than what an opposed candidate has to offer that is negative. It is also estimated that since the survey was distributed to the Political Science department of Cal Poly Pomona, as well as 14 friends and family members, that 78% of respondents are Political Science students. Political Science students are logically suspected to have a heightened understanding of political campaigns and may also place more interest on what a candidate has to offer than what is undesirable about an opponent. Another possible explanation for the dominating preference of positive campaigning, is simply that respondents may not want to admit they care more about negative information than positive information to avoid labeling themselves as negative and or pessimistic.

In addition to the theses above. Several statistically significant findings were discovered in an effort to find insight in how various demographics are impacted by varying campaign strategies. ANOVA testing found that age groups differed in their donation likelihood to positively framed advertisements with ethnic appeals. ANOVAs also revealed numerous differences in how ethnic groups interacted with campaign advertisements. Ethnic groups differed in their donation likelihoods to advertisements with negatively framed funding appeals, positively framed socioeconomic appeals, and positively framed ethnic appeals. Ethnic groups differed in their share likelihoods of advertisements with negatively framed funding appeals, positively framed ethnic appeals, and negative framed ethnic appeals. Ethnic groups also differed in their "like" likelihoods of advertisements with positively framed ethnic appeals. ANOVA testing revealed that gender groups differed in three areas. Gender groups differed in how likely they were to donate to, "like," and share advertisements with positively framed advertisements with ethnic appeals. The last significant ANOVA revealed that socioeconomic groups differed in how likely they were to share advertisements with positively framed socioeconomic appeals. Chi-square testing revealed that ethnic, education-level, and socioeconomic groups respectively differed in their framing preference for advertisements with socioeconomic appeals. Chi- squares also revealed that ethnic and education-level groups differed in their framing preference for advertisements with ethnic appeals. With a significant ANOVA for Age, seven significant ANOVAs plus two significant Chisquares for ethnicity, three significant ANOVAs for gender, a significant ANOVA and Chi-square for socioeconomic group, and two significant Chisquares for education level, it is proven that different demographics can be expected to be impacted differently by various campaign strategies. Crosstabs of means for all the significant demographic differences discussed are labeled charts 2.3-4 and are available in Appendix B located after the conclusion. This data can help candidates better tailor their campaign materials.

Returning to the literature review, it is noted that scholars such as Barton et al. (2016) and Freedman et al. (1999) find that negative campaigning is more likely to facilitate voter turnout. Repetitions of this experiment's project might benefit from adding "turnout likelihood" to the criteria of assessing the performance of positivity and negativity across the four experimental appeal types. This could be done simply by asking the respondent how likely they are to vote for the candidate after each advertisement is shown. This would increase the number of criteria assessed by the experiment to 20 criteria from the current 16, increasing the breadth of the experiment. It is also likely to yield positive results for negative campaigning according to the scholarship. This experiment would also certainly benefit from a larger sample of participants. Another po-

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tential addition could be a qualitative assessment which would seek simply to find insight into personal reasoning for a sample of respondent's answers. Hopefully, the findings of this project, and any modified or unmodified repetitions, can be utilized by campaigns and lead to more competitive elections. Additionally, political campaigns at all levels may use this experiment as a template to discover trends and significant findings with data from their actual campaign materials.

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