THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION UPON THE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN THE 1960, 1964 AND 1968 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DONNA A. BREVAK

1970

MAR 17 1999

MAR 12 2001
03130

APR 06 2001
04270

R-054

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION UPON THE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN THE 1960, 1964 AND 1968 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

By

Donna A. Brevak

This thesis examines the impact of television upon the image of the Republican and Democratic candidates in the 1960, 1964 and 1968 Presidential elections.

Through survey data, it has been determined that television does have the potential audience to create an impact on the image of a candidate in a campaign. This is because the public does depend heavily on television as a credible source for information and news.

Since the potential does exist, it is up to the political candidate to make use of the television medium in order to create an image. There are five elements considered in the thesis: (1) Performance, (2) Political role, (3) Personal image, (4) Situation in which the public figure is shown, and (5) Preconceptions of the candidate which are held by the public.

In the 1960 campaign, these elements combined to give John F. Kennedy a very positive image. He was the war

hero, Pulitzer Prize winner, family man and colorful senator. Though he was youthful in age, he established an image of competence through his appearances on television. Kennedy's staff presented their candidate in his most successful moments in life in a variety of films made for television. Nixon, on the other hand, refused to permit his staff to make extensive use of television film. He only wanted to appear on television in a formal situation where he could speak directly to the audience. He considered any other use of television to be a gimmick. Aside from this, Nixon's appearance was extremely poor because of ill health and fatigue. Though he was competent in his answers and statements, the elements of imagery combined to picture him in a less desirable manner than his opponent.

In the 1964 campaign, Johnson was pictured as the "folksy" candidate, the concerned President and the man of the people. His staff made use of television film to portray this image. Johnson also made use of film to castigate his opponent. The Johnson staff created commercials and spots which pictured Goldwater as being "trigger-happy" and ready to use nuclear weapons at a moments notice. Johnson had an advantage in being connected with the popular Kennedy name. Goldwater refused to release a particularly incriminating film on Johnson which his staff had prepared. He also did not adequately defend himself against the Johnson charges. He did not possess the fame of the Johnson name and was

known as an extreme conservative. Because he was placed on the defensive from the beginning by the Johnson accusations, Goldwater was at a disadvantage and did not effectively make use of television to help himself.

In the 1968 campaign, Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey both had to overcome negative preconceptions. Nixon ran an extremely controlled television campaign. Every word which he spoke and every appearance he made were pre-planned and rehearsed. In fact, his entire campaign was planned around television. His staff made effective use of television film to portray him, always competent and sure, in various situations. Humphrey was comparatively disorganized. Because he was not always prepared, some of his television appearances projected him in a negative light. His talkativeness was another negative factor in his image development. While Nixon's campaign was referred to as the "electronic election," Humphrey's campaign was the opposite.

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the candidates' use of television in the last three Presidential elections did have an effect upon image and that image was projected through television to the audience. It is likely that future candidates will pattern their campaigns after the television techniques of the last three victorious Presidential candidates.

THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION UPON THE IMAGE OF THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES IN THE 1960, 1964 AND 1968 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

By

Donna A. Brevak

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

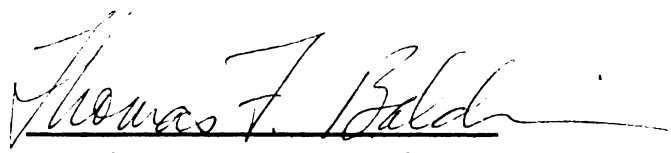
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Television and Radio

1970

G67068

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Television and Radio, College of Communication Arts, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.



Director of Thesis

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Thomas Baldwin for his help in the writing of this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

"The medium is the message," says Marshall McLuhan.[1] These well known words refer to the McLuhan theory that with any extension of ourselves or with any new technology comes the formation of a new scale of measurement. Thus, a new environment is created. With these ideas, McLuhan has laid the basis for the entire age of electronics. The advent of electricity has brought with it a totally new way of life. New types of jobs have been created to replace outmoded occupations. Working hours could suddenly be extended. Transportation has made advances as has the world of communication. It is in this area that one finds the development of television, the one piece of electronic equipment that has so drastically altered many aspects of our society. One such aspect was the political world. Suddenly, political candidates could receive massive exposure to almost the entire voting populace in one evening. Since television has allowed the candidate to be seen, as well as heard, his physical presence and projected personality have become influencing factors in his political

---

[1]Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 7.

success or failure. The candidate could no longer be screened by the impersonal print newspaper or the carefully scheduled and selected public appearance. His appearance, his personality, his intelligence are suddenly exposed to the voting public. This could be either an advantage or disadvantage. If the candidate's overall image could be projected positively, he might be able to win the election. If not, he might lose. It is no longer the man who was important, but the image. Kenneth Boulding reinforces this by saying: "The meaning of a message is the change which it produces in the image."[2]

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the impact of the television image upon a political candidate and the voting public. The samples for study are the three Presidential elections of the 1960's.

1960 - John F. Kennedy--Richard Nixon

1964 - Lyndon B. Johnson--Barry Goldwater

1968 - Richard Nixon--Hubert Humphrey

The question as to whether the candidates of each major political party used television to his advantage or disadvantage will be raised and studied in detail. Through this intense examination of television and politics in the 1960's, it will be possible to predict the role television will play in the 1970-1980 elections.

---

[2]McLuhan, Understanding Media, p. 26.

Aside from all that has been mentioned, it is basically important that the voter be made aware of the possible influence of image upon his voting behavior.

