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Nathan Katz

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ABSTRACT

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT, SUPER PACS, AND
THE 2012 REPUBLICAN PRIMARIES

Nathan Katz, M.A.
Department of Sociology
Northern Illinois University, 2015
Diane M. Rodgers, Director

Super Political Action Committees (PACs) are relatively new organizations within American politics that allow individuals to donate unlimited funds to campaign causes. This was particularly noticeable during the 2012 Republican primary, which was one of the most well-funded primaries in American history. One of the ways both candidates and Super PACs spend their money is for the production of campaign ads to develop candidate images. These advertisements contribute to a political impression management that develops candidate performances. I have used the Symbolic Interactionist perspective for this study because the theory states that the images or presentations of individuals are continuously being constructed, reconstructed, and therefore dynamic. One place this can be observed is within the world of televised political ads, where the core political images are regularly changing depending on who is responsible for airing the advertisements as well as when and where the advertisement is aired. By performing an ethnographic content analysis focusing on television advertisements from both candidates and Super PACs, a typology of candidate performances was developed: the true conservative, the working conservative, the saint, the sinner, and the traitor. Through a typology of advertisement performances, future political advertisements, particularly television advertisements, can be further understood by showing *how* particular types of advertisements contribute to different aspects of a candidate's impression management. My study expands upon

the literature concerning political impression management by including advertising in the era of

Super PAC political campaign finance.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

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IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT, SUPER PACS, AND

THE 2012 REPUBLICAN PRIMARIES

BY

NATHAN KATZ
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Diane M. Rodgers

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The 2012 Republican primary was the first primary where Super Political Action Committees (PACs) have been involved, making it the most well-funded political primary in American history (Benoit and Compton 2013; Lynch 2014). As a result, between candidates and Super PACs more money was spent on television ads than ever before[1]. The use of Super PACs has the capability to change how candidates create performances and a study of these may show how future campaigns will change their political imagery to incorporate Super PACs. PACs are political organizations that individuals are able to anonymously donate limited amounts of money to for the purpose of political activity. After the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling in 2010 Super PACs were created. Unlike traditional PACs, individuals and organizations are able to donate an *unlimited* amount of money to Super PACs but lose their anonymity. Many Super PACs are not connected to individual candidates, but candidates often have Super PACs directly supporting them, allowing for individuals to indirectly provide candidates with unlimited funding. While legally these organizations are independent, the links between candidates and many of these Super PACs are fairly well known (Gulati 2012).

Super PAC funded advertisements have begun to reorganize political power and have become an expansion of the political backstage by providing unlimited funding for the purpose of creating public images. Impression management in television political advertisements has

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[1] This is assuming that whoever is reporting financial records is being truthful. Ron Paul's campaign reported spending $73,000 on media air-time but actually gave the money to an Iowa senator Kent Sorenson to change his endorsement from candidate Michele Bachmann to Ron Paul (Beaumont 2014).

been analyzed, but research regarding Super PAC ads and how they use impression management in television ads has not yet received the same level of analysis. Specifically, my research investigates how impression management was used by candidates to construct their public images in television advertisements during the 2012 Republican primaries with Super PACs capable of supporting them. Do official campaign advertisements and their Super PAC counterparts use the same forms of impression management to portray candidates? And how does having a Super PAC influence a candidate's ability to interact with the rest of the political party? Through a Symbolic Interactionist theoretical framework I analyzed how impression management was used on the political front stage and the implications it has for the political backstage during the Republican 2012 primaries by conducting an ethnographic content analysis of these political primary television advertisements.

I was able to develop five ideal type candidate performances that have been constructed through the combined efforts of candidates and Super PACs: the true conservative, the working conservative, the saint, the sinner, and the traitor. By developing a typology of advertisement performances, future political advertisements, particularly television advertisements, can be further understood by showing *how* particular types of advertisements contribute to different aspects of a candidate's impression management. My study will expand upon the literature concerning political impression management by including advertising in the era of Super PAC political campaign finance and how it influences the process of running for political office.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the underlying premises of democratic elections is that they allow for the general population to influence elected politicians to help them further represent the causes voters believe are important. What political advertisements have done is just the opposite—rather than politicians gaining support by being influenced by the electorate, politicians now focus on shaping the opinion of the electorate to meet their needs (Banducci and Karp 2003; Harrington 1996). Most candidates do not have a completely clean slate when it comes to the general public. Often their past political records as well as personal backgrounds can impact the voters' view of candidates. In order to change the view of the public, political advertisements are deployed (Harrington 1996; Nimmo and Savage 1976).

In contemporary politics, the primary concern of voters is a politician's image (Hall [1979] 2005). The intense focus on political image has brought about what is often referred to as "political theater" or "playing politics," where partisans create a public spectacle of themselves and their actions to create a political image and ensure victory within an election. This is often done with political advertisements. Television advertisements are used for the purpose of impression management through both verbal and nonverbal cues (Hall [1979] 2005). By being surrounded with advertisements, voters have no choice but to become involved within the political process where candidate's images and voters intertwine to determine the future of a democratic body (Edelman 1988; Goffman 1959).

Potential voters become directly involved with campaigns by watching political advertisements. Glaros and Miroff (1983) found that after watching advertisements produced by Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign, viewers' perceptions of Reagan and their confidence in him as a president would change based on the themes viewers were able to identify in the advertisements. As Glaros and Miroff (1983) explain, this is because candidates do not enter the world of politics without voters already having opinions about their personalities and policies. This means that television appearances and performances are used to combat preconceived notions about a politician to varying degrees of effectiveness based on both the performances in question and the opinions of voters prior to watching said performances.

Many times media coverage and effective advertisements become more important for winning an election than the policies of candidates (Miller et al. 1998). The use of political advertisements grows every year, and if a candidate is not able to produce advertisements regularly while their opponent can, they are subsequently at an extreme disadvantage (Fridkin and Kenney 2004; Lau et al. 2007; Devlin 1994). Although it is also the case that a poorly constructed ad that harms one's political campaign is counterproductive and takes away from a politician's resources (Devlin 1994; Fridkin and Kenney 2004; Lau et al. 2007). Through the use of political advertisements, a campaigning politician can create an unique image of themselves for the general public or create a particularly memorable ad (Devlin 1994). A politician can also create a situation in which his campaign can organize future political activity as well as create a primary focus for a campaign during the electoral process (Polsky 2012). Gaining the support of

the general populous through mass media has become a necessity in contemporary politics in

order to win an election (Fridkin and Kenney 2004).

The tacticians behind political advertisements know very well that a certain level of

deceit and control is required in advertisement production. This is done by manipulating the

presentation of available information (Winton 2010; Edelman 2001). Information within

advertisements can be used to spread ideas throughout a democratic body in order to convince

the public to believe in ideas developed within the ads (Ellul 1965). This is important for

political advertisements as political media, particularly television coverage is the primary source

of political knowledge for many Americans (Martin 2008). Political ads further control the

political knowledge available to the public. The structure of the language used within

advertisements helps to expand upon the foundation of an advertisement (Goffman 1974). It is

also not uncommon for different political symbols and ideas to be utilized by different

individuals and organizations depending on how they wish to manage their own political

impressions (Hall 1972).

Negative Ads

Much of the past research on political advertisements has focused on their effectiveness

particularly whether positive or negative advertisements are an effective tool to win an election.

The emphasis has been on negative advertisements, which have rapidly increased in production

and are often more sensational and effective (Lau et al. 2007). Richard Lau and his colleagues

have produced two major meta-analytical studies of the impact of negative advertisements (1999;

2007). Although the first analysis was widely ignored by consultants in the eight years between

studies, the amount of research on campaign advertisements had quadrupled (Lau et al. 2007). Researchers have found focusing on negative ads to be highly fulfilling due to their controversial nature. The vast majority of research has shown that people are often more influenced by negative advertisements than from positive ones (Arceneaux and Nickerson 2010; Lau et al. 1999; Lau et al. 2007). Even after consideration for moderating factors, it has been confirmed that negative advertisements do not decrease voter turnout, and often increase it (Lau et al. 1999; Lau et al. 2007). Negative advertisements allow voters to identify clear differences in the political stances of different politicians (Lau and Rovner 2009). L. Patrick Devlin (1994) found that for a campaigning politician, negative advertisements are an effective way to gain media attention with the potential to take the leading position within a primary. Ted Brader (2005) expanded upon this, saying that on the emotional level negative advertisements are capable of evoking fear within viewers to gain their support. Negative ads also have the potential to gain attention from the free media, meaning more exposure to the population without the use of funds (Brader 2005; Lau and Ronver 2009).

There are two basic types of attacks found in negative advertisements: those focused on slander, often referred to as "mudslinging," and those that criticize a politician's failures, hypocrisy, and incompetence, not their personal lives (Lau and Ronver 2009). Ads focusing on a politician's personal and professional shortcomings, while negative, are considered acceptable to the general public and are seen as a way to hold politicians accountable (Francia and Herrnson 2007). Candidates are often hesitant to engage in mudslinging advertisements due to the influence of their consultants. Just like the general public, politicians see these advertisements as

foul play, and do not want to be known as mudslingers. However, politicians who hire professional campaign managers are far more likely to engage in negative attack ads, including those of a mudslinging nature (Francia and Hernnson 2007; Swint 2006).

Thielmen and Wilhite (1998) found that Republican candidates are often the first to produce ads that focus on attacking their opponents. While the general public is often critical of personal attacks within television advertisements, Republican candidates are often more open and willing to use mudslinging in advertisements (Francia and Herrnson 2007; Lau and Ronver 2009). This may be a necessity, as in some ways Republican voters thrive on negative advertisements. Republican voters tend to view those who use negative advertisements and their sponsors far more positively than their Democratic counterparts (Pfau et al. 2002). According to Martin (2004) Republican voters are also more likely to believe that political races are closer than they appear after viewing negative advertisements.

Television Ads in the Internet Age

Television advertisements provide an opportunity for candidates to fight against what Martin (2008) refers to as the free media: the news and journalistic coverage of political activities during the electoral process. In contemporary elections, internet coverage can also be considered free media. Free media is the primary way that the public gathers information making it a powerful force capable of creating social situations (Martin 2008). While free media can be beneficial, it is beyond the control of politicians, meaning that it may not show them in a positive light (Steger 2000). Free media is more likely to influence the opinions of those that are more politically involved while the politically uninformed are influenced by advertisements (Fridkin

and Kenney 2004). Free media does not always accurately articulate the ideas and policies a candidate wants the public to be aware of. Candidates use their own political media with this in mind to attempt to correct what they see as the inaccuracies of the free media (Miller et al. 1998).

Free media focuses on leading candidates, meaning that those being ignored have less access to it (Steger 2000). The longer a political primary lasts, the greater chance for a candidate to fade into the background (Collingwood et al. 2012). In order to be introduced to the general public, lesser-known candidates need the media exposure to be seen on a national level (Conover and Stanley 1989). For these candidates, the ability to use television ads provides an opportunity to gain greater exposure, momentum, and likeability to the point where they may be able to overcome being a candidate in the background (Devlin 1994; Steger 2000). This is critical early in the political primary process as early primary performances often help to secure resources and the momentum necessary to endure the entire primary (Norrander 2006). At the same time, while a strong ad may be of assistance to a politician, a poor ad may have the exact opposite effect. An advertisement that reinforces negative aspects of a politician can worsen his political position with no aid from the general media or their competition (Devlin 1994).

The internet is becoming more and more relevant for campaign coverage and advertising. There are advantages to internet campaigning. It has a lower production cost (or is free), and there is no need to pay for air-time like television ads (Sides et al. 2014). Political ads also may have a "viral" element, where media coverage spreads to the internet for constant awareness, and ads on the internet are already one step closer than television ads (Sides et al. 2014). Several politicians, including Barack Obama, have attempted to harness the power of the internet and the

ability for volunteers to become a substitute for an actual campaign staff, allowing them to make

content as a way to reduce costs, spread media information, and raise money (Poletta 2014).

However, online campaigning is somewhat unreliable. Online campaign materials can easily be

manipulated and distorted by anyone with internet access. Campaigns have less control over

content made available online, and when volunteers create media to support a candidate they do

not necessarily instill the values the candidate wants to be associated with (Sides et al. 2014;

Kreiss 2014). Despite the rise of internet media and campaigning, political issues presented on

television tend to still be the public's primary concern (Hayes 2014; Lynch 2014). Television is

also where the majority of a campaign's financial resources are placed, making TV ads a major

campaign investment and a significant concern for politicians (Hayes 2014).

Enter the Super PACs

The most important change introduced into the 2012 primaries was the involvement of

Super Political Action Committees (PACs). To some it was considered "The Year of the Super

PAC" (Briffault 2012; Kang 2013). This is primarily due to the large amount of money spent

during campaigning. The 2012 primary was also the first where Super PACs existed, modifying

the campaign process (Fowler and Ridout 2012). The 2012 primary was also an excellent

moment for Super PACs to begin to fully develop, as there were many candidates who had

highly constrained fundraising capabilities (Christenson and Smidt 2014). According to the

Sunlight Foundation (2012), Super PACs spent more money than most official campaigns

through the 2011-2012 election cycle (both congressional and federal). The Republican Party

spent roughly four times more money in Super PACs than the Democratic Party. Super PACs are

a new challenge for politicians. The limitless money that Super PACs bring into campaigning

means that not only do candidates have to deal with image problems from other candidates, but

also third parties with theoretically unlimited expenditures.