CHAPTER I

PART 1

NIXON - 1960

Within the last decade, there was an increasing amount of discussion concerning the new techniques of marketing a political candidate to the public. The creation of the celluloid image allowed nonachievements to be projected as effectively as the real ones. Through the use of television, it was possible to project this "celluloid image" into almost every home in the U.S.A. and thus, to almost every voter. The 1960 Nixon-Kennedy campaigns seemed to have firmly cemented the union of television, polls and advertising.[1] During this campaign, many innovative "marketing" techniques were attempted for the first time. One fact became very clear, these new processes did create an image for each of the candidates. This discussion will now be chiefly concerned with the construction of these images.

It is best to begin with an examination of the background and personal characteristics of each candidate

---

[1]Robert MacNeil, The People Machine (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 135.

because these do play an important role in the formation of the personality and thus, the image of later life. Richard Milhous Nixon was born in January, 1913, on a farm in Yorba Linda, California. His father raised lemons for a livelihood. For the first nine years of his life, Richard Nixon lived in this small town. Perhaps some of his conservative tendencies were developed during those years. The influence of his mother, a Quaker, may also have contributed to this. At nine, Richard Nixon moved with his family to Whittier, California, where he worked in his father's gas station and general store when not in school. During the 1960 campaign for the Presidency, Nixon referred often to his "poor American boy" image, cultivated at that time.

In high school, Nixon was an achiever. His determination to achieve good grades and become the outstanding leading member of the debate team in both high school and college was followed throughout his political career. Few politicians have fallen as low as Nixon and still have managed to reach the very top of the ladder. As a student, he also excelled in public speaking, a skill that would, along with debating, play an enormous role in the formation of his political image in 1960. His debate ability won him his first political election, as a political unknown, for congressman of the U.S.A. Again, in Congress, it was his debate skills on the House Committee of Un-American

activities that brought him to national prominence and set the stage for his becoming Vice President to Eisenhower. In 1952, Nixon's public speaking skills again brought fortune to him. As the Vice Presidential candidate under Eisenhower, he was accused of using a secret $18,000 fund collected by a "millionaires' club" for personal expenses. Eisenhower told Nixon that to remain a candidate, he would have to prove himself clear. Nixon, with his wife, went on national television to tell viewers he used the money only for political campaign purposes. He said that he was given a small dog, Checkers, but he would not take him away from his children because he was a political candidate. The response was over-whelmingly pro-Nixon. On a visit to Russia in 1959, Nixon engaged in a series of informal public debates with Russian leader Nikita Khrushchev, on the merits of democracy versus communism. Most Americans felt that Nixon came out ahead in these "Kitchen Debates." A year later, this event along with the others mentioned, convinced Nixon to accept the invitation to debate Kennedy. John Kennedy has stated that he felt it was television, specifically the debates, that turned the election tide in his direction.

Nixon's personal characteristics also contributed to his political image. He was an extremely strong-willed individual. In 1960, he refused to turn his Presidential campaign over to the celluloid image makers and he even

refused to ask for help in the campaign. One White House aide said of Nixon:

> You must start with a basic psychological fact--that Nixon is an introspective man. He just can't ask anybody for help. He could have had our help any time he wanted . . . But Nixon couldn't bring himself to ask help of anybody.[2]

Nixon possessed an energy and drive to try again in the face of the worst failures. In 1952, when he may have lost the Vice Presidency because of being accused of spending campaign money for personal reasons, he replied: "I don't believe I ought to quit because I am not a quitter."[3] Nixon possessed a volatility of moods which were apparent when he appeared before audiences or on television. When he was in hostile or unfriendly territory, he would be sad or strident. Friendly audiences would bring out his warm, radiant and glowing side. One of his strongest appeals was to small farm town people. He was from such a town and these people and he understood each other. This was the exact opposite of the John Kennedy image which was cosmopolitan. Lastly, Nixon possessed an ability to learn from his mistakes. In 1968, he let the celluloid film makers create his political

---

[2]Theodore White, The Making of the President, 1960 (New York: Antheneum Publishers, 1961), p. 316.

[3]David C. Whitney, The American Presidents (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1969), p. 354.

image. Also, in 1968, he did not physically exert himself in the Presidential campaign as he did in 1960. As a result, his appearance was much better and he remained in good health, both contributing factors to a television image.

Nixon's pre-campaign image was that of an experienced, competent, hard worker who was much better informed than his opponent, Kennedy. He had had eight years experience as Vice President and had been a political ambassador to foreign nations during this time. He was the experienced and skilled politician who had overcome with dignity the angry mobs in South America who had threatened him and had expertly defeated Khrushchev in the 1959 debates. He was a champion debater and an excellent television politician. Besides his image, Nixon had several other advantages over his opponent. Nixon was well known as a politician while Kennedy was not as yet. Before the debates, the image of Nixon was clearer to the people. A survey showed that 70 percent were more familiar with Nixon while only 12 percent were more familiar with Kennedy. Eighteen percent claimed to be equally familiar with both.[4] Nixon did not have to face the "religious" question as did Kennedy. In fact, on September 12, Nixon refused to discuss religion on "Meet the Press." Nixon

---

[4]Gladys and Kurt Lang, Politics and Television (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1968), p. 227.

won the Republican nomination easily and had full party support from the beginning along with President Eisenhower's endorsement. One disadvantage was that Nixon found it necessary to defend the record of the Eisenhower Administration while, at the same time, he had to point out that a record "is not something to stand on; it is something to build on."[5] Nixon had to pledge to do better than his own administration.

Nixon campaign strategists, Carroll Newton and Ted Rogers, had worked out a remarkable campaign structure and theory. Unfortunately, because of Nixon's strong-willed stubbornness, these ideas were never carried out. Newton's theory revolved on the following basis of commercialism.[6] All products were marketed in a few simple steps. Products were developed and tested in homes in what was called blind tests. Research people then found out what people liked about the product and the advertising agency developed its strategy from that. A political candidate must follow the same process in being sold to the public. People were interviewed to find out what they liked and disliked about the candidate. Research was done and from

---

[5]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon (London: MacDonald & Company, 1968), p. 233.

[6]MacNeil, The People Machine, p. 197.

this came emphasis on certain points of the candidate. The candidate was then played up over the medium. Surveys have shown that only one-third of the electorate at the most were vitally interested and followed campaigns in newspapers, magazines and television.[7] People who were indifferent got their news from television because it came on and it required a positive action to get away from it. Newton concluded that one did not direct mass media campaigns at the informed voter. From this it was apparent that Newton possessed one of the most fertile and imaginative minds concerning the usage of modern television. Rogers, Nixon's personal television adviser, was one of the most skilled and experienced practitioners of political television. These men wanted to make use of television film in the campaign. Nixon rejected several of their ideas. One film would have been called "Khrushchev as I Have Seen Him," and would play up Nixon's foreign policy experience. The film would show Khrushchev's temperament and make him out to be an international villain while Nixon would be characterized as an American who best understood what peace demanded. Another film was to be called "You and Your Family." This setting would be the Nixon home outside of Washington, D.C. and would concern family problems such as inflation, consumer data and the morality

---

[7]MacNeil, The People Machine, p. 197.

of youth. Nixon would talk directly to the humble families, just like his own. Both of these unique film ideas were rejected by Nixon. Perhaps this was because Nixon feared television and considered it a gimmick. The medium was new to him and had not been around when he had learned politics many years ago.

One film, however, was made and used. It was entitled "Ambassador of Friendship," and its only drawback was that Nixon did not allow it to be shown enough. The technique used in the beginning was to detach the audience from the reality of their own worlds and personal problems, clear their minds and get them ready for persuasion. The first film sequence showed an airplane in the clouds. This was Nixon flying over the terrain of the country. These shots were intended to cause the audience to forget reality for a short time. Since no airplane footage was readily available, film clips from the Jerry Lewis movie "Geisha Boy" were used. The next sequence showed Nixon speaking to people who were supposed to be Russian. Then there were reaction shots of people, Russians, listening intently. Actually, these were only people who looked like Russians listening and watching anything. Next, a pan up of an antenna was shown and a reverb was added to Nixon's dialogue track to give the illusion of a loud speaker. The antenna shot was from an old B-rated picture, "Radio Patrol." Next, were scenes of a mob attacking Nixon in Venezuela.

There was no voice on the sound track here. The picture spoke for itself and was most effective.

Newton and Rogers were introducing two new concepts in political television. First, they wanted to get the candidate away from the old style of talking directly to the camera. Secondly, they wanted to shape the television campaign into a crescendo with an impact just at the end to exploit a fresh interpretation of American election behavior. This behavior would be coupled with the marketing techniques of mass advertising.

The campaign strategy that was followed was the one of Richard Nixon. Nixon referred to it as the theory of "pace." In a campaign, according to this theory, there was a rhythm and a natural tide with its ebbs and surges. It was essential not to "peak" a campaign too early because it was essential not to weary the public. Also, the mood of the campaign must be changed as well as the pace at the appropriate moment. Nixon felt that the campaign should open in low key filled with quiet optimism and confidence. The first job of the Nixon campaign was to erase his image of pugnacity. The attack would be stepped up in October and the last three weeks would involve every control element of television and media advertising that the Republican National Committee could finance. At this time, Nixon would really begin his attack upon Kennedy. The key word of the campaign was "flexibility."

The Nixon staff was composed of a planning group that was abandoned by the candidate in the sense that he never listened to them or took their advice. By the end of the campaign, the staff disaffection from the candidate had become general. These men, most of them absentees on leave from impressively important jobs, could not penetrate through Nixon's inner court to catch his attention. One speech writer, who, like others, could only reach Nixon through messages, greeted a television adviser coming out of Nixon's hotel suite by asking: "So, you saw him--how's the meanest man in the world this morning."[8] If this was the view of the campaign staff, the question might arise as to how the public, the voters, felt about Nixon. Before examining the television campaign and the public image that was formed, there is yet one more element that must be considered.

Nixon and his staff decided early in the year that the press was their enemy and that they would reach the American people by the direct route of television.[9] Nixon refused to cater to the press and never explained his policies to them. In doing this, he only hurt himself because they did not know what to write in their stories

---

[8]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 313.

[9]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 275.

concerning his views. The roots of this malice were begun by the candidate himself. So, Nixon turned to television, a medium that he claimed had saved him in many previous situations. Unfortunately, Nixon did not realize that his 1952 "Checkers" speech to the nation was carried by the melodrama of the moment. It was also made effective by the intimate conversational style of delivery. His 1960 convention acceptance speech over television was powerful because of the moment, setting and theatrical intensity. Thus, Nixon turned hopefully to the use of a medium whose strategy he did not understand. Inwardly, he feared television and considered any progressive use of the medium to be a gimmick.[10] He refused to follow any plan of action except his own and would not take or ask for advice.

The most outstanding event of the television campaign was, of course, the great debates. At first, Nixon was hesitant to debate. Both he and his advisers felt that he could win. His entire career had been based upon television and debating. As Mazo and Hess have said in their book, President Nixon, Nixon never should have agreed to debate as Vice President. Immediately, he was put on the defensive as a representative of the party in power. Before the first debate in early September, according to

---

[10]Joe McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968 (New York: Trident Press, 1969), p. 33.

a Gallup Poll survey, Nixon was favored 47 to Kennedy's 46. After the first debate, it was Kennedy 49, Nixon 46. After the last debate, it was Kennedy 51, Nixon 45.[11] Images of the candidates changed during the debates. Previously, Kennedy was regarded as a youth lacking the experience of Nixon. Nixon had the reputation of being experienced, competent and better informed than his opponent. At the close of the debates, Kennedy was regarded as a competent, dynamic, quick-thinking candidate with an alert mind. He did not fumble during the debates. He was confident of himself, a doer, a leader and a positive thinker. Because of the debates, Nixon's image as a superior debater was underminded. It was not that his image necessarily became negative, but rather, that Kennedy's became so positive.