Outside spending from political organizations that cannot be associated with campaigns

is nothing new. The 2004 general election brought in tremendous amounts of spending from non-

associated political organizations, and spending has only increased since (Swint 2006). Prior to

Citizens United, advertisements could be viewed in terms of first and third party ads, where the

first party are candidate sponsored ads and the third party are outside spending, Super PACs have

created "second party" advertisements. Super PACs were designed for the purpose of

independent expenditures, meaning that individuals and corporate entities could donate unlimited

funds to Super PACs. However, Super PACs could not coordinate with candidates, unlike

traditional PACs which could work with official candidates and campaigns, but had limitations

toward individual donations (Briffault 2012). This did not stop candidates from finding ways to

coordinate with Super PACs. Dino Christenson and Corwin Smidt (2014) found evidence that

the link between candidates and Super PACs may not be as clear cut, and they may in fact be

acting within the law; however the behavior of Super PACs does work with and complement the

behavior of candidates. Christenson and Smidt's research has limitations, notably that they do

not make any distinctions between Super PACs that have known personal links to candidates,

rather they choose to not look at "Hybrid" Super PACs[1] and to combine all other Super PAC

spending and look at who it supports rather than those who run the Super PACs and their

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[1] Hybrid Super PACs are those that have PACs cooperating with them. For example, American Crossroads is a PAC that works directly with the Super PAC Crossroads GPS.

personal relations to candidates. Joseph Dalia (2013) found that Super PAC advertisements were not particularly persuasive on a national scale, but they were useful in individual situations and for long shot candidates. However, Dalia's research on Super PAC advertisements is lacking as well. Dalia focused on determining if ads are positive or negative; previous research does not consider other concerns such as if ads are image or issue ads, what topics are common in Super PAC ads, and how impression management is utilized in Super PAC advertisements.

The use of Super PACs for advertisements rather than official campaign advertisements is a direct modification to the flow of information made present to voters (Hall 1972). Voters are now provided with messages from campaigns without actually being informed that the messages are from the campaigns. The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 created what is known as Stand By Your Ad (SBYA) legislation. SBYA legislation requires ad producers to endorse the advertisements they produce (Gale et al. 2005). This is why advertisements often end in "I am _____ and I approve this message." In order to meet SBYA requirements a clear candidate endorsement must be made. Because Super PACs are not officially linked to campaigns they do not have to mention that the candidate endorses or supports an advertisement, rather they only must reveal the organization funding the advertisements.

SBYA legislation produces trustworthiness. Ad viewers who watched several ads with SBYA legislation were not particularly persuaded to support a candidate, but they did believe that campaign ads with SBYA legislation were fairer than those without SBYA claims (Gale et al. 2005). Super PACS that were indirectly linked to a campaign were able to create advertisements semi-unified with the campaign, spreading messages without a candidate being

accountable (Gulati 2012; Spencer and Wood 2014). This was a seemingly logical decision as most research suggests that ad viewers tend to be more accepting of negative ads with anonymous sponsors, rather than those with candidate SBYA support (Dowling and Wichowsky 2013; Weber et al. 2012). Ad viewers may be more comfortable when candidates make SBYA claims, but they find the ads less convincing.

Perhaps the greatest benefit to political advertising from what at the very least appears to be a third party, is that it can have all the effectiveness of a campaign ad, but it does not result in the same level of political backlash, meaning candidates do not suffer from negative reception of advertisements (Brooks and Murrov 2012). Research done on post-*Citizens United* advertising does show that third party ads tend to be more negative, and that the majority of ads by Super PACs is spent focusing on attacking candidates of the same party (Gulati 2012; Spencer and Wood 2014; Werner and Coleman 2013; Nader 2013).

CHAPTER 3: THEORY AND METHODS

The sociological concept of impression management is one that is commonly used in politics. Stemming from Goffman (1959), the idea of impression management is that individuals change their behavior to alter how others see them. This is useful in political primaries due to the reciprocal nature of impression management, where a politician will create images of themselves, interpret voter feedback, and then modify their image accordingly to improve their appearance among voters (Hall 1972; Nimmo and Savage 1976). Candidates take on a variety of images to become a combination of what the voters find appealing in a political candidate and the images that voters actually see in candidates (Nimmo 1995; Nimmo and Savage 1976). Peter M. Hall (1972) coined the term "political impression management" to describe how Goffman's ideas of impression management influence political activity both in legislative and electoral aspects. Political impression management allows for the creation of a political self—a public identity designed for voter appeasement (Hall [1979] 2005).

The power and prestige that come with being a presidential nominee has a certain image that goes with it (Edelman 2001; Hall [1979] 2005). Candidates must work on their image during primaries to ensure that they "look" presidential. Because voter approval is how candidates acquire power, they are expected to suppress their own views, in order to help create an atmosphere that is favorable to the majority, regardless of the emotional stance of an individual candidate (Goffman 1959). Oftentimes, politicians are seen less as people and more as a compilation and structure of political images, values, and symbols they become associated with (Edelman 1988; Goffman 1959). By using these images, it is possible to develop a typology of

candidate performances, based on how the information is structured and presented. These can be seen as Weber's (1978) ideal and real types, as information can be categorized by how it is presented.

When political information and ideals are compiled into a presentation, what emerges is the "face" of a candidate. Signs are often used to create a political face. The face is the presentation candidates use in public, as it represents the information they want to be connected to (Goffman [1955] 1967). Through face work candidates explain why they would be ideal for the government using a practice known as ownership, where different political parties and candidates "own" different political issues. The issues that they own are their specialties and part of their political identities as they become associated with political problems and potential solutions (Hayes 2005; Petrocik et al. 2003). Ownership allows both candidates and parties to be associated with characteristics by default. This is a form of trait ownership, the act of being associated with values such as being fiscally responsible (Hayes 2005). Candidates can also own political policies. In these cases political policies are "traits" of the candidates who become known for strongly supporting and implementing political policies (Hayes 2005; Petrocik et al. 2003). By owning character traits, candidates are not only capable of presenting themselves as experts, but also as the only ones with the most viable solution to problems they own (Edelman 1964; Petrocik et al. 2003). Candidates could be attacked based on the fact that they "own" political policies as well.

Bill Clinton once said, "There is no point in saying what you've done. Keep saying what you're going to do, have a clear direction. Reagan and Thatcher did that, and they didn't have to

achieve that much" (Cronin 2008:3). The truth in Clinton's claims can be seen through Hall's (1972; [1979] 2005) works on politics and impression management. According to Hall (1972), past research revealed that American voters pay more attention to political images than actual policy. While voters are often frustrated with candidates' emphasis on image rather than policy, they are the ones who provide more substantial rewards for having quality political performances rather than quality policies (Cronin 2008). Political actors respond to the public's behavior that favors acting through the use of language and images to create desirable social situations with the hope that the public will respond in a positive manner (Hall [1979] 2005). Hall ([1979] 2005) makes note of the fact impression management is not just verbal but is also visual. Political advertisements are one of the many ways that impression management can take form through the use of visual imagery. These cultural symbols are utilized in television and other forms of mass media, where a politician can project the desired images throughout households wherever potential voters are.

Both Goffman (1963) and Edelman (1964) deal with the concept of symbols. Goffman developed the concept of prestigious and stigmatic symbols. Prestigious symbols are those that emphasize the strengths of an individual, what makes them noteworthy to others and why they may be significant. Stigmatic symbols on the other hand show aspects of individuals that are undesirable (Goffman 1963). The idea of using symbols is to show that candidates are "with" someone or something (Goffman 1963). Prestigious symbols show candidates "with" successful businesses, famous political figures, or others of exemplary character. Stigmatic symbols would show candidates "with" inconsistency, weakness, and the discredited. Edelman (1964) builds on

the concept of being "with" someone in politics through what he calls referential symbols. Referential symbols are those that show a politician's direct physical or character based reference. Referential symbols not only refer to other people, but also to political ideas showing how similar two different candidates, policies, or ideas are (Edelman 1964). Edelman (1964) also developed the idea of condensation symbols. Condensation symbols are those that are purely emotive and use emotional triggers to pull at the heartstrings of viewers in order to ensure reactions based on ideas such as sympathy, rage, and fear (Edelman 1964).

The purpose of using political signs and symbols is to make sure that individuals respond in a desirable manner (Edelman 1964). In the case of political primaries, those individuals are not only the voters but also the competing candidates. In some cases, stigmas become visible, and simply by presenting oneself in public, viewers think about the stigmatic elements of a character (Goffman 1963). Political stigmas may hurt one's chance of receiving votes or even respect. Placing stigmas on political figures is an effective and useful strategy for candidates to manage the competition. The political signs used show the values of the political community (Edelman 1964). For political primaries, this means that the signs produced in advertisements show the values of the primary runner, and with whom these values are to be associated with.

The Front and Backstage

Impression management deals with the idea of both a front and a backstage. The front stage is what the public sees, and the backstage is hidden from the general population (Goffman 1959). In politics, the backstage consists primarily of the activities designed in order to gain support from the voting population (Hall 1972). The political backstage is also a place of back

room deals and planning away from the scrutiny of the public; the same application of theoretical concepts can include televised political advertisements (Hall 1972; Hall [1979] 2008; Davis 2000). Through advertisements candidates create frames for their campaigns, allowing them to organize for future political activity, the desired faces of candidates, and decide on major focuses for a campaign. This is planned and calculated on the political backstage, where the public remains unaware of the direct intentions of ad creators and political strategists (Polsky 2012; Hall 1972).

By standing out as someone willing to protest against a popular establishment or with a creative advertisement used to build character, a politician can develop likeability within the population (Pfau et al. 2002). Political actors use impression management to put the public into a state of suspended disbelief, where no political reality exists beyond that framed within advertisements (Cronin 2008). The use of a suspended disbelief is the test of impression management. If a candidate's impressions go over well with the audience, then they have convinced the audience they are portraying the situation accurately (Gardner and Martinko 1988). If an actor is not accurately portraying a situation, they will return to the backstage to modify their presentations and represent them to the public creating a "feedback loop" where the audience and the actors become involved with each other (Gardner and Martinko 1988). For actors, the front stage is highly ritualized. These practices and manners are established so performers know how to act and audience members know what to expect when viewing front stage activity (Goffman 1959). Rituals are necessary as they make political processes effective because all participants are expected to take part in rituals (Edelman 1964). The historical use of

political rituals creates circumstances that are beyond the control of a candidate (Hall 1997). If

television is a political front stage then it means that politicians are expected to engage in the

practice of creating political advertisements when they decide to run for office. There are also

standard behaviors and practices for candidates regarding the content of political advertisements.

The requirement for advertisements to meet Stand By Your Ad (SBYA) regulations is an

example of established and ritualized practices and circumstances beyond the control of a

candidate. Candidates are expected to engage in SBYA statements to show the public who is

behind the advertisements. Super Political Action Committee (PAC) advertisements do engage in

SBYA claims but do not have to reveal their purpose as being solely for directly supporting

candidates, creating a loophole for candidates associated with the political front stage. Super

PACs let candidates cheat the audience through performances that are not simply misleading, but

also misrepresenting the performers as well.

  Despite being locked into a political situation, it does not necessarily mean that

performers are in a harmful position (Kanter 1972). Political ads are useful to candidates, so even

if they were not compelled to produce ads they would most likely pursue ad production anyway.

Appearances on the front stage also show that an idea or image is worthy of public attention, so a

candidate who does not or cannot produce television advertisements may not be considered

worthwhile by viewers (Altheide 1985).

  On the political front stage, various aspects of Goffman's concepts of impression

management are seen. It is here where candidates present their political faces to the public

alongside the faces developed by the public through acts such as passing, covering, and

discrediting. Passing is the practice of disregarding negative attributes in order to place more emphasis on the positive ones, while covering allows candidates to hide their negative traits (Goffman 1963). The act of discrediting allows candidates to apply blemishes, pieces of negative information to other candidates to hope that they can stigmatize them (Goffman 1963).

Traditionally, the front stage and the backstage are kept separate (Goffman 1959). In politics the secrets of the backstage are critical. Deals are often seen as being made in "smoke filled rooms" by political elites uninterrupted from the public, whether they be in the public's general interest or otherwise (Davis 2000). The backstage is also where candidates coordinate with their service specialists in order to manage political impressions, and to take in public feedback so candidates can continue to modify their impressions as desired (Gardner and Martinko 1988; Goffman 1959). It is the backstage where candidates decide what information to pass, what to cover, and what is used to discredit others. There are two reasons that the stages are kept separate. The first reason is that what happens on the backstage is hidden from the public, and historically it has been unrecorded, making it hard to show the public without any physical representation (Davis 1980; Goffman 1959).

The second reason the backstage is hidden is far more critical. The backstage is often suspicious, corrupt, borderline illegal, and is known for hiding secrets designed to produce results favorable to those who occupy it (Goffman 1959). The backstage is not only used for policy deals, but also for strategic developments toward impression management that candidates may wish to keep secret (Goffman 1959; Hall 1972). The American public often sees politics in the form of actors rather than power structures so when the backstage is revealed it is not the

political system that becomes critiqued but the politicians involved (Hall 1972). As the backstage

is revealed, it is not the political process that suffers these consequences but instead the actors

involved. By sharing the backstage performers are engaging in similar behavior and have a

collective interest in keeping viewers away (Kanter 1972). When public viewers have access to

the backstage, it makes it harder for those who regularly occupy it to perform backstage activities

(Hall 1972). Political attack advertisements often expose the backstage and share secretive

information with the hope of eliminating a candidate's credibility (Goffman 1963; Hall 1972).

Super PACS are a new edition to the backstage. Richard Kang (2013:1919) makes note

of the fact that individual campaigns had Super PACs that served as "alter egos" to candidates.

These alter egos are "candidate specific Super PACs," Super PACs designed for the sole purpose

of advancing a single candidate rather than the political party as a whole, or associated with a

particular political policy (Briffault 2012:1675). The alter egos consist of second party

advertisement creators: Super PACs linked to candidates but not actually managed by them.

Through these second party Super PACS, candidates could take advantage of the newly available

unlimited funding and make political statements without claiming responsibility.

While on the surface, no Super PAC is directly linked to a candidate or campaign,

political analysts can determine that some Super PACs are in fact linked to candidates (Gulati

2012; Ceaser et al. 2013). These unofficial branches of political campaigns were often run by

former members of a campaign's staff who were closely trusted by candidates (Gulati 2012).

Super PAC ads could not have candidates speaking for themselves making personal issues

statements, but they were able to use pre-recorded material available to the public (Ceaser et al.