Of all four of the debates, debate one had the largest audience and therefore was credited with having the most influence on the voters. There were several important factors involved that contributed heavily to Nixon's image. First was his appearance. At the time, he was undergoing antibiotic treatment for an injured knee. He had only been released from the hospital a few weeks before after undergoing a knee operation. The drugs that he was taking had exhausted him. He had lost eight pounds and was

---

[11]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 319.

drinking three or four chocolate malts a day in order to regain his weight. When he appeared in the first debate, his shirt hung loosely about his neck and the weight loss made him appear scrawny on television. What was worse, he lacked the energy to project himself. Nixon had always done best on television when he was able to distract the attention of the viewer from his passive countenance to his theme or message.[12] This was evident in the "Checkers" speech. His deep eye wells and heavy brows cast shadows on his face and made it glower darkly on the screen. When he became indignant, television showed his ferocity. This can be traced to Nixon's changing moods and the manner in which his personality came across to the audience. He refused the services of a professional make-up man and instead, used only a cover-up product for his skin, Lazy Shave. As a result, his face looked haggard and his facial hairs were noticeable, though he had just shaved. One Republican leader said that Nixon looked as if he were made up by a man with Democratic leanings.[13] Nixon had only himself to blame for his poor appearance. Though he was not to blame for his knee injury, he had let himself become physically run down. He refused make-up and had refused to

---

[12]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 290.

[13]Sidney Kraus, The Great Debates (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 95.

take the advice of his medium experts and use a sun lamp on his face.

Technical factors were also contributing elements to the Nixon image. An important one was the television camera. Television cameras projected electronically by an image-orthicon tube that was similar to an X-ray. Like its sister beam, the image-orthicon ray seemed to go beneath the skin in forming the image on the screen. This was very bad for Nixon's already transparent skin. In fact, when he would make television appearances, the camera was usually held away from Nixon because, in a close-up, the tiniest hairs on his face could be seen. For the first debate, CBS had equipped its cameras with brand new tubes for the most perfect projection possible. This was more harmful than ever to Nixon. For the later debates, Nixon was persuaded to wear theatrical make-up to repair the damage that the television cameras had done to him.

Another technical factor involved in the creation of the Nixon image was the lighting. It had been set before the show, but photographers and reporters had come up on the stage to take pictures and had kicked the wires and had displaced the lights. Nixon advisers had requested more light for Nixon's dark eye wells. Robert Barry, CBS lighting director, was against this, but had to give in to the Nixon staff demands. As a result, the extra lighting was even worse for Nixon's skin and also caused him to

perspire heavily. This streaked his Lazy Shave make-up. A last technical factor was the gray scale. Nixon's advisers were told that the set background would be the gray-scale-five, dark tone. The advisers urged Nixon to dress in a light-gray suit. When they arrived at the studio, the backdrop was too light and they asked for it to be painted darker. It was painted but it dried lighter. Nixon's light suit faded into a fuzzed outline while Kennedy's dark suit was a crisp picture of contrast.

Another drastic difference between the two candidates was the area of style. Style was very important in the formation of an image. Nixon was tense and appeared almost frightened during the first debate. At times he even appeared glowering. Nixon addressed himself to Kennedy when he spoke. Mazo and Hess stated:

> Mr. Nixon was debating Mr. Kennedy as if a board of judges were scoring points; he rebuttled and refuted, as he went, the inconsistencies or errors of his opponent. Nixon was addressing himself to Kennedy, but Kennedy was addressing himself to the audience that was the nation.[14]

Confident Kennedy employed new techniques that fit with the usage of television while Nixon attempted to use the "old styles" that had worked for him previously under different situations. Another style factor was the reaction shots of Nixon. Producer of the show, Don Hewitt, promised Ted

---

[14]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon, p. 234.

Rogers that there would be no profile shots of Nixon and there were none. He also said that the camera would not catch Nixon off guard. There was one accidental shot of Nixon as he wiped the perspiration from his face. Another poor shot caught Nixon as he slouched, Lazy Shave powder streaked with sweat. His eyes were exaggerated hollows of blackness and his jaws and face were drooping with strain.

Nixon's preparation for the debates was not adequate. Earlier in the day, against the will of his advisers, he had appeared before the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners--a hostile union audience whose negative reaction had psychologically disturbed Nixon. Nixon was not briefed well enough and therefore appeared unsure in instances. He had not received enough rest. As he was getting out of the car at the studio for the first debate, he had struck his injured knee on the car door and had gone white with pain. All of these preparation factors served to negate Nixon's image.

Nixon was the strongest on the issue of foreign policy and so, he wanted to debate this subject when he was certain that there would be the largest audience. Nixon felt that this would be the last debate. He agreed to debate domestic issues for the first round, an area in which the Democratic party traditionally proposed a more elaborate program than the Republicans. Here was an example of Nixon's misunderstanding of the audience. Mazo and Hess

have stated: "Therefore, Nixon had allowed Kennedy to expose his most appealing ware to the largest audience."[15]

The remaining debates took place on October 7, in Washington, D.C., October 13, with Nixon in Los Angeles and Kennedy in New York, and October 21, in New York. By this time, Nixon had regained some of his weight and had consented to wear theatrical make-up. Still, the damage done in the first debate had a shocking impact on the Nixon image. White said in his book, The Making of the President, 1960, that, though Nixon was later to recover from the impression that he had made in the first debate, the beginning of the contest was, as in so many human affairs, half of the whole.[16] The third debate was perhaps Nixon's best performance in terms of its impact on the audience. Nixon seemed to be more at ease, perhaps because his opponent was across the continent. The fourth debate was the dreariest of all. Both candidates had almost nothing left to say and repeated themselves on all matters.