2013). Candidates would continuously blur the line between what was and was not independent of their campaigns. Primary runner Jon Huntsman officially endorsed a Super PAC known as Our Destiny, whose primary donor was Huntsman's own father. Mitt Romney openly advocated for people to donate to the Super PAC Restore Our Future that was established by former Romney staffers (Gulati 2012; McIntire and Luo 2012). Another common tactic was for political campaigns and Super PACs to hire the same advertising firm for campaign ads. This way, advertisers could communicate and work together, but legally there was no coordination between campaigns and Super PACs (Kang 2013).

Political Mythmaking

Goffman's (1959) concept of mystification has components of political mythmaking. Myths are created for the purpose of creating false ideas about actors and situations, in order to distract audiences from the reality of the situation (Ellul 1965). Mystification consists of constructed performances rather than spontaneous ones (Goffman 1959). Political mythmaking is the art of creating ideals and images about a candidate or nation that are entirely fictional. They become legends in themselves due to the public's aspiration for such realities to be true. In political advertisements, myths take performances to the next level of dramatization. When mythmaking and mystification becomes involved, one is not simply a "conservative," they are "the most conservative candidate since Ronald Reagan."

Myths hold a quasi-religious status in public viewing. The myths are "sacred" texts, images and information that must go unaltered in order to preserve the situation (Altheide and Johnson 1980). To an extent, all advertisements have some mythmaking involved.

Advertisements show the best of the candidate campaigning and the worst of their opponents, but some advertisements and candidates take the ideals and concepts of the myth to whole new levels. These myths consume social situations and information, encouraging individuals to believe in highly distorted or false situations, and information based on a belief held by the general public (Ellul 1965). Individuals become attached to these myths, and to speak against them becomes borderline heretical (Ellul 1965). Oftentimes myths are unbreakable, and no matter how much evidence is shown to the contrary, nothing will convince one who believes in a political myth that any other reality can possibly be true (Edelman 1988). The American Dream is one of these myths (Edelman 1964; Ellul 1965). A house, car, 2.5 children, and a white picket fence may be overly idealistic about what it means to be successful in America but is a well known myth. The goal of obtaining the American Dream is a mystification of contemporary economic struggles that emphasizes the wishes of individuals rather than their actual living situations. The concept of "American Values" is also a myth. There is no common set of values that belong to all American citizens. When asked what "American Values" truly consist of, no one can find a concrete answer (Hall and Hewitt 1970). Yet the ideas of the American Dream and American Values make excellent political rhetoric, which is able to reach the hearts of individual voters, calling for voters to endorse candidates who advocate for these sociopolitical fantasies.

Myths are not only for the audience: actors are suspect to myths as well, particularly those regarding the importance of politicians and their ability to influence the public (Ellul 1965; Edelman 1964). There are also myths shared by both candidates and voters, and when myths are

shared by both candidates and the audience, candidates often use political myths in order to advance their own careers (Edelman 1988). The most notable shared myth is that of the political hero (Nimmo and Savage 1976).

The hero is an individual that Goffman (1959) would refer to as "exalted." These figures hold qualities superior to that of their peers, the mythical component of the perfect candidate, who emphasizes all that a political party stands for, gets desired results, and either keeps a nation as it is or changes it for the better. The political hero is a private myth, which each individual separately believes in, making it stronger and more personal (Ellul 1965). This is the problem with attempting to claim to be the political hero. Every individual has their own perception of what the political hero needs to do (Nimmo and Savage 1976).

Ronald Reagan may be considered an attempt to create the "political hero," and is perhaps the most well known Republican to become exalted. He is praised by conservatives as being the most important and positively influential president in recent history. Reagan is credited with having a calm and connecting personal manner, and a profound understanding of the necessity of political performances, which is part of what helped him become the myth that he is today (Cronin 2008). However, in order to ensure Reagan's mythical status, he needed to be separated from his political record, which is not particularly conservative[1]. Reagan's record contradicts what the legend of Reagan represents, and to become the cultural hero he is today, severing all ties to his legislative history was necessary.

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[1] Reagan's dealings with the Iran Contra, continuous raising of taxes, use of executive orders, amnesty for immigrants, the massive debt increase during his administration, his contribution to establishing the National Security Agency, and promoting an assault weapons ban are hardly what a contemporary conservative would find "ideal" (Busby 2011; Edelman 1988; Goodman 2014; Mehrota 2013; NPR Staff 2010; Ungar 2014).

Frames, Encounters, and Performances

The creation and use of television ads can serve as a strip of framework, creating a small series of events and experiences. These events maintain cues to let the audience know when a series of events begins and ends (Goffman 1974). In political advertising this would be the duration of a television commercial, where a viewer would be informed they were to begin engagement in a political situation as an advertisement began, and would cease to be involved in politics as the advertisement came to an end. Political advertisements would be within a ceremonial framework, as there is no "playful deceit" involved (Goffman 1974). If there was playful deceit involved in political advertisements it would detract from their general purpose, meaning the advertisements would be more for the entertainment of campaign strategists and candidates than being a framework focused first and foremost with ensuring a desirable voter outcome. Goffman's (1974) idea of a "corrective hoax" framework, where individuals and groups use impression management to change the opinions of viewers, is also applicable to politics. While corrective hoaxes are often more casual and for the sake of amusement, both political advertisements and corrective hoaxes work to engage large audiences in order to ensure they believe a desired social situation.

Performances consist of a series of encounters, each providing their own particular contributions (Goffman 1959). In the world of political advertising, each advertisement can be considered an encounter with the public; if each advertisement is an encounter, then the overall performance is that which takes the messages, images, and interactions accumulated from all the

television ads in a single campaign season. Candidates use political advertisements to create

performances with the hope of designing a convincing front stage in politics.

Television advertisements can be used for political framing to help to expand and solidify

the transference of power by persuading voters to accept the reality desired by candidates (Hall

[1979] 2005; Weber [1919] 2008). Advertisements are a direct attempt to actively portray

politicians in a particular manner; they are planned and timed appearances in the political world

where ad creators have absolute control over images projected (Hall 1972). These advertisements

are used for the purpose of impression management through both verbal and nonverbal cues

(Hall [1979] 2005; Goffman 1959). Because Super PACs are now involved in the campaign

process, more advertisements will result in more frequent framing and reframing of candidate

images.

Methods

Advertisements can be seen as cultural artifacts left behind that reflect the political

culture at the time of their creation. As cultural artifacts, they can be analyzed to reveal the ideas

of their creators. In order to successfully perform an ethnographic content analysis of television

ads I developed a dataset from the larger Stanford Political Communications Lab (PCL)

database. Ads taken from the PCL database were those created by candidates and from Super

PACs with known links toward candidates (Gulati 2012). This allows analysis to be focused on

the influence that Super PACs have on campaigns. This is a new opportunity for campaigns to

create political ads with minimal, or possibly no, accountability. While other Super PACs were

involved in the 2012 Republican Primary, these Super PACs were often of a different nature.

The Super PACs chosen were not only designated to support the campaign platforms of single candidates, but they were also the Super PACs that raised the most money to specifically support each candidate (Opensecrets.org n.d.a). "Third Party" Super PACs that created advertisements as well were completely outside the control of candidates and many spent money on political races aside from that of the presidential primary. Furthermore, outside spending for campaigns existed, through PACs, before *Citizens United,* but it is only now that candidates themselves also have potentially unlimited spending. These Super PACs, while capable of creating their own problems, deserve a separate analysis because they are completely beyond the control of candidates, while candidates are capable of having some influence in the Super PACs analyzed.

English ads were taken from the database and cross referenced with the P2012: Race for the Whitehouse website in order to filter out internet advertisements and discover the original region that advertisements aired. Upon cross referencing, it was discovered that the PCL database was incomplete. The PCL database did not include three advertisements: two from Revolution PAC, one from Keep Conservatives United, and one sponsored by the Herman Cain campaign. These ads were found online and added to the general advertisement list. Lastly four ads that were attributed to candidates were actually produced by their Super PACs. Three ads by The Red, White, and Blue Fund were attributed to Rick Santorum rather than his Super PAC, and one advertisement from Restore Our Future was attributed to Mitt Romney. RevPAC's ad "Adherence to Oath," while aired on the internet was designed for television, so it was included in the database. After adding the additional ads, a total of 76 official campaign ads and 57 Super PAC ads were compiled. Simple random sampling was used to compile a list of 70 ads to be

analyzed; 40 from candidates and 30 from Super PACs which can be seen in Appendixes B and C.

Ads were coded into four categories by region based on how the National Census divides the nation: Northeast, West, Midwest, and South. Ads that were known to be televised, but did not have region information available, and the Revolution PAC ad that was designed for television but did not have enough funding to be aired, "Adherence to Oath" were coded as having no region available.

The coding guide (Appendix A) stems from Kaid and Johnston's (2001) *Videostyle* codex, though some changes were necessary. The most distinct modifications of the Videostyle codex were the exclusion of questions regarding the use of music and video production techniques. Because primary advertisements may attack the president, opponents, or both the questions regarding political attacks need to be asked twice to help determine if there is any significant difference in who is attacked more often and if there is a difference in how President Obama or other primary politicians are approached. Additionally, questions regarding religion and religious affiliation as well as specifically looking for associations with the Tea Party, have been included. A major criticism of Videostyle is that it often sees ads solely in terms of positive or negative advertising. Positive advertisements are those that portray the strengths and positive aspects of a candidate, while negative advertisements focus on failing social policies or unfavorable aspects of opponents is also incredibly common for advertisements to have a combination of positive and negative messages rather than simply having "positive" and "negative" ads or "image" and "issue" ads (Johnston and Kaid 2002). In order to compensate for

this deficiency there will be four possibilities for coding rather than simply two. Ads can either be positive advertisements, negative advertisements, positive advertisements with negative messages, or negative ads with positive messages. If there is a mixture of positive and negative messages, the dominant classification will be determined by how much time is spent on each aspect of an advertisement, meaning that if an ad is 30 seconds long, and 16 seconds are devoted to positive images and 14 seconds are devoted to negative messages, then the advertisement will be classified as a positive advertisement with negative messages.

As Altheide and Schneider (2013) explain, numeric coding is not enough to fully understand media analysis. Some emotive and visual aspects can only be fully understood through observing videos. For this reason, additional notes, comments, and remarks about advertisements and what they made the coders feel was also recorded and taken into consideration (Altheide and Schneider 2013). By combining qualitative numeric coding and open coding through observation it was possible to encompass more aspects of the advertisements in question. After going through all the advertisements viewed, they were "looped" through a second time. Each advertisement was given a second viewing to ensure that no concept developed later in the first viewing was ignored in earlier ads. Twenty percent of advertisements, which can be found in Appendix D, were also coded by a fellow graduate student for the sake of intercoder reliability. There was a 91% level of intercoder reliability.

CHAPTER 4: THE PLAYERS

Meet The Candidates and Their Super PACs

The 2012 Republican Primary had eight noteworthy candidates within it: Jon Huntsman, Michele Bachmann, Rick Perry, Herman Cain, Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum, and Mitt Romney. Each candidate produced a distinct number of political advertisements and many faced unique media challenges. Each candidate also gathered funds for both their official campaign and the unofficial campaign expansions based in the form of Super Political Action Committees (PACs). This section focuses on major candidates who also produced advertisements that were analyzed, and can be summarized in Table 1, which shows which candidate was associated with what Super PAC and how much money both the candidate and the Super PAC were able to raise during the primary season. Four other candidates ran in the primary: Buddy Roemer, Gary Johnson, Fred Karger, and Tim Pawlenty. Roemer and Johnson produced no advertisements. Roemer would go on to seek nomination through the Reform Party, while Gary Johnson became the Libertarian Party nominee (Burns 2012; Libertarian Party 2012). Karger and Pawlenty did produce advertisements but did not have a Super PAC to support them (Derrick 2012). Because of this their ads were excluded. Without a Super PAC, they would not have been able to engage in the new expansions of the political backstage. Media analysts and political insiders expected Pawlenty to be a noteworthy candidate. Unfortunately for Pawlenty, that was not the case. Pawlenty's campaign had a failure to initially launch and gain any momentum. This was often attributed to the fact that Pawlenty himself was painfully bland (Coombs 2013).

Table 1. Candidates, Super PACs and Funding

Candidate	Money Raised	Super PAC	Money Raised
Huntsman	7,835,277	Our Destiny	3,195,677
Bachmann	9,244,228	Keep Conservative United	27,187
Perry	19,704,706	Make Us Great Again	5,607,881
Cain	16,672,939	9-9-9 Fund	617,670
Gingrich	23,131,262	Winning Our Future	23,907,955
Paul	40,627,094	Revolution PAC	1,251,849
Santorum	22,358,245	Red, White, and Blue Fund	8,517,926
Romney	97,963,836	Restore Our Future	61,472,694

Jon Huntsman

Former governor and ambassador to China, Jon Huntsman Jr. announced his campaign on June 12th 2011 in an interview on Bloomberg News (Bloomberg TV 2011). Huntsman is the only candidate analyzed to never take the lead in the 2012 primary. Hoping to have an appeal to independent voters as well as traditional Republicans, resulted in him being labeled as a political moderate, which was the source of a great deal of scrutiny (Coombs 2013). Despite claiming to oppose the use of personal funds for a political campaign, Huntsman ended up using his own money to attempt to get his campaign off the ground (Coombs 2013). Mid-January Huntsman ended his campaign to become the presidential nominee (Rutenberg and Zeleny 2012). Huntsman's personal campaign would spend a total of 7.8 million dollars (Gulati 2012). The Huntsman campaign produced two television ads.

Our Destiny was the Super PAC supporting Jon Huntsman. Our Destiny was managed by a former lobbyist and official for the Huntsman campaign named Tom Loeffler (Mehta 2012b). The Super PAC would raise 3.2 million dollars. The primary donor to Our Destiny was Jon

Huntsman's father, Jon Huntsman Sr., who donated a total of $2,219,039 (Opensecrets.org n.d.a; Opensecrets.org n.d.e). Our Destiny produced three ads.

Michele Bachmann

In an attempt to compare herself to Margaret Thatcher, America's self-described "Iron Lady" Michele Bachmann was a congresswoman known for her media exposure and charisma. What she was not known for was producing any major legislation of historical significance or with major lasting impact (Coombs 2013). On July 27th 2011, Bachmann announced she would be running as a Tea Party Conservative (Condon 2011). Bachmann was prone to political gaffes and making blatantly false claims but managed to take the lead in the primaries quickly. She came in first place during the Ames Straw Poll (though it is important to note that neither Jon Huntsman nor Mitt Romney chose to participate). The earliest polls in July also showed that she was the party favorite early on (Jensen 2011a; Coombs 2013). Bachmann ended her campaign on January 4th 2012 choosing to endorse Mitt Romney as she left, but before that she was able to raise just over 9 million dollars for her campaign (Acosta et al. 2012; CNN Wire Staff 2012; Gulati 2012). Bachmann's campaign produced a total of six television ads.

Perhaps holding the weakest link between candidate and Super PAC, Bachmann was supported by Keep Conservatives United, an organization that decided it would spend its time focusing on Rick Perry (Schwartz 2011). This did not stop Bachmann from openly endorsing the organization (Gulati 2012). Keep Conservatives United was founded by Bob Harris, and would eventually spend $27,000, making it one of the less lucrative Super PACs (Confessore 2011; Gulati 2012). Keep Conservatives United created one television advertisement for Bachmann.

Rick Perry

Announcing his candidacy on the same day as the Ames Straw Poll allowed Rick Perry, the longest serving governor of Texas, who had never lost an election, to eclipse the attention that Michele Bachmann was receiving (Coombs 2013; Ceaser et al. 2013). Bachmann would eventually retaliate by criticizing Perry for mandating that girls get HPV vaccinations while Merck, the producer of Gardasil was a major campaign donor for Perry, and his campaign manager used to be part of the pharmaceutical industry (Coombs 2013). As Bachmann began to decline in popularity, Perry took her place holding the lead in July and September of 2011 (Jensen 2011c; Jones 2011). Despite criticisms, for a short time Perry was considered a candidate that had major appeal to all political groups. There was a point in October where Perry was able to out-fund Romney, and Perry would raise just under eight million dollars (Coombs 2013; Gulati 2012). Unfortunately for Perry, the more he spoke the less popular he would become (Coombs 2013). In a November debate, Perry had his "oops" moment. Perry planned on explaining a policy that would cut three government agencies but forgot what the third one was (Terkel 2011). In January 2012 Perry would withdraw from the political race and endorse Gingrich, only to later endorse Romney instead (Sink 2012). During his campaign, Perry created 15 advertisements and raised 19 million dollars (Gulati 2012).

Make Us Great Again was a Super PAC founded by Mike Toomy, the former chief of staff to the Perry campaign (Mehta 2012a). Make Us Great Again would raise 5.6 million dollars in total, with the most notable funder being the Contran Corporation (Opensecrets.org n.d.c; Opensecrets.org n.d.d). Make us Great Again produced six advertisements.

Herman Cain

Herman Cain had a waning amount of fame within the Republican Party due to his vocal opposition of health care reform in the 1990s (Ceaser et al. 2013). Cain was the only running candidate to have never served political office, though he was the chief lobbyist for the National Restaurant Association. He was also the only African American candidate to run in the primary as well. This not only gave him the opportunity to run as a political outsider, but also gave him the ability to talk about race in the Republican primary (Coombs 2013). Entering the race early on, Cain was able to take the lead from Perry in September. One of Cain's biggest struggles was the lack of successful fundraising; he eventually raised a total of 16.67 million dollars (Bacon 2011; Ceaser et al. 2013; Gulati 2012). A series of sex scandals and criticism for attempting to sell a book (about how he won the 2012 election) as he campaigned would be his downfall. Cain would retire from the race in December of 2011 (Streitfield 2011). As 2012 emerged, he would endorse Newt Gingrich and then later Mitt Romney (Boerma 2012). The Cain campaign produced two televised advertisements.

The 9-9-9 Fund was a Super PAC created to support Cain and named after his economic policy (nine percent income tax, nine percent sales tax, nine percent tax on business transactions) and would raise a total of $617,000 (Gulati 2012). The largest donor was Richard Stoker who donated a total of $5,000 (Opensecrets.org n.d.b). The 9-9-9 Fund would create one televised advertisement. After Cain's campaign ended, the remaining finances of The 9-9-9 fund would be transferred to The Cain Connections Super PAC; a Super PAC created by Cain after he left the election designed for his own political activism (Abowd 2012a).

Newt Gingrich

After Cain lost his favorability, Gingrich would receive a spike in popularity, taking the lead in November (Steinhauser 2011a; Steinhauser 2011b). In late December, Ron Paul briefly took the lead, followed by Romney, but by January, Gingrich, who had suffered a dip in popularity, regained the lead (Coombs 2013; *Des Moines Register* 2012; Jensen 2011b). Former Speaker of the House and "idea man" Newt Gingrich produced 15 advertisements during the course of his campaign. During his campaign, Gingrich's greatest strength was also his biggest weakness. Gingrich had a great deal of success in the 1990s, with solving unemployment issues and allowing the Republicans to retake the House of Representatives (Ceaser et al. 2013). However, the height of his career came to a swift end due to corruption charges (Coombs 2013). Gingrich was often criticized for initially running a campaign without showing any interest in being president (Coombs 2013; Pitney 2011). Gingrich was able to raise a total of 23 million dollars, his campaign ended on May 2nd 2012 (Gulati, 2012; Dover 2012).

Winning Our Future was a Super PAC designed to help endorse Gingrich that raised just under 23 million dollars. Becky Burkett ran the Super PAC after working for other media and lobbying organizations created and run by Gingrich (Opensecrets.org n.d.k). The Super PAC was primarily funded by Gingrich's friend Sheldon Aidelson, a multi-millionaire who made his money in the casino industry (Confessore and Lipton 2012). Both Aidelson and his wife donated 7.5 million dollars to Winning Our Future (Duszak 2013). Winning Our Future released 14 ads on television.

Ron Paul

Jacques Ellul (1965:69) described "the agitator" as, "[one who] functions as a nationalist. He does not appeal to a doctrine or principle, nor does he propose specific reforms…Usually he is against the New Deal and for laissez-faire liberalism: against plutocrats, internationalists, and socialists—bankers and Communists alike…The agitator is especially active in the most unorganized groups of the United States. He uses the anxiety psychoses of the lower middle class, the neo-proletarian, the immigrant, the demobilized soldier …The agitator uses the American Way of Life to provoke anti-Semitic, anti-Communist, anti-Negro, and xenophobic current of opinion." This is the essence of Ron Paul and his ideology. Ron Paul's ultra-libertarian and isolationist stances brought in support from white supremacists, while at the same time rarely receiving serious attention from public media. This does not mean he was without a series of loyal followers who performed a "moneybomb" for the campaign and raised 1 million dollars in small donations in a single day (Coombs 2013). In 2012 Ron Paul began his third attempt to run for president (Ceaser et al. 2013). While Paul did not receive a great deal of success in many national polls, he was the winner of the Conservative Political Action Conference poll and a poll held by the Family Research Council (Coombs 2013). For a week in December he was the leader in the polls, but quickly was replaced by Romney (*Des Moines Register* 2012; Jensen 2011b). Ron Paul's campaign raised 41 million dollars produced 16 advertisements, and never actually ended (Opensecrets.org n.d.j). Paul ran until the very end, but failed to receive enough delegates to win the nomination.

Ron Paul was supported by Revolution PAC (RevPAC). One of Revolution PAC's advisory board members was Penny Langford Freeman who used to serve as Ron Paul's political director (Abowd 2012b). RevPAC claimed that Ron Paul served as the "third option" and was an alternate to mainstream politics as it raised a total of 1.25 million dollars (Abowd 2012b; Opensecrets.org n.d.h). Of the 1.25 million dollars, RevPAC spent the majority on non-campaign related activities (Webster 2012). RevPAC created two televised advertisements. RevPAC pushed for advertisements in a peculiar way. Both RevPAC televised advertisements were originally put on YouTube with requests for donations in order raise enough money to have them aired on television (TheRevolutionPAC 2011; TheRevolutionPAC 2012). One ad was successfully aired, but the other was not. However, because the ad that did not air on television (Adherence to Oath) was designed with the intention of being placed on television, it was included in the database.

Rick Santorum

Rick Santorum was a two-term senator and came in second during the presidential primary process. In February, Santorum would take the lead in the 2012 Primary (CBS News 2012). Known for being socially conservative, Santorum was proudly pro-life, anti-college, anti-gay rights, and claimed to be the most pro-family candidate (Coombs 2013). Santorum had a somewhat mixed public reception. He was well known for fighting against health care reform and winning over politically liberal regions of Pennsylvania, but he was also considered by many to be too conservative to win in a general election (Ceaser et al. 2013; Balz 2012). Santorum's campaign produced a total of 11 television ads before leaving the primary race. He would then

proceed to endorse Romney a month later (Haberman 2012). Santorum has a long history of being associated with corporate lobbyists. When he left Congress an email between lobbyists said that his leaving, "create[d] a big hole we need to fill" (Bimbaum 2006). His corporate ties may have helped him raise 22 million dollars (Opensecrets.org n.d.i).

The Red, White, and Blue fund was the Super PAC behind Rick Santorum. This Super PAC raised a total of 8.5 million dollars, including two individuals that donated 1 million dollars each (Opensecrets.org n.d.f; Opensecrets.org n.d.g). With the money raised, The Red, White, and Blue fund aired 11 advertisements on television. The Red, White, and Blue fund was founded by Nick Ryan, a former campaign advisor to Rick Santorum (Marcus 2012a).

Mitt Romney

Willard "Mitt" Romney eventually won the Republican presidential primary. Many expected Romney to win from the beginning. After placing second in the 2008 Republican Primary, he was considered "next in line" for the Republican candidacy, particularly by the political elites with heavy corporate ties who have traditionally dominated the Republican Party (Ceaser 2013). But the ex-governor of Massachusetts went through a long battle to win the nomination, in part due to the rise of social conservatives and the Tea Party who were less concerned with corporate ties and were seemingly more concerned with social issues (Ceaser et al. 2013). Romney was faced with accusations of being uninteresting, too moderate, inconsistent, and was criticized for once writing an article titled "Let Detroit Go Bankrupt" (Coombs 2013). In order to secure his election, Romney had to downplay his own political record, which had some liberal tendencies, in order to meet the appeals of the far-right voting block in the Republican

Party (Jacobson 2013). At the same time, he was also the only governor running with name recognition, and he was a favorite among party insiders. With his wealth, name recognition, and insider favorability, Romney was able to raise just under 100 million dollars during the primary process (Gulati 2012). Romney created 14 political ads.

Restore Our Future was a Super PAC designed to support Mitt Romney. It created 18 television ads. It was founded by Carl Forti and Larry McCarthy. Forti was the director of Romney's 2008 presidential campaign, and McCarthy was the head of the 2008 campaign's media team. Charles Spies was the Super PAC's treasurer and was a financial advisor to Mitt Romney during the 2008 campaign (Marcus 2012b). Restore Our Future raised over 61 million dollars during the primary campaign (*New York Times* n.d.).

CHAPTER 5: CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE TYPES

The 2012 Republican Primary included countless advertisements that contributed toward the development of a typology of candidate images. By breaking down candidate images into broader performances, broader, more ideological symbols and ideas can be expressed by candidates. These broad sets of images can then be "brought to life" through the analysis of an ongoing discourse as revealed by the timeline section, which shows how candidate and Super Political Action Committee (PAC) ads worked together to shape more specific images at different points within a political campaign, while reflecting on how different candidates responded to the images put out by their opponents earlier in race.

During the analysis of the 2012 primary, I was able to develop five ideal performances within the television advertisements: The true conservative, the working conservative, the saint, the sinner, and the traitor. As "ideal type" performances, they serve as larger templates for how political information is arranged in order to show candidates in a desirable manner. Information was arranged through emphasizing a candidate's prestige, discrediting, passing, and covering; all of which are concepts developed by Goffman. Often candidates engage in multiple performance types, particularly the negative performances of the sinner and the traitor against their will. As a result, on the campaign trail, different political encounters would often emphasize different aspects of political information so that candidates could express different aspects of performances. Candidates could also engage in multiple performance types at once, particularly when they were beneficial and complimented each other.

Being Conservative: The One True Value

The most important, overarching aspect of political performances during the 2012 primary was the need to have the face of a conservative. Rick Santorum's campaign advertisement "Best Chance" claimed he was a "full-spectrum" conservative and mapped out why:

> *Male Voiceover: Rick Santorum is rock solid on values issues, a Tea Party favorite for fighting corruption and tax payer abuse, more foreign policy credentials than any candidate, and Rick's Made in the U.S.A. plan will make America an economic superpower again. Rick Santorum: A trusted conservative who gives us the best chance to take back America.*

By making a claim to be conservative, candidates were making an appeal to the concept of the in-group. Claiming to be a conservative candidate meant that one naturally belonged within the in-group, and therefore they should be elected to lead (Goffman 1963). In the 2012 primary to "naturally belong" to the Republican Party meant to be either a true or working conservative.

The need for a conservative was in part for the purpose of "taking back America." "Taking the country back" to "restore America" is directly opposing political change, out of a fear that one might lose power. The overly-white base of the Republican Party may have seen change in multiculturalism and diversity that would inevitably lead to a different America where they would have less political power (Edelman 2001). But taking the country back and restoring conservatism was also an internal problem. The Republican Party was slowly beginning to acknowledge that its own past record was not particularly conservative, and that the party itself needed to reinstate its own conservative values (Neville-Shepard and Theye 2013). Part of taking

the country back for conservatives also meant ensuring a truly conservative candidate was nominated.