In television circles, the results of the debates were widely discussed. It was difficult to measure an audience response to a particular program because one could only measure what an audience felt their reaction to be.

---

[15]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon, p. 235.

[16]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 290.

Many did agree that the debates were an advancement in television progress. They provided a double exposure of both personality and argument of both candidates at the same time. Partisans of one party had an opportunity to compare their candidate's viewpoints with that of the opposition. The debates showed the impact of the candidates' personalities. Lastly, the debates were a novelty. They received much advanced publicity and attracted a very large audience. Many surveys have been done to determine the effectiveness of the debates. According to a Gallup Poll taken immediately following the first debate, 43 percent of the viewers felt that JFK had won the debate while 23 percent thought that Nixon was the victor. The survey was repeated again after the fourth debate. Here were the results:

Debate 1	Debate 4
43%--JFK won	42%--JFK won
23%--Nixon won	30%--Nixon won
29%--Draw	23%--Even
5%--Undecided	5%--Undecided[17]

A Roper Poll was conducted to determine how the debates influenced the voting behavior of the public. According to the poll:

---

[17]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 294.

57% of those who voted believed that the television debates influenced their decision

6% (over 4,000,000 voters in the panel) ascribed their final decision on voting to the debates alone

Of the above 4,000,000 voters:

26%--(1,000,000) voted for Nixon
72%--(3,000,000) voted for JFK

If the above are true--2,000,000 of the JFK margin came from television's impact on the debates
JFK won by 11,000 votes[18]

John Kennedy made this statement in regard to the 1960 election: "It was TV more than anything else that turned the tide."[19] From the sample surveys, an interesting fact arose. Those who heard the debates on radio believed that the candidates came off almost equal. Those who watched on television indicated that the Vice President came off poorly and, in the opinion of many, very poorly. White stated: "It was the picture image that had done it--and in 1960 television had won the nation away from sounds to images, and that was that."[20]

---

[18]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 294.

[19]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 294.

[20]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 290.

Before examining the last week of the Nixon campaign, it is necessary to pose the question as to why Nixon, an otherwise careful and shrewd politician, could make so many fatal mistakes in his television campaign. It is first necessary to recall Nixon's independent personality and his constant rejection of aid. It must also be recalled that Nixon was a politician of the "old school," meaning that when he began his political career, television was not being used for politics as it was in 1960. Nixon saw only the fact that several times before in his career, he had used television to turn the tide of public sentiment and he had been successful. He forgot that the "Checkers" speech was given eight years ago and that times, as well as techniques, had changed. He also forgot to attribute the success of that speech, as well as the Republican convention acceptance speech, to the emotional appeal of the moment. He only knew that he had used television successfully "his way" and that was the way he would use it again. He needed no gimmicks such as make-up, emotional films, or instruction from anyone. The thought of resorting to such tactics offended him. Nixon used television "his way" in the 1960 Presidential election.

Nixon had opened his campaign in the South with a bang. He had spoken in a clear, sound, mellow voice. He had been confident and certain of himself. As the campaign progressed, his delivery became more hasty, and melancoly.

It generally reflected the mood of the Nixon camp. Toward the end of the campaign, Nixon drew much on his youth and his poverty to identify with the people. He began to make mistakes in his speeches, probably because he was physically tired and ill. Once, he used the JFK phraseology and referred to the country as the New Frontier.

Nixon's last week of campaigning involved a great reliance on the broadcast medium. On October 25, there was a national telecast of a Nixon rally in Cincinnati, Ohio. On October 29, followed an Eisenhower telecast out of Pittsburgh. This was followed on November 2 by a rally on television with Eisenhower, Nixon and Lodge that was broadcast from New York. During the last week of the campaign, Nixon appeared every night during prime time for fifteen minutes. Eisenhower, as was noted, began to campaign for Nixon at the end of the campaign. The Nixon strategists, as well as Eisenhower himself, felt that this last big effort would turn the tide for Nixon. However, Nixon's staff was in for a shock. Nixon refused to permit Eisenhower to have an all-out campaign for him. The reason was that Nixon had spoken with Eisenhower's physician and Mrs. Eisenhower and both had urged him not to exert Eisenhower for health reasons.

Nixon realized that he was falling behind Kennedy in popular support. At other crucial times during his career, when he had needed to regain the confidence of the

people, he had appealed directly to them via television. He had been successful. The Republicans had purchased time on the Sunday before the election directly following the "Ed Sullivan Show." Originally, they had planned to present a final viewing of the most effective film, "Ambassador of Friendship." Nixon, going on past experience, pre-empted the showing of this film so that he could speak directly to the nation in a last minute appeal for support. Nixon phrased it in this manner: "Let me go on and talk to the people. I have to get my views across to them."[21] Because this particular situation lacked the dramatic intensity of his previous experiences, his appeal was not well received. Thus, the prime time slot following one of the most highly rated shows on television worked against Nixon when it might have worked for him.

On November 7, in the afternoon, the Republicans presented a four hour telethon from Detroit. This show mixed sentiment and factual substance in equal proportions. During the four hours, viewers saw the candidate at his best--talking of peace. They also saw him at his worst--discussing the high cost of living with Ginger Rogers. Surveys have estimated that one out of every five homes watched the show sometime during the telethon. It was true

---

[21]Gene Wyckoff, The Image Candidates (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. 54.

that the audience was mostly housewives, but that the audience that caught him at his good moments was influenced by him. This telethon was referred to by Theodore White as: ". . . the most expensive and probably most effective burst of television election airing since the medium invaded American culture."[22] The climax of the campaign came on election eve when Eisenhower went on television to tell the nation he would vote for Nixon and advised them to do the same thing. Here were the election results:

Nixon --34,107,646 or 49.55%

Kennedy--34,227,096 or 49.71%[23]

Nixon himself can best sum up his own campaign which was one of the closest elections for the Presidency in history. He had this to say:

> I believe that I spent too much time in the last campaign on substance and too little on appearances. I paid too much attention to what I was going to say and too little to how I would look. Again, what must be recognized is that television has increasingly become the medium through which the great majority of voters get their news and develop their impressions of the candidates . . . One bad camera angle on television can have far more effect on a speech which is then picked up and criticized by columnists and editorial writers.[24]

---

[22]MacNeil, The People Machine, p. 198.