There were two main performances regarding political conservatism. Candidates would take on the face of the true conservative and the working conservative. The true conservative was ideologically pure one who would embody socially or economically conservative principles in his or her actions in an uncompromising fashion. Working conservatism is the idea that the application of an ideological stance can have a lasting cultural impact. The idea is not just "talking the talk" but also "walking the walk." If a candidate is ideologically conservative, but can't implement the policies then there is little point electing them. They must be able to use their conservatism to influence the values of others as well as government functions. The working conservative may not necessarily be ideologically pure, but it is a possibility. As conservatives, candidates put on political faces to be distributed to the public. When creating the face of a conservative, not only does one present themself in a manner which exalts their positive experiences but they also engage in passing and avoidance—the arts of downplaying or ignoring more realistic tributes (Goffman 1959; 1964; [1955] 1967).

True Conservatives

Information that could be categorized as having the face of a true conservative provided candidates opportunities to claim that their faces were genuine. Being genuine lends itself to the ideological purity that is necessary to lead to a more conservative nation. Both the 30-second and 60-second versions of Winning Our Future's advertisement "Time to Choose Newt," talked about how Gingrich could "put Obama to shame." The 60-second version referred to Gingrich as

a "visionary." This not only provided Gingrich a manner with a set amount of prestige, but also allowed him the opportunity to attempt to establish himself as having the status of a thinker and fighter above that of a partisan actor. "Plastic Men" claimed that Ron Paul was the only candidate who "listened to our Founding Fathers" while "Someone" by Our Destiny made it clear that unlike other candidates, Jon Huntsman was "not a phony." Both of these advertisements show candidates expressing that they have a manner that is genuine to the conservative ideology, making them the best candidates to fit within the in-group.

The ability to agitate political opponents was a practice the true conservative could take pride in. Holding conservative values to their fullest extent would aggravate the left as the country was slowly taken back. Winning Our Future's advertisement "Newt on Jobs" showed footage of Gingrich saying:

> *Gingrich: I believe, every American of every background has been endowed by their creator with the right to pursue happiness. And if that makes liberals unhappy, I'm going to continue to find ways to help poor people learn how to get a job, learn how to get a better job, and someday learn how to own the job.*

It appears that Gingrich is more willing to fight for jobs in order to torment the political left than to help individuals find work. This allows Gingrich to show himself as having more partisan policies, siding with political conservatives who can take satisfaction in knowing that his success will frustrate opponents. This also allows Gingrich to engage in the act of passing to portray himself as a true conservative. Passing allowed Gingrich to downplay his actual performances, distancing himself from accusations that he was too moderate and accepting of politically liberal policies due to working in the Clinton Era.

Passing was not the only corrective technique used to rearrange information so a candidate could hide past political experiences; covering was also used to mask their ideological stances as well. By covering, Huntsman was able to combat some of the criticism he received for being too moderate. Our Destiny began covering in advertisements such as "Quotes." "Quotes" used claims made by George Will, Erick Erickson, and the Wall Street Journal to show that Huntsman "should be a conservative hero," and that he was "more conservative than Newt Gingrich and Mitt Romney combined," and most importantly, all three agreed that Huntsman had the best plan to fix the economy. The advertisement "Two" showed a comparison between Romney and Huntsman, making it clear that Huntsman was significantly more conservative, claiming Romney was a "chameleon" while Huntsman was a "consistent conservative."

One of the policies used to develop the face of the true conservative was the act of owning the concept political isolation and expanding military might as a method of defending the American way of life. Rather than becoming more involved in the world, candidates wanted to become more secluded. This seclusion needed to be met with military strength in order to justify the proposed cut back in international involvement. In "Rebuilding the America We Love," Gingrich planned to "regain the world's respect by standing strong again." As Gingrich made this claim, video footage of military training maneuvers was played. The Red, White, and Blue Fund's advertisement "America's Future" made mention of how Santorum wanted to reinstate America as an international superpower.

When performances that could be categorized as those of true conservatives endorsed isolationism, it was to prevent America from cultural threats. "Devoted" and "America's Future"

by The Red, White and Blue Fund brought up the idea that there was a cultural threat from involvement with other countries. Both ads show citizens of an unidentified but clearly Arab nation burning the American flag. "Devoted" says that Santorum is a "leader in the fight against radical Islam." The link between the cultural threats that are a consequence of global activity and America's energy needs is bolstered through the advertisement "America's Future":

> *Male Voiceover: Under Barack Obama, America is spending 314 billion dollars a year on foreign oil. Funding radicals with bad intentions causing pump prices to rise drastically. Rick Santorum is the principled leader with an energy plan. Develop domestic resources; utilize natural gas, and power generation, and transportation; open drilling and build pipelines to lower costs; create jobs. Secure America. Rick Santorum for president. Red, White, and Blue Fund is responsible for the content of this ad.*

Changing America's energy plan was not just for the purpose of securing America's economic strength (as the working conservative would claim), but also to protect America from Islam. This is direct resistance to being involved with nations beyond America's borders when it meant endorsing non-traditional, non-conservative, non-Christian values. By being involved with other nations, America is, by default, helping its enemies and enhancing their culture. "Obama Bows Again" was a Gingrich sponsored advertisement, which showed the same sentiments as The Red, White, and Blue Fund's ads, that cheap energy can be obtained in America while we simultaneously diminish our enemies:

> *Obama: It means that anyone who tells you that we can drill our way out of this problem doesn't know what they're talking about or just isn't telling you the truth.*

> *On Screen Text: "I am very enthusiastic about [the Saudi] willingness to [boost oil production] and, hopefully, it will have a downward pressure on prices, which is what we want…" Energy Secretary Steven Chu*

On Screen Text: If more Saudi drilling works more American drilling works much better.

Gingrich: If you would like to have national energy—

On Screen Text: For Americans

Gingrich: [A]n American energy policy, never bow to a Saudi King and pay $2.50 a gallon, Newt Gingrich will be your candidate.

The face of the true conservative dealt with international policies based around a fear of change and the desire for the public to know that they are suspicious of any sort of political change that may occur (Edelman 2001). If there is not an advocacy for isolation, then American culture may interact with others and cultural values may, in fact, change. In some ways, these policies have a mythical component as well, as they rely on the idea that America being a superpower and culturally superior is imperative to the American way of life, and that anything else is somehow lesser.

The true conservative's myths of choice were the idea of the American Dream and a "simpler America." While the American Dream may be an idea that many people find hard to believe, it is still a common theme in political advertising. People may not believe the myth, but they most certainly want to (Edelman 1964). In campaigns, the political myth is explained by advocating for simplicity in America. The true conservative's mystification supporting simplicity reinforced other aspects of the true conservative's face. The political community is nuanced and complex, and to be ideologically pure is rather difficult in a world of nuance. By mystifying the idea of simplicity candidates could hold on to their ideological claims rather try to deal with real political situations. When candidates pushed for a simpler America, they spoke in a slower

soothing voice during the ads. Anita Perry explains what she and her husband view as the

American way of life in the ad "American Story":

> *Anita Perry: It's an old fashioned American story. I married my high school*
> *sweetheart…When Rick's term in the Air Force ended, he returned home to work*
> *with his dad and asked me to marry him. We grew up in small towns…*

Anita Perry's performance expresses how she and her husband preferred a simpler America, one

that was easier for everyone to understand; through electing her husband, America itself would

become simpler. No longer would the world be a post-industrial terror, but rather more like

Mayberry. In his advertisement "Rebuilding the America We Love" Gingrich expressed many

of the same sentiments, about how simplicity was important to the American Dream and how as

president he could help make this dream achievable:

> *Gingrich: Some people say the America we know and love is a thing of the past. I*
> *don't believe that...We can revive our economy and create new jobs…shrink*
> *government and the regulations that strangle our businesses. Throw out the tax*
> *code and replace it with one that is simple and fair…We can return power to the*
> *people and the states we live in so we will have more freedom, opportunity, and*
> *control of our lives.*

Like Perry, Gingrich portrayed a simpler America and the American story as concepts

that can be brought to government. By bringing the American way of life to government, the

process of governing is presented as more human and far less bureaucratic than it actually is.

This allows candidates to both endorse conservative ideals and attempt to hide their own

backstage practices by making America "simple" again.

The Working Conservative

What the face of the working conservative offers to the public is a performance that

promises results, often this was tied to policies based in numbers, past records, and successful

historical moments. As with the true conservative, information is rearranged and presented in a favorable manner that informs the public or enhances already presented information. Those holding the performance of the working conservative engage in less passing and covering and instead choose to subtly engage in more aggressive forms of face work, where they try to show that their face is the superior choice (Goffman [1955] 1967). This "one-upmanship" within the campaign cycle was based on candidates directly trying to be more conservative than their opponents on the same policies. The candidates would offer more tax cuts, more balanced budgets, and less government involvement in daily life to make them seem as if they were truly the most conservative. The working conservative also differs from the true conservative as the working conservative is more pragmatic. This pragmatism allows candidates to express their ability to make politically conservative policies work, and claims were often focused on legislating or ending legislation.

The working conservative did not necessarily need past political experience, but if they lacked governing experience, they needed to explain how their past employment would be effective in the executive office. In Herman Cain's advertisement "America Needs Jobs" Cain emphasized the fact that he had a long history of making jobs and helping the economy, though it was through the private sector. Cain portrayed his success as one that was political in nature. He rearranged how the public was informed of his private manner into a life of public and political service by pointing out that the economy and job growth were not going to get any better until America put "an executive into the executive office." He claimed that, if elected, he would be "America's CEO in Chief." His dramatized political encounter showed that business and

government were so similar that his personal life was, in fact, a political one (Neville-Shepard and Theye 2013).

While political policy is the most important aspect of a working conservative performance, of the ads analyzed, only those produced by Gingrich and Perry focused on policy alone. In ads like "$2.50 Plan" Newt Gingrich promised to provide Americans with gasoline costing $2.50 or less. Perry placed his policy emphasis on the idea of a part time Congress where congress would have their work hours and pay cut in half, with the hopes of forcing them to work second jobs back in their home states when not legislating ("Lazy," "Leno Ad," "Part Time Congress"). However, more often than not, the working conservative candidate held a face that believed that a smaller less involved government was the key to political success. Candidates focused on advocating for change in policy through the form of taking no action or cutting government programs as expressed by the ad "Romney Difference":

> *Romney: Let me tell you how I am going to shrink the budget. I am going to*
> *eliminate some programs. The easy one to get rid of is Obamacare. The test*
> *that I am going to apply is "[is] this program is so critical that it makes sense*
> *to borrow money from China to pay for it."*

While Romney's claim did have elements involving saving face (as he was often linked to Obamacare) the message of the advertisement was that the government stage needed to, in fact, be smaller, as he attempted to own the face of a small government. Michele Bachmann showed similar sentiments in "Waterloo," stating that she "Will. Not. Vote. To increase the debt ceiling." These policies, while not Tea Party references, do tap into the Tea Party ideology of a minimalist government to the most extreme level, where candidates were pushing not for the government to do something, but rather to make sure the government could not do anything.

While both Perry and Paul attempted to own a political policy based around cutting federal government departments, Paul based his ownership on being more conservative than Perry's initial proposal. After Rick Perry's "Oops" incident, where he forgot the third government department he would shut down, Ron Paul began producing advertisements offering to remove five departments of government ("Vote Texas," "Big Dog"). Paul began airing advertisements where he claimed he would cut the three that Rick Perry promised to end[1]: Commerce, Education, and Energy, as well as the Department of Interior and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These advertisements serve as an example of the bridge between those focused on policy for the sake of supporting a political policy and policy for supporting an image. Candidates also showed competition for political ownership and the need for working conservatism. A working conservative political policy would be effective for balancing the budget and cutting what was seen as excessive spending. Candidates may be pushing for political policies, but they are doing so not simply because they believe it is the way to govern best, but rather because they want to have a face that the public believes will, in fact, be able to enact these policies, rather than the face of a candidate who supports a larger more expansive,"big government."

The constant focus on "big government" was an attempt by candidates to see who could own the ability to control the size of the government in people's daily lives. Whoever could own the image that their policies and political effectiveness would make a smaller government possible would have a more politically conservative image, making them a better choice.

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[1] In Perry's "Leno Ad" he identified the Department of Energy as the third department he wished to cut, in an appearance that was one of a saint that will be discussed later.

The most common themes among both Super PAC and candidate sponsored advertisements were those relating to economics. When using the face of a working conservative, economics was the main focus of policy based political advertisements; the main concerns were the budget, job growth, and economic stability. America's unemployment problem was seen as an empty void in the current status of America, and one that could be filled through private industry. In "America Needs Jobs," Cain linked the lack of job growth in America to excessive government spending and an overwhelming national debt:

> Cain: The engine of economic growth is the business sector…our 15 trillion dollar national debt is killing our children's future, and it's not going to get any better until we put an executive in the executive office.

Cain's accusation that the national debt was harming job growth makes it clear that he believes government is the problem and not the solution. By calling for an "executive in the executive office," Cain also purports his own image in relation to the developments in job growth. Santorum's advertisements often spoke of his "Made in the USA" plan ("Best Chance," "Your Side"). The plan's name alone is an attempt to apply some form of symbolic prestige to the policy as it attempts to support the idea that through Santorum, American ideals can be accomplished. This was mapped out in the advertisement "Your Side":

> Male Voiceover: Rick Santorum's "Made in the USA" plan changes everything. It cuts taxes for Michigan manufacturers to zero, so we can bring back American jobs from overseas. It also cuts taxes for all workers, and cuts five trillion in spending over five years balancing the federal budget.

Here too, we see candidates endorsing the idea that government is preventing job growth and that through a candidate's proposed policy changes, the government will shrink. "Your Side" is an advertisement designed to show Santorum is capable of swiftly and effectively doing both.

While Super PAC ads put much less emphasis on job growth than candidate ads. When Super PACs did focus on job growth, they did so in a less idealistic way. Rather than depicting job growth being part of the soul of America, Super PACs chose to look at already existing jobs and actual policies in place. This allowed for both grounded impressions of candidates and bountiful attack opportunities. In "Job Creation," Make Us Great Again pointed out that under Perry's leadership, Texas had the most job growth of any state. The first point of Restore Our Future's ad "Right Experience" was that Romney "helped create thousands of jobs." Candidates not only engaged in job growth, but also showed that even prior to running for office they still held the face of a working conservative.

Winning Our Future's economic policy claims are the pure embodiment of the information within the working conservative typology. The advertisement "Prosperity" focused not only on job growth but on government spending as well:

> *Male Voiceover: Under Newt Gingrich, overall spending was slashed. Federal deficits were turned into record breaking surpluses. 11.1 million jobs were created, and unemployment dropped.*

When focusing on unemployment, the advertisement showed on screen that only 4.3% of citizens were unemployed. By also mentioning government spending and surpluses, the advertisement points out that economic concerns were not just those of employment, but also those of fiscal responsibility, a symbol of working conservatism. This helped to establish Gingrich as having the face of a working conservative, as his record lent itself to this ideal type far more than that of the true conservative, which involved much more passing to maintain. "Washington Machine" and "Big Dog," advertisements by the Paul campaign, also brought up

the idea of responsibility through large budget cuts. "Washington Machine" claimed that Paul had a plan to "cut one trillion dollars in year one, and balance the budget in three." "Big Dog" reiterated this point, saying Paul would "cut a trillion dollars in year one. That's trillion with a 'T." These policies that focused on the idea of budget cuts for the sake of responsibility contributed to the face of the working conservative. These policy framings not only proposed what were already well known political problems, but in fact, also showed that the face of the working conservative—particularly the working conservative the ad was meant to support— would be capable of solving the problem.

While it was generally the true conservative who wanted to be an isolationist, Paul's ad "Secure" advocated for isolationist policies from the frame of a working conservative:

> *Male Voiceover: Ron Paul, a veteran with a plan to keep America Secure. Protect America by securing our borders and rebuilding our defenses. Not by acting as the world's policemen, spending trillions nation building overseas. The Paul plan for security? Start protecting America's borders. Stop wasting American money. Ron Paul. Restore America now.*
>
> *Paul: I'm Ron Paul and I approve this message.*

Border security was partially for the purpose of making sure that immigrants stayed out of the country, but more importantly for the advertisements, it was to show that there was a need for America to be a strong, solitary country that did not invest in nation building. Investing in nation building and other countries did not invite new cultures into America, as the true conservative claimed, rather the working conservative feared that international activity would generate ill will toward America from those who were not receiving aid, and that the American military might be drawn into conflicts with nations that are being financially supported.

If idolatry was political, Reagan would hold a demigod status. His influence on the Republican Party and their desire to be like him has lead to some infamy (Coombs 2013). Working conservatives often chose to use the myth of Ronald Reagan, particularly Gingrich and his Super PAC Winning Our Future. In two separate advertisements, Gingrich was shown sitting next to Ronald Reagan working with him. It was made to seem that not only was Reagan endorsing Gingrich, but that Reagan's charisma and political savvy touched Gingrich and he was given access to a portion of Reagan's power. When Reagan was shown next to Gingrich, the advertisements made sure to point out that Gingrich was an inspiring, experienced leader that would lead to prosperity—just as Reagan has been made out to be.

Saints, Sinners, and Traitors

While being politically conservative was the most important aspect of the 2012 primary, candidates used other faces as well. Candidates often took the role of the saint, a semi-political character. Saints often chose to exemplify their character in non-partisan ways, and when they made mention of being conservative, it was for non-political purposes. Because political performances were beyond the hands of a single candidate, there were also ideal negative performances which were often based around the idea that a candidate was *not* conservative. This was the role of the sinner. The sinner was inauthentic, partisan, uninterested in the public, and was often far more liberal than the true or even working conservatives. This differs from the second negative performance of the traitor, as the traitor not only endorsed some liberal policies, but also intentionally betrayed the American public or voluntarily contradicted conservative principles for their own personal advancement.

The Saint

Saintship was important for candidates because it allowed them to exemplify the fact that they lived their own lives by the values they claimed to support, and that they would hold these values in public office as well. When saints wanted to be seen as Washington outsiders, they made sure their performances expressed that they were genuinely *better* than Washington insiders. Saints did their best to make it appear that candidates were more ethical, more intelligent, and more genuine than their competitors in every aspect of life.

In order to show a candidate could be identified as a saint more than their opponents, advertisements chose to place emphasis on the biography of a candidate, notably to either downplay or focus on the fact that a candidate was a politician in order to support the idea of sainthood. When showing that a candidate was not a politician, the encounters were designed so that candidate's identity was closer to that of an average human being, rather than the identity of a Washington insider. Michele Bachmann engaged in this strategy. In her advertisement "Waterloo," Bachmann identified herself as a "parent, foster mother, tax lawyer, and now a job creator," however the advertisement never referred to her as a congresswoman. "Waterloo" also showed old, faded pictures of her family. If that was not enough to humanize her, her advertisement "America's Iron Lady[2]" called her "one of our own," and included faded baby pictures of Bachmann, similar to those in "Waterloo," and the advertisement "Voices Part 2" openly had testimonial claiming that she was not a politician.

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[2] This advertisement briefly used the myth of the true conservative, showing a picture of Bachmann to Margaret Thatcher for the sake of political mythmaking.

Perry attempted to identify himself as a political outsider as well. In his late December advertisement "Part Time Congress," he opens with pictures of Bachmann, Paul, Gingrich and Santorum with a voiceover asking, "If Washington is the problem, then why trust a congressman to fix it?" This made the message of the rest of the advertisement clear: Perry was not a political insider, did not have insider associations, and was not corrupt like many political insiders were. While campaigning, he made an appearance on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno.* During the commercial break he aired an advertisement in Iowa known as "Leno Ad." In this ad, Perry showed a video of his failure during the "Oops" moment in debate leading to public humiliation. He followed the video by finishing the list, claiming the third department to be cut would be the department of energy, followed by him saying, "You know a lot of us have lost our train of thought before, but not a lot of us have done it on national TV." Perry attempted to use this advertisement as a method of avoidance, downplaying or justifying failures in one's performance (Goffman [1955] 1967). This avoidance served not only as a method of damage control for his campaign, but also to make it into a humanizing moment showing he held the face of a saint by being just like the common man and not a political elite.

As both Bachmann and Perry claimed to be political outsiders, they engaged in performances that were able to place focus on their positive traits, notably those of Saintship. This allowed candidates to see the faces of saints and know what these saints consisted of internally. These advertisements were in part biographical, and by being biographical, they were able to not only establish candidates as saints, but also to limit how they can be presented by themselves and others (Goffman 1964). The biographical claims made in advertisements do

have some inconsistencies with other aspects of political campaigning. One emerging aspect of

campaigning is the need for candidates to produce their own personal memoirs (Neville-Shepard

and Theye 2013). In memoirs produced by 2012 primary runners, the candidates made sure to

make note of the fact that their life was one of hardship and overcoming adversity and

challenges, and that is what made them saints rather than being outsiders (Neville-Shepard and

Theye 2013). In campaign advertisements, it was not hardship that made individuals Washington

outsiders, but rather it was having different cultural values and not being incorporated into large

political institutions such as the executive branch.

Hall and Hewitt (1970) made it clear that no one truly knows what "American Values"

are, but they are still useful for talking points. This was not lost on saints in the 2012 primary.

Oftentimes candidates spoke of having values or being by guided by principles. It was never

directly explained what these values and principles were. While Perry did claim to be guided by

"hard work, faith, and family" in an ad titled "Values," and Rand Paul did explain that his father

taught him the value of, "faith, family, and the constitution" in "Principled Leadership." But

neither Perry nor Rand Paul bothered to explain how these principles actually mattered or

affected their political practices. The 2012 campaign memoirs often shared a similar problem,

where values were mentioned but it was never revealed what they truly consisted of (Neville-

Shepard and Theye 2013). In advertisements, the idea of "faith" was presented less for the

purpose of showing that candidates believed they had a duty to the public, but rather how they

were guided in life and how their faith influenced choices. This contrasts from their memoirs, in

which campaigns expressed faith as what guided them through their decision making (Neville-

Shepard and Theye 2013). Instead of faith, candidates argued it was being "principled" that would guide them through their decisions. Being "principled" was something that The Red, White, and Blue Fund emphasized greatly. While it was not only Santorum's Super PAC that talked of being principled it was the primary value used in many of the Red, White, and Blue Fund's advertisements, such as "Pride":

> *Male Voiceover: He's the principled conservative. Rick Santorum is determined and will never waver.*
>
> *Santorum: What wins in America are bold ideas, sharp contrasts, and a plan that includes everyone. A plan that includes people from all across the economic spectrum. A plan that says we will work together to get America to work.*
>
> *Male Voiceover: Rick Santorum, an American we can trust. Red, White, and Blue Fund is responsible for the content of this ad.*

"Pride" shows the importance of being principled, as it allowed Santorum to identify himself as someone who was guided enough to follow through on plans that would be inclusive to all Americans.

Candidates produced images of themselves as socially and politically conservative, and by doing so they had "values." If they were to be anything other than conservative, they would have been amoral, but because they do have morals, they are unfaltering and unwavering as they are guided through their legislative practices. This was a point brought up both by Perry and Paul. Perry mentioned it in his advertisement "Values":

> *Perry: As a son of tenant farmers from the West Texas town of Paint Creek, I learned the values of hard work, faith and family. I took those values with me when I served our country as a pilot in the Air Force…The values I learned served me well as Governor of Texas, and will continue to guide me as President.*

And his wife Anita Perry did so as well in the advertisement "American Story":

> *Anita Perry: We grew up in small towns, raised with Christian values. Values we still believe in. And we know Washington D.C. could use some of that.*

Ron Paul's advertisement "Staying on the Right Path" also shared similar concerns about being guided by principles to the fullest extent possible. Marcie Holt and another testimonial from a patient named Diane Wilson explain:

> *Holt: I love the fact that he hasn't changed in all these years. Ron's still the same guy, saying the same things…*

> *Wilson: It's not hard for someone who is a Christian and truly believes to stay on the right path. And I think that's what sort of person Ron is.*

The ability to live one's life by values and principles as saints has a borderline evangelical quality to it. These principles are to be brought to Washington and saints are to spread their values in an infectious manner to other politicians. Saints are often presented as candidates that are expected to influence the presentations of others with the hope of reshaping policies and political activity.

The most extreme aspect of mythmaking was done when candidates were attempting to show the face of a saint. Candidates did not compare themselves to the metaphorical Christ that is Ronald Reagan, but to the actual savior of the Christian faith. Restore Our Future attempted to engage in this with the advertisement "Saved." The ad was testimony of Robert Gay, a past business partner of Romney's. Gay spoke of the time when Romney helped find his lost daughter by temporarily shutting down their company in order to find the girl. At one point Gay said, "Mitt's done a lot of things that people say are nearly impossible," and the end of the ad shows Mitt looking downward, as a glowing halo surrounds his head. This is a common image used in

paintings of Christ where the halo is not an actual golden ring, but rather a spherical light that illuminates the face.

While Restore Our Future may have produced "Saved," Paul and RevPAC incorporated some form of Christ-like imagery into almost every advertisement they produced. In his own ads, Paul was portrayed as the last hope that could save America, while this is common in all advertising, only Paul's ads promised that he was "incorruptible," "he won't falter," he was capable of "bring[ing] peace" to America, and above the problems of the political machine. "Plastic Men" by RevPAC took the Christ-like imagery even further. In the advertisement, the voiceover pointed out that "everything he has predicted has come true" as a magazine showed a picture of Paul with "The Prophet" written over his head. This godlike image Paul gave himself allowed him to support his other images as a strong, pure, and Christian leader in a manner so extreme that one wonders if it is based on any "real" candidate and if a man named Ron Paul even exists at all.

The conservative saint must have strong, principled, Christian values, meaning that one will never change policies or positions under any circumstance. Being guided by values was a zero-sum game. If candidates were truly saints as well as conservatives, their opinions would never change. If any action ever endorsed a liberal policy in any way, a candidate was without principles. Otherwise they would be a sinner.

The Sinner

In many ways the sinner is the reflexive opposite of the true conservative and the saint. A candidate would take on the face of being the sinner against his or her will, through continuous

acts of discrediting by his or her opponents. Attacks made toward candidates were based in

exposing a character's blemishes rather than positive performances based in exposing a

candidate's prestige. Rather than being conservative, bold, and uncompromising, the sinner is

timid and often liberal. The primary non-referential economic critique of sinners was focused on

the concern that if elected, candidates would work to expand the size of the federal government.

Sinners were accused of working toward policies that created a larger government with more

spending. Focusing on spending and earmarks was particularly popular when targeting Rick

Santorum due to past claims that he was proud of the earmarks he put in bills ("Difference,"

"Proud," "Never").

While Santorum was attacked for his government spending, other candidates were

discredited with the threat that the expansion of government would lead to a lack of individual

autonomy. Romney was discredited for expanding the government when the public was

reminded of his contributions toward Obamacare; while Gingrich could not be directly linked to

Obamacare, his past support of health insurance mandates exposed him to similar criticisms.

Oftentimes, the size of government was not related to specific concerns for debt and spending,

but was presented as a concern for the autonomy of individuals. These were logical appeals

regarding individual autonomy and the size of government. RevPAC's advertisement "Plastic

Men" brought up similar concerns about Perry as he "tried to force girls in Texas to be injected

with an STD vaccine," while showing a cartoon picture of Perry dressed as a mad scientist. The

expansion of government would mean that political stages would become vaster as well; there

would be more room for bureaucracies involved in the daily lives of voters. Political affairs are

often seen as performances that the audience may be forced to engage in at certain periods, but they do not dominate their lives (Hall 1972; Edelman 1964). Threats of a "big government" that break these boundaries are proposed to scare voters into believing that the government will be involved in more aspects of their lives, and as a result, they will have to become more engaged with the government.