[23]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon, p. 242.

[24]Wyckoff, The Image Candidates, p. 51.

The human dimensions of a candidate's character became perceivable on television. Seeing conveyed more intense clues to character than what they heard. The campaign of 1960 and the election outcome have firmly cemented television and politics together for the future.

PART 2

KENNEDY

John F. Kennedy was practically opposite of Richard Nixon in almost every aspect in the 1960 campaign for the Presidency. Kennedy was young, a millionaire, less experienced than his opponent, a liberal and a Catholic. Kennedy, being what he was, believed in using the broadcast medium to aid his election with all of the latest techniques employed. His image was created by an expert team of medium people around his dashing personality. It was a "true" image and was accepted by the voters. To really understand the difference between JFK's campaign and that of Nixon, it is necessary to begin again with the background of Kennedy. Only after a careful examination of the candidate can one understand what influenced him to use the medium in the way he did and how his image was constructed.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was born in May, 1917, in Brookline, Massachusetts into a very wealthy family. In fact, Kennedy's father was the wealthiest man in the United States. This alone would immediately serve to make Kennedy into an exciting, glamorous figure. He led an active childhood and there developed his interest in sports and physical fitness that also became associated with his image in later

years. He graduated from Harvard, cum laude, and attended Stanford University graduate business school. At this time, his father had been the U.S. ambassador to England and so, Kennedy received an early exposure to politics. His thesis for his M.A. later became a best seller, Why England Slept. Even at this age he demonstrated his understanding and grasp of international relations and politics.

Kennedy was a war hero in WWII. This later was played up to a great degree in the 1960 Presidential campaign. He was then a U.S. representative and then a U.S. senator. He married a very glamorous society figure, Jacqueline Bouvier. Along with all of this, he won a Pulitzer Prize for a biography about courageous senators who took their stands against great odds, Profiles in Courage. He became known as a liberal because of his stand on issues in the Senate. When Kennedy ran for President, he did not run alone. Behind him was the image of the entire Kennedy family who organized, supported and ran his campaign. Kennedy realized something that Nixon did not, how important an image would be.

John Kennedy possessed a most commendable set of personal characteristics. First, even though his motive need never be the desire for money, he possessed a great amount of ambition and drive. His life was geared from the start to high achievements with an eventual goal in politics. His achievements in school and as an author have

already been mentioned. In the Navy, he rose in rank to lieutenant. He received command of his own torpedo boat and displayed a great amount of courage in managing to save some of the crew and himself when the boat was destroyed. Kennedy possessed a great native intelligence. His remarkable reading ability was widely talked about. He did possess one extremely important characteristic. Although Nixon was willing to learn from his mistakes, he usually had to make the mistake in order to learn. Kennedy was willing to listen to the advice of intimates whom he trusted. He did not always take their advice but he would listen to them open-mindedly and evaluate their ideas. Kennedy took his strategists advice and made use of all the latest developments in television during the campaign. One last characteristic must be mentioned. He possessed a charismatic ability to draw crowds to him and then to make them feel an intricate part of the campaign. He learned, toward the end of the campaign, a Nixon technique of illiciting a verbal response of "yes" or "no" from the crowd. People flocked to see him. He also possessed the ability to unite his campaign staff to facilitate operations. To do this, Kennedy made use of communications and kept his staff, as well as the press, well informed of his objectives and movements.

Like Nixon, John Kennedy had certain advantages and disadvantages in his campaign. Dollen said that although

Nixon started the campaign with all the obvious advantages, the Kennedy wit and charm brought people to listen to him and his ability to handle complex issues with skill and clarity won them over to his side.[25] One disadvantage was the religious question. There was much controversy concerning the separation of church and state and the Catholic religion. People wanted to know if JFK would be ruled by the Pope. JFK had learned in the West Virginia primary not to avoid this nasty question, but to tackle it directly. So, he went before the Houston Ministerial Association to face the religious question openly, as he had in the primaries. The next day, the television networks broadcast the program. Kennedy volunteers used a filmed recording to present the program over and over again in Catholic and Protestant areas of the country. Because he faced this issue squarely, Kennedy was able to turn this disadvantage into an advantage. Through it, he demonstrated that he possessed the ability to speak his mind and make himself clear on an issue. He also displayed courage in standing up for his beliefs.

Another disadvantage was the need to secure the Democratic nomination and then secure the support of his party. After the nomination, his party was not 100 percent

---

[25]Charles Dollen, John F. Kennedy, American (Boston, Mass: Daughters of St. Paul, 1965), p. 98.

behind him. At the close of the televised debates, he had won their support as well as the public support.

A last disadvantage was the "inexperienced" image. Kennedy was regarded as the underdog because he was not well known. Before the debates, according to surveys, 70 percent were more familiar with Nixon, 12 percent were more familiar with Kennedy and 18 percent were equally familiar with both.[26] To solve the religious question, to win the support of his party and public and to become known, Kennedy used television.