The Traitor

Like the sinner, the traitor was formed through the act of discrediting not through blemishes, but rather of in-group/out-group concerns. Goffman (1963) made note of the fact that members of in-groups not only naturally belonged, but those in out-groups not only did not fit in, but also often worked against the in-group. The face of the traitor was not simply one lacking positive personal qualities, but the performance of the traitor was of one who went out of their way to intentionally contradict the practices offered in conservative performances. While most treacherous acts were based in concepts such as mudslinging and the political backstage, there were other attacks that were based in political liberalism as well. These attacks differ from when candidates play the part of the sinner as they show candidates embracing the highest level of hypocrisy possible. Santorum was known for being one of the most pro-life candidates, which was part of his political appeal to many social conservatives (Coombs 2013). Santorum took pride in this stance but had actions that directly contradicted it. Restore Our Future took advantage of these contradictions in the advertisement "Own Words":

> *Female Voiceover: Santorum says he is the principled conservative, but that's not how he voted. Here are Santorum's own words on voting to fund Planned Parenthood.*

Santorum: While I have a personal moral objection to it, even though I d—I don't support it, that I voted for bills that included it.

Female Voiceover: 20 years in Washington changed Santorum's principles.

Despite moral objections, Santorum failed to spread his core principles into all his policies. What the rest of Santorum's political history consisted of was irrelevant. Santorum pushed for legislation that supported Planned Parenthood, and that single infringement was enough to bring about attempts to discredit him as a traitor. "Own Words" suggested that Santorum would compromise his values, and therefore he could not support a working conservatism, and if he is without values, he might as well be a liberal.

Mudslinging was uncommon in the primary. However, mudslinging was still used, and when it was, the attacks were unapologetic and aimed toward traitors. Winning Our Future produced an advertisement called "Think You Know Mitt?" that focused on Romney's past position on abortion in a particular fashion:

Female Voiceover: Think you know Mitt? He claims to be pro-life but here's what he told voters of Massachusetts when he was running for governor:

Romney: I will preserve and protect a woman's right to choose and am devoted and dedicated to honoring my word in that regard…And with regards to this issue of age of consent? It is currently 18 years old if one wants to have an abortion younger than that, one must have the permission of one parent and if a parent doesn't go along one can go to a judge or justice to get that permission.

Female Voiceover: He said what?

Romney: And if a parent doesn't go along one can go to a judge or justice to get that permission.

> *Female Voiceover: You heard right, Mitt Romney thinks a judge should be able to give permission to a minor to get an abortion over the objection of a parent.*

Winning Our Future attacked Romney because he claimed government officials can override the decisions of parents, and if Romney has his way, the next parent who could be disregarded might be the viewer. These political attacks that were purely slanderous were also accompanied by advertisements based in projection and deflection.

Candidates would put out advertisements that accused their opponents of mudslinging. The irony of these accusations is that they are, in themselves, mudslinging. In Gingrich's advertisement "We Deserve Solutions," he said, "We want and deserve solutions. Others seem to be more focused on attacks rather than moving the country forwards." Gingrich's indirect mudslinging was based in the accusation of mudslinging. Rick Santorum's advertisement "Rombo" embodies this accusation perfectly. The advertisement features a Romney look-a-like armed with a paintball gun that shoots balls of mud. The man who is supposed to be Romney roams through an empty warehouse shooting at large cardboard cut outs of Santorum that never seem to hit the targets. A voiceover in the ad claims that, "Mitt Romney's negative attack machine is back. On full throttle. This time Romney is firing his mud at Santorum." Santorum made the attack with the hopes that the vitriol of mudslinging and using Super PACs would leave viewers frothing at the mouth. But the ads from the "negative attack machine" were not actually mudslinging, rather they were other forms of attacks.

The use of deflective mudslinging was less for the purpose of making a political attack, and more for the sake of covering, the act of burying one's activity to hide it from the public (Goffman 1964). The defensive mudslinging involved allowed candidates to present themselves

with one of the most criticized aspects of politics, while performing the very same act. As Goffman (1959) explained, bringing the backstage to public viewing is a genuinely bad idea. But that does not stop it from happening within political advertising. When attacking a candidate's past record or personal associations, oftentimes the backstage is brought forward. Not every attack based on associations or a candidate's record would be considered bringing the backstage forward. Only the advertisements that reveal content that was meant to be partially or entirely hidden from the public can truly qualify. While candidates are criticized for public policy support, this is different than a candidate taking money from a large organization or working with other politicians while in Washington D.C. By working on the backstage, candidates were presented as holding a different political manner, meaning that the public is expected to respond differently, treating candidates as traitors rather than as sinners. This was a particularly popular focus for ads that were based in personal attacks or on a candidate's affiliations.

In Super PAC advertisements, there was less of a focus on attacking the backstage. The backstage was attacked in two advertisements used by Restore Our Future and one by Winning Our Future. Winning Our Future's advertisement "Questionable" attacks Romney's record in the private sector, accusing him of never being interested in job creation, and being more focused toward monetary gains. In "Smiling," Restore Our Future attacked Gingrich for taking money from Freddie Mac, pharmaceutical companies, and political inconsistencies:

> *Female Voiceover: Newt has a ton of baggage. Like the fact that Gingrich was fined $300,000 for ethics violations, or that he took at least 1.6 million dollars from Freddie Mac just before the meltdown. Then there's the $37 million Gingrich took from healthcare and industry groups. And on the issues? He's been on all sides…Gingrich even teamed up with Nancy Pelosi and Al Gore on global warming.*

Super PAC advertisements brought out the backstage to imply that candidates had ulterior

motives, rather than simply being corrupt. These exposures embraced the idea that a candidate's

loyalty to a political party was based in his or her own ideology, rather than one that is meant to

help the party as a whole (Goffman 1959; Edelman 1964). Romney's disinterest in job creation

and Newt Gingrich being open to bribery showed that they were less interested in the American

people and more interested in themselves.

Gingrich was the main target of candidate sponsored advertisements as well. Here too,

Gingrich was constantly targeted for his backroom associations, particularly in taking 1.6 million

dollars from Freddie Mac right before the housing crisis began ("Florida Families," "Nevada

Families," "History Lesson") and taking money from healthcare organizations while working at

a think tank ("Serial Hypocrisy"). Gingrich was also constantly accused of working on the

backstage to the point of corruption. However, when attacks on Gingrich were made by

candidates rather than Super PACs the discrediting acts presented the backstage in a different

manner. Rather than simply being corrupt, these advertisements proposed that a candidate's

behavior was harmful to the entire American political system. Ron Paul's advertisement "Newt

Gingrich: Serial Hypocrisy" begins with Gingrich talking about the political environment

followed by a series of attacks on Gingrich regarding how he contributed to it:

> *Gingrich: If you want to put people in jail, let's look at the politicians that created the environment. The politicians who profited from the environment.*
>
> *[The politicians who profited from the environment is replayed three times]*
>
> *Male Voiceover: Newt Gingrich on the defense for taking 1.5 million bucks after he left congress…*

> *Bob Beckel: A think tank founded by Newt Gingrich collected at least $37 million. A group that supports individual mandates…*

> *Different Male voiceover: Everything that Gingrich railed against when he was in the house he went the other way on when he got paid to go the other way.*

Romney's ad "History Lesson" took a similar approach:

> *Newscaster: Good Evening. Newt Gingrich, who came to power after preaching a higher standard in American politics…tonight he has on his own record the judgment of his peers, Democrat and Republican alike…found him guilty of ethics violations…several of them raised questions about his future effectiveness.*

Not only did this attack go after Gingrich as a traitor, but it also reveals that the backstage is a place where corruption is known and accepted, and implied that if Gingrich were to be elected president, it would only increase the amount of political corruption in Washington.

Gingrich was also attacked for working with Nancy Pelosi, particularly on the topic of climate change and UN related legislation that would help promote China's one child policy ("Whoops," "Risk (FL)," "Desperate"). But it was not only Gingrich who was accused of working on the political backstage with Democrats. In Michele Bachmann's ad "America's Iron Lady," the announcer boasted that she did not make deals with Obama, unlike other republicans[3].

In itself, there is nothing wrong with working with politicians on the other side of the political aisle. It is often necessary for legislation to pass through Congress, but by portraying bipartisan activity as something that was meant to be secretive; candidates can be seen as untrustworthy and unloyal to a political party. When accusations of bipartisanship are made, it is less important that candidates are attempting to legislate, but rather the moral implications of

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[3] No particular Republicans were specified.

those associations are what are of concern. Working with a Democrat on the backstage is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of treason. This treason is one that is harmful to the state of the nation and its political processes. By working with liberals, traitors are empowering them within the government, and by doing so are making the government worse and a destructive force toward the American people.

Gingrich was not the only target of attacks associating candidates with the backstage. The most unique incident where the backstage was brought out was Rick Santorum's ad "Rombo." "Rombo" is noteworthy, as it not only attacks Romney for fundraising, but it openly attacks him for having a Super PAC and using the Super PAC funding to attack Santorum. While Santorum does intentionally exclude his associations with the Red, White, and Blue Fund from the advertisement, it is an open admission that candidates are capable of working with Super PACs. Like other attacks in candidate sponsored advertisements, "Rombo" focused on the idea of candidates harming the political process, though it was not also delegated to accuse Romney of treason. The use of a Super PAC suggests the possibility of corruption, presented in a manner that harms a political system through bribery. By using actual mud, the use of Super PACs is presented as a literally "dirty" practice, but it is not considered one that is extortive of the American population as attacks toward Gingrich were.

The purpose of revealing the backstage is to expose the secretive activities of candidates to the public. Candidates are not simply associated with other organizations but rather a broader, corrupt political machine. This is impractical, but typical of political advertisements. The backstage emerges when candidates want to show the moral failures of other candidates; their

greed, corruption, and unethical behavior. Super PACs expose social and political backstages not to discredit candidates through accusations of corruption, but rather to focus on showing that a candidate does not have the public's best interest in mind, and are running based on their own personal agenda. Candidates attack each other for their records and associations to bring new information to the public. This information makes claims that the political system is inherently corrupt.

Admitting candidates are capable of working with Super PACs, Democrats, corporate interests, and lobbyists, while intentionally raising their own pay during economic stagnation, the primary candidates did the unthinkable: they destroyed the secrecy regarding the backstage. No longer is the political backstage of Republicans separate from the corporate backstage or the backstage used by liberals. The 2012 advertisements link all the backstages together. By revealing that the backstages are partially, or possibly entirely, one and the same, the candidates show not only their own party's corruption, but that they are no better than any other political or corporate organization. This exposure also means that the backstage, where new impressions are formed and cultivated prior to public appearances, has been revealed. Doing this allows candidates to suggest that their opponents are using the backstage to build impressions that hide their corruption and destructive behavior. While this may hurt the Republican Party as a whole, the candidates seem relatively unmoved by the long term consequences of the activity. The shift in focus of primaries toward winning a nomination at any cost creates counterintuitive political activity as long as it allows for candidates to move on to the next step.

It does not matter if candidates and their Super PACs do not reveal their own backstage activity, because another candidate or Super PAC will. By attacking each other's backstage behaviors, each candidate, as well as the political institution's behavior, has become exposed. It may be that in order to ensure a more level playing field, each candidate must expose the backstage of his or her opponents. If a candidate's backstage is revealed and his opponent's stage is not, then the candidate stands out as the only one who is involved with political corruption, rather than everyone being involved. To candidates, the ability to say that they are not the only guilty party may be a way to excuse questionable activity.

Beyond backstage exposures and mudslinging, accusations of treason were also based in political myths. Edelman's (1988; 1964) concept that the political myth is unbreakable and that going against it is a social taboo is the base of some performances as a sinner. The condemnation of candidates through myths comes from accusations that they choose to go against the myths. Because Gingrich was so close to the man worshipped by the Republican Party, there needed to be an attempt to separate the two of them. Restore Our Future performed this task in "Continue to Fail":

> *Female Voiceover: In debates Newt Gingrich likes to talk about Ronald Reagan…but here is what Newt said about Reagan's leadership when Reagan was actually president.*

> *Gingrich: Measured against the scale and challenge of the Soviet Empire's challenge the Reagan administration has failed, is failing, [and] will continue to fail. President Reagan is clearly failing.*

This attack on Gingrich for his criticism of Reagan is noteworthy. Because of Reagan's mythic status, it is nearly impossible to criticize him without a negative backlash, as no one who

supports the myth will believe any criticism (Edelman 1964). Yet now candidates also have

access to Super PACs, where they can promote images with fewer risks. Only through Super

PACs can this image production be effectively made by a candidate. By revealing that Gingrich

attempted to discredit Ronald Reagan, he has committed an act of sacrilege that cannot be

forgiven. This advertisement would not be possible for a candidate to officially produce, as any

mention of Romney in an advertisement accusing Gingrich of this heretical behavior may leave

negative images of Romney for exposing something that might in fact be a weakness in the

Republican legend. By revealing everything that a politician could want hidden: their corruption,

their associations, their hypocrisy, and most importantly, their treason, the traitor was by far the

most damning role a candidate could have taken on, making it the most popular for attacks and

the most necessary to defend against.

Region and Timing in Political Ads

Thielman and Wilhite (1998) found that as campaigns go onward they do in fact become

more negative. However, it may not be the length of the campaign, but rather *when* during the

campaign ads are aired that influences the negativity of advertisements. This would most

certainly be true of the 2012 Republican Primary. During the earliest months of the primary,

particularly in December, advertisements were overwhelmingly positive, focusing on images of

saints and true conservatives. However, in January, when primary voting actually began,

candidates and Super PAC ads were overwhelmingly filled with negative images as candidates

began to accuse each other of being sinners and traitors. Appendix E shows this to be particularly

true of Super PAC ads which were more negative. During March, a great deal of the negative

imagery from earlier in the campaign had vanished. While many ads did contain criticism, the advertisements were primarily those using the image of working conservatives, only at the very end of the campaign did policy proposals become prominent in campaign advertisements. While no region of the United States was without both Super PAC and candidate sponsored advertisements, states in the Midwest and the South received the overwhelming majority of all advertisements. In January and February, Super PACs placed a great deal of emphasis on the South (Christenson and Smidt 2014). It was at this time that candidates also began to air fewer advertisements overall. Appendix F shows that during January and February, candidates aired fewer advertisements than Super PACs. These were also the months where the South received the majority of advertisement focus, meaning that Southern states were disproportionately impacted by Super PACs.

Because the South was impacted by Super PACs more than other regions, those who lived within the South also were also exposed to more negative advertisements. This shows the importance of Kang's (2013:1919) concept of Super PACS serving as "alter-egos" to candidates. As candidates stepped down, their alter-egos would emerge and supplement the campaign with the use of negative advertising. This contrasts the Southern states from those in the Midwest, particularly Iowa, where positive imagery was much more common. While this is highly likely due to advertisements being aired during the months where voting occurred, it also shows that candidates and Super PACs have different expectations of different regions of the United States: The South, which tends to be more conservative, is believed to be more accepting of negative political advertisements than the Midwest.

There is a link between candidate performance types, region, and timing however further understanding calls for future exploration. Different performances within the typology may resonate with different regional demographics, which would expand upon the importance and depth of impression management during political campaigns, particularly when Super PACs become involved.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There are a few limitations to this research, but overall the study of political impression management in a single campaign created a clear understanding of how Super Political Action Committees (PACs) and candidates cooperate to construct images in political television ads. However, an in-depth comparison between campaigns would also be useful. As mentioned in the methods section, third party Super PAC ads were not analyzed, as they deserve a full separate analysis. These third party Super PACs may have their own set of ideal types and could be compared to those of the candidate and Super PACs they are connected to. While ethnographic content analysis may be able to analyze the images created by campaigns, it is not a substitute for ethnographic fieldwork on the campaign trail or in advertising firms, which should be the next step in the sociological research of political campaign advertisements and Super PACs. By following campaigns and advertising firms, a stronger understanding of what messages and information the creators of these television ads truly wish to present might be understood. This could be complemented by analyzing the public's reception and interpretation of said ads to test the successful reception of messages. While television ads are still where campaigns spend the majority of their finances, this may not always be the case. In future years, internet advertising may surpass television, and when that occurs, the same typologies will still be usable as a guiding force. Candidates and Super PACs will still be working on impression management for political campaigns, making the change a new allocation of resources rather than an overhaul in candidate performances and messages.

Because Super PAC ads aired primarily when primary votes occurred, the effects were twofold: First, candidates were able to free up their funding for purposes beyond advertisements, which brought about more fundraising opportunities. Second, candidates held less accountability for advertisements, particularly negative advertisements, when the general public was allowed to vote. This meant that candidates were able to capitalize on the value of negative advertisements during the most critical point during the primary campaign, while minimizing the consequences of using Stand By Your Ad (SBYA) statements. However more analysis on the relationship between region and Super PAC advertisements is needed. It is unclear if Southern states being the main target of Super PAC advertisements was merely a coincidence or if there is an additional need to avoid SBYA claims in the South. Different regions of the United States may be more open to different character performance types, and if the South is more accepting of attack advertisements, then it only makes sense that that is where Super PACs place their resources to capitalize on the benefits of negative ads while reducing liability.

Through the typology I formulated in this study, candidates arranged political information in order to frame themselves as having the face of one of five candidate types: the true conservative, the working conservative, the saint, the sinner, and the traitor. When playing the role of the true conservative, candidates talked about how they were ideologically pure and would stand for conservative values, as the working conservative offered concrete results from said values. As the name of Ronald Reagan and the American Dream were used for support, both promised to take America back from liberals and conservatives who did not follow through. Meanwhile, the saints showed their exemplary lives to the public offering a trustworthy

politician in office who could handle the presidency. As candidates began to discredit each other in later months, through casting others sinners who were weak and traitors that were deceptive. These performances are "ideal types" and often do not purely appear on the political front stage. Often candidates use components from multiple performance types at a single time and will engage in all performances at some point during campaigns. There is little question whether Super PACs designed to support candidates did in fact do so. Super PACs designed political encounters that would enhance or compliment the performances of candidates. The typology I developed shows not only the shift on the front stage, but the expansion of the backstage because of the influence of Super PACS. The reciprocal nature of the political front and backstages is altered as there are now new players involved gathering information and involved with political organizing in the back, as new characters take on more control over the images involved in the front.

The significance of this study on the newly introduced Super PACs into campaigns is that it specifically shows how they allow candidates to interact with each other in new ways that change their ad performances. Goffman's ideas of impression management, particularly in relationship to face work, show that information and ideas are arranged and presented in order to change how people respond or feel regarding ideas and individuals, and this is exactly what advertisements are: a planned and structured presentation of information with the hopes of allowing viewers to respond in a desired manner. Peter M. Hall's meso-level symbolic interactionist analysis, combined with ethnographic content analysis, allows for cultural artifacts, such as political ads, to be used as a way to indicate how individuals, institutions, and large

political organizations interact with each other. In the case of political campaigns, advertisements become the way candidate campaigns and Super PACs send and respond to messages to each other and the public. Because Super PACs are not directly linked to candidates, the similarities and cooperation in political impression management techniques between Super PACs and candidates shows that even without working together, a precise political performance can be constructed. Through Super PACS, candidates can now attack each other with less liability and more resources. Potentially unlimited funds, with a now reduced liability, allow campaigns to make more drastic attempts at the alteration of political impressions and provide more opportunities to do so as well. The existence of Super PACs will continue to fuel negative campaign advertisements, and there is no sign of Super PACs losing their ability to influence campaigns any time soon.

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APPENDIX A

CODE SHEET

General Questions

1. Candidate/Super PAC:_____

2. Commercial ID: _____

3. Length of Commercial (in seconds):_____

4. Date of ad _____

5. What Regions Was the Ad Aired in? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. North East
    2. Midwest
    3. West
    4. South
    5. N/A

6. Is the advertisement an image or an issue ad?
    1. Issues
    2. Images
    3. Issues, with some images used
    4. Images, with some issues used

Targeting

7. Format
    1. Documentary
    2. Video clip/music video
    3. Testimonial
    4. Introspection
    5. Issue Statement
    6. Stages Press Conference
    7. Opposition focused
    8. Issue Dramatization
    0. Other (specify) _____

8. Who is the ad focused on?
    1. Candidate-Positive Focused
    2. Negative Focused
    3. Candidate-Positive, but attacks are made
    4. Negative Focused, but positive images are shown

9. If there is an attack made, who makes the attack?
    1. The Candidate
    2. The Surrogate
    3. Anonymous announcer
    4. No attack

10. If a negative attack is made who is focused on? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Opponent
    2. Obama/Democrats

11. If an attack is made on Obama/the Democrats what is the purpose or nature of the attack?
(Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Attack on personal characteristics of opponent.
    2. Attack on issue stands/consistency of opponent.
    3. Attack on opponent's group affiliations or associations.
    4. Attack on opponent's background/qualifications.
    5. Attack on opponent's performance in past offices/positions.

12. If an attack is made on competing Republicans what is the purpose or nature of the attack?
(Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Attack on personal characteristics of opponent.
    2. Attack on issue stands/consistency of opponent.
    3. Attack on opponent's group affiliations or associations.
    4. Attack on opponent's background/qualifications.
    5. Attack on opponent's performance in past offices/positions.

13. What types of attacks were made?
    1. Vote against a candidate, not for one
    2. Direct comparisons to candidates
    3. Indirect comparisons to candidates

14. What is the dominant appeal within the ad?
    1. Logical
    2. Emotional

15. Content of appeals in ad (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Emphasis on partisanship of candidate
    2. Issue-related: Candidate's issue concern
    3. Issue-related: Policy Reference
    4. Personal characteristics of candidate
    5. Linking a candidate w/ specific character

16. What are the main topics in the advertisement? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Competency and the presidency
    2. Charisma and the presidency
    3. Calling for changes
    4. Emphasizing optimism for the future
    5. Speaking to "traditional values"
    6. Appearing to represent the philosophical center of the party.
    7. Consulting or negotiating with world leaders
    8. Endorsements from the party or other leaders
    9. Emphasizing a candidate's accomplishments
    10. Depending on surrogates to speak
    11. Taking the offensive position on an issue
    12. Attacking the record of Obama
    13. Attacking the record of another primary candidate
    14. Other_____

Image Questions

17. In the ad, is the candidate endorsed by another party member?
    0. No
    1. Yes

18. Can American symbols be seen within the Ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

18a. If yes, please mark present or absent for the following:
    1. Flag
    2. National Colors
    3. Famous American Landscapes
    4. National Bird (Eagle)
    5. Famous documents (such as constitution)
    6. Representations of prior president/famous figures
    7. Other_____

19. Were there any images or references to religion and God made in the ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

19a. Were any religious images used within ads? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Directly mentioning the Judeo-Christian God
    2. Crosses, churches, and traditional Christian symbols
    3. Suggestions of ungodliness or rejecting religious values

4. Holiday greetings
5. Positive references to Islam and Sharia Law
6. Negative references to Islam and Sharia Law
6. Positive references to Judaism
7. Negative references to Judaism

20. Was there a reference to the tea party?
    0. No
    1. Yes

20a. Was the reference associating the candidate with the tea party?
    1. The tea party was referenced, but no links were made
    2. The tea party was referenced and linked to the candidate
    3. The tea party was referenced, and linked to an opponent(s)

21. Who is speaking? (Code for dominant speaker)
    1. Candidate
    2. Other office holder/politician
    3. Competing candidate
    4. Democrat
    5. Non Government Celebrity
    6. Family Member
    7. Announcer
    8. Other/Combination_____

22. Does the candidate appear in the ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

[If answered no to 22 skip to 23]

22a. Is the candidate usually (Code for dominant expression)
    1. Smiling
    2. Attentive/Serious
    3. Frowning/Glaring
    4. Other

22b. Rate of Speech
    1. Slow
    2. Moderate
    3. Fast
    4. The candidate does not speak

22c. Dress Code
    1. Formal
    2. Casual
    3. Varied/unclear

23. Does the candidate's family appear in the ad?
    1. Spouse
    2. Children
    3. Spouse and children.
    4. Other
    5. No family in the ad

24. What Candidate Characteristics are emphasized in the ad? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Honesty/Integrity
    2. Toughness/Strength
    3. Warmth/Compassion
    4. Competency
    5. Performance/Success
    6. Aggressiveness
    7. Activeness
    8. Qualifications

Issue Questions

25. Is the term "values" used in the ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

25a. Were any specific values mentioned or implied?
    0. No
    1. Yes

25b. If yes, was the main value spoken about: _____

26. Which of the following issues are discussed within the advertisement? (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)
    1. Economic freedom/regulation concerns
    2. Religious liberty/freedom of worship
    3. Foreign policy
    4. Military policy
    5. Healthcare

    6. Gay rights
    7. Reproductive Rights
    8. Women's Rights
    9. Other_____

27. What is the dominant issue emphasized in the ad: _____

28. If Obamacare/The ACA is mentioned how is it referenced?
    0. There is no reference of Obamacare or the ACA
    1. The policy is referred to as Obamacare
    2. The policy is referred to as the ACA

29. Are fear appeals in the ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

30. Are political promises made in the ad?
    0. There are no promises made in the ad
    1. There are implicit promises in the ad
    2. There are explicit promises in the ad

30a. Was the word promise used in the ad?
    0. No
    1. Yes

30b. What promises were made: _____

APPENDIX B

CANDIDATE SPONSORED ADVERTISEMENTS

Mitt Romney
Wrong Choice
Never
Florida Families
Character
History Lesson
Romney Difference
Nevada Families

Rick Santorum
Say What?
Your Side
Rombo
Easy Answer
This Man
Best Chance

Newt Gingrich
Winning the Argument*
Rebuilding the America We Love
Christmas Greeting
$2.50 Plan
Obama Bows Again
We Deserve Solutions

Herman Cain
America Needs Jobs

Ron Paul
Staying on the Right Path
Big Dog
The One
Newt Gingrich: Serial Hypocrisy
He Served
Washington Machine
Principled Leadership
Conviction
Vote Texas
Secure

Rick Perry
A Doer, Not a Talker
Part Time Congress
Leno Ad
Values
American Story
President of Honor
Lazy

Michele Bachmann
Voices Part 2
Waterloo
America's Iron Lady

All advertisements can be found on the Stanford Political Communications Lab web page.

*The advertisement is misspelled as Wining the Argument on the PCL web page.

APPENDIX C

SUPER PAC ADVERTISEMENTS

Restore Our Future
Facts
Saved
Whoops
Smiling
Risk
Proud
Desperate
Own Words
Continue to Fail
Right Experience

Winning Our Future
Questionable
Newt On Jobs
Its Time to Choose Newt (30s)
Its Time to Choose Newt (60s)
Think You Know Mitt?
Best Friends
Prosperity

Red, White, and Blue Fund
Trust*
Pride*
The Only One
America's Future
Vital Decisions
Devoted

Revolution PAC
Plastic Men**

Make Us Great Again
Difference
Job Creation

Keep Conservatives United
KCU-Budget-c4**

Our Destiny
Someone
Quotes
Two

Unless otherwise specified, advertisements can be found on the Stanford Political Communications Lab web page.

*Advertisements are attributed to candidate, but are produced by Super PACs.
** Advertisements cannot be found on the PCL database, but can be found on YouTube.

APPENDIX D

ADVERTISEMENTS USED FOR INTERCODER RELIABILITY

Candidate Advertisements
Leno Ad
Rombo
America Needs Jobs
Rebuilding the America We Love
Florida Families
Conviction
America's Iron Lady
President of Honor

Super PAC Advertisements
Two
Smiling
KCU-Budget-c4
Own Words
Right Experience
Someone

APPENDIX E

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ADS

Tone of Ad	Total Ads	Super PAC Ads	Candidate Ads
Candidate Positive	28.57%	16.67%	37.50%
Candidate Negative	25.71%	36.67%	17.50%
Candidate Positive with Negative Elements	28.57%	30.00%	27.50%
Candidate Negative with Positive Elements	17.14%	16.67%	17.50%

APPENDIX F

CHRONOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN FOR ADVERTISEMENTS

Initial Air Date	Total Ads	Super PAC Ads	Candidate Ads
July-November 2011	18.57%	10.00%	25.00%
December 2011	31.43%	20.00%	40.00%
January 2012	20.00%	33.33%	10.00%
February 2012	18.57%	26.67%	12.50%
March-April 2012	11.43%	10.00%	12.50%