Kennedy also began with some advantages. He did possess another image, but he had to make it known. He was a war hero, a man with fourteen years experience in Congress, an author of a best seller and Pulitzer Prize winner, a social figure and an intellect. His appearance was dashing and glamorous. He was a liberal minded youth. The Bostonian accent served to distinguish him and set him apart. As the candidate of the out-party, he was free to attack the administration while Nixon was not. Kennedy appealed his theme song over the national networks: "I say we can do better . . . I say it is time to get this country moving again."[27] Any Democrat, from an organized

---

[26]Lang and Lang, Politics and Television, p. 227.

[27]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon, p. 232.

and statistical standpoint, should have overwhelmed any Republican in the 1960 national election.[28] Across the country there were three registered Democrats for every two Republicans. The Democrats controlled all major power centers, governorships, both Senate seats, all congressmen and both houses of state legislature in eleven states. The Republicans enjoyed that amount of power in only one state, New Hampshire. Nixon had to capture 5 to 6 million Democratic votes to win. Lastly, Kennedy could stand on his party's past record. He could be proud of past Democratic Presidents.

The discussion can now turn to Kennedy's use of television in the campaign. Broadcasters have made reference to Kennedy's television campaign as one of the most perfect unions between man and mechanical equipment. Nixon watched Kennedy's acceptance speech at the Democratic Convention on television. Nixon felt that it was a poor performance. First of all, it was way over the public's head and too fast in delivery. At that time, JFK was tired and strained from his race to win the nomination. Nixon did not realize what fatigue and illness would do to his own image. Kennedy's first round of speeches in the first ten days of the campaign were flat and discouraging. His

---

[28]Earl Mazo and Stephen Hess, President Nixon, p. 230.

crowds were small. His voice was hoarse and his delivery was still too rapid. It was almost as if he were trying to make up for campaign time he had lost before the Senate had adjourned. Kennedy was tense and taut. Worst of all, he was ignored by the press. About this time, he went on the air to face the Houston Ministerial Association. Encouraged by the success of this venture, JFK felt better. His cracking voice disappeared and he could dispense with the voice coach. His attitude toward the future became clearer and the sharpness of his theme grew with each appearance. Gloom descended slowly upon the Nixon camp and lifted from the Kennedy entourage. The candidate was now ready to face television.

The candidate's brother, who organized JFK's campaign, disagreed with Nixon's theory of peaks and rhythms. He called this nonsense. Robert Kennedy believed in fighting to get to the top and in fighting to stay there. The entire JFK clan believed in starting early and running "flat" all the way. Robert Kennedy followed the idea that there were three things required in the use of television in any geographical area of the country:

1. Accurate polling by pollsters who are trusted and followed by strategists.
2. Willingness to use television production and air time extensively for films to promote image. These films were designed to spread a particular image of the candidate.

3. Be able and willing to pay money.[29]

JFK had his schedule strategy planned and frozen by Labor Day. Nixon, who believed in flexibility, kept his open until October. JFK planned to hit hard the Northeastern states where this particular campaign would be decided while Nixon kept his campaign promise to speak in every one of the fifty states. Nixon would have to fly off to places such as Alaska, while JFK could stay where the electoral vote would be a real prize.

Kennedy used television to carry out the psychological aspects of his campaign. The key word here was "co-operation." Kennedy co-operated with the press and with the broadcast medium. As a past press writer himself, JFK welcomed and respected the press. His advisers rode the press buses and yielded a constant flow of information. The staff greeted the press with joy and gave them extra anecdotes of color for their stories. White said that there was no doubt that this kindliness and respect shown for the press colored all the reporting of Kennedy positively while Nixon was colored adversely.[30] The Kennedys

---

[29]Robert MacNeil, The People Machine, p. 200.

[30]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 338.

realized that these media were the way to the public. Kennedy, as was illustrated by the religious question, was not afraid to go on television and speak his mind directly to the nation. This included any controversial issue. He felt that it was important for the people to know exactly where he stood.

Television was important in the development of the Kennedy image. In the primaries, when seeking the nomination, Kennedy appeared to be young Lochinvar running against the big bosses. He had a good image to offer the people--a youth filled with courage and energy. This image alone would not win the election. Kennedy made use of television films to develop his image. The Democratic films showed Kennedy as the war hero, author and Pulitzer Prize winner, family man and intellect, as well as an experienced and energetic young man. These films, along with the film on Kennedy's religious stand, were circulated around the country. Kennedy realized that for television to be effective in politics, he had to be exposed to the exact degree. He feared overexposure. This fear carried on into his years in office. He felt that overexposure could be as fatal as underexposure.

The debates were regarded as the turning point in the Kennedy campaign. Immediately after the first debate, there was an improvement in the Kennedy image. Lang said that the largest gain for Kennedy came from crystallization

of intent--the movement from being undecided toward a clear cut preference for one of the two candidates.[31] Kennedy emerged from the debates with a more "personal" image. To the audience, he had become a "man," rather than a political man. This was one of his personal characteristics--to make the crowds feel as though they, too, were playing an intricate part in the campaign. Kennedy was now generally thought of as a competent, cool and ambitious young fellow. Some still felt that he was snobbish and were still suspicious of his Catholicism. This was evident in the election results. It was one of the closest elections in history. All the same, the debates dispelled many doubts concerning Kennedy's maturity and experience. He suddenly became dynamic, quick-thinking, alert, a leader and a positive thinker. It seemed as though the exposure of the debates led to a large scale crossing of candidate images. This discussion will now examine why this was so.

Kennedy had proper preparation for the debates. On the day of the debates, he rested. His staff had done much research and had briefed him well. Kennedy had an uncanny ability to memorize and reiterate a large quantity of numerical facts and figures. He impressed his viewers when he used this ability in the debates. The result was

---

[31]Lang and Lang, Politics and Television, p. 222.

well known. Nixon was tired, haggard and ill-looking while Kennedy was rested, healthy, handsome and young.

Aside from the preparation, there were other elements that contributed to Kennedy's success in the debates. Another was style. Kennedy was calm, nerveless in appearance while on television during the debates. He never fumbled. He addressed himself, not to Nixon, but to the nation. Kennedy managed to hold his own in the verbal give and take process. Reaction shots caught Kennedy looking at Nixon with intense concentration but with command and comfort in the situation. It was as if his expression assured the audience that he could handle the situation. Another element was the issues. Kennedy was able to discuss domestic issues for the first debate which drew the largest audience. The Democrats were stronger in this area.

J. Lenard Reinsch, Kennedy's television maestro, said: "Every time we get those two fellows on the screen side by side, we're going to gain and he's going to lose."[32] The Kennedy camp would have preferred to have had five debates. A survey revealed that, after the first debate, 89 percent felt that Kennedy had bested Nixon.[33] From the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan came

---

[32]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 283.

[33]Lang and Lang, Politics and Television, p. 233.

these conclusions:

1. Among Independents, favorable responses to Kennedy after the debates were twice as frequent as favorable responses to Nixon.
2. The image of Nixon, held by the panel as a whole, deteriorated.
3. Gains by Nixon among Kennedy supporters were noteworthy though not large enough to offset the trend. They occurred among the group where Kennedy's image had been strongly negative.[34]

After the debates, the election had suddenly taken a positive turn for the Kennedy group. It seemed as if Kennedy, during the last weeks of the campaign, had received a second wind. His writers worked constantly preparing speech material for personal appearances as well as for television. Kennedy went on "Meet the Press" and did quite well. He was fully prepared and briefed. The technique of involving the audience with "yes" or "no" participation answers that Kennedy had learned from Nixon was essential. White said that in JFK's hands the technique came alive.[35] It had been said that the great orator was one who made the audience feel as though they were partners with him in

---

[34]Lang and Lang, Politics and Television, p. 236.

[35]White, The Making of the President, 1960, p. 328.

his efforts. When these Kennedy speeches were televised, the home audience was caught up with the studio audience. Kennedy's personality and wit penetrated through the glass screen and into the voter's home.

Pierre Salinger, Kennedy's press secretary stated:

> In my view his election would have been impossible without the debates--really, when you analyze it, without the first debate. The majority of the American people made up their minds on the basis of this debate and merely reinforced their views by watching the other three. The first debate was a debacle for the Vice-President, particularly because of his appearance on the screen.[36]

The election would have been impossible without the debates, the televised debates. Wyckoff added to that: ". . . Senator Kennedy, who--less known nationally than Vice President Nixon--had much more to gain from the prominence of the televised joint appearances than Nixon did."[37] It was not the debates alone that won the election. The final weeks of television coverage added to Kennedy's supporters. The televised Houston Ministerial Association interrogation dispelled the religious question for the majority. Kennedy made good use of the medium and won the election.

---

[36]Pierre Salinger, With Kennedy (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1966), p. 47.

[37]Wyckoff, The Image Candidates, p. 260.

CHAPTER 2

PART 1

GOLDWATER - 1964

The most important development among the news media in the 1964 Presidential campaign was the new collaboration achieved between television and the printed press.[1] For the primaries, television inaugurated a comprehensive and accurate Network Election Service for reporting returns and services of prediction and analysis. Both of these services were put at the disposal of the nation's major news agencies and newspapers. During the campaign, television provided intensive coverage which provided an opportunity for the candidates to create a reputation. The image that the candidates did achieve will now be examined.

Background often explains certain aspects of one's personality and present political image. Born in Phoenix, Arizona, Goldwater attended Staunton Military Academy in Virginia. At the age of twenty-eight, he became president of his family's Phoenix department store. His wife's father was one of the founders of the Borg-Warner Corporation.

---

[1]Milton C. Cummings, Jr., The National Election of 1964 (Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institute, 1966), p. 10.

During his career as a United States Senator, Goldwater became the best known conservative in the Republican party. He achieved this reputation through his speeches and books, as well as through his Senate voting record. Often, he voted against measures favored by other moderate Republicans. Immediately, at the very beginning of the 1964 Presidential campaign, the image of the extreme conservative was linked to Goldwater's name. He drove this point even farther when, in his acceptance speech during the Republican convention, he said: "Extremism in the defense of liberty is novice" and "moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue."[2] Goldwater's conservative tendencies supplied the Democrats with the ammunition that they needed to blow to pieces the Goldwater image.

Before beginning a discussion concerning Goldwater's use of television in his campaign, it is necessary to examine the candidate's personal characteristics that contributed to image development. Goldwater, always the conservative in all he did, was polite to his crowds, like a man keeping appointments with strangers. He remained aloof and cool even when the crowds were devoted to him. Here one can draw an interesting comparison between Goldwater and Lyndon Johnson. While Goldwater was polite, shy and friendly in a distant way with his public, Johnson embraced his crowds,

---

[2]"Goldwater," Encyclopedia Americana, 38th ed., Vol. 13.

charged at them and lectured them. During the duration of the campaign, Goldwater gave far fewer speeches to crowds than did Johnson. This comparison can be next extended to both candidates' treatment of the press. While Goldwater avoided contact with the news media, the press found it necessary to hide from Johnson. Goldwater kept to himself while en route on the campaign plane. He almost never went back to the press section to talk. Also, reporters were barred from the inner rooms of the Republican National Committee offices in Washington, D.C. As a result, the news media found it difficult to understand Goldwater's views on campaign issues. Johnson, on the other hand, made certain that the press knew in advance his statements and that they understood them.

This led to one of the largest contributing factors for the failure of the Goldwater campaign. Goldwater's reaction to the media revealed an element inherent in his personality that undoubtedly contributed to his negative image. His very restraint in crowds and his guarded speech in public or in private, exposed the fear of really protraying his true personality and beliefs to the public.[3] He was criticized for never making clear his stand on issues such as the testing of nuclear weapons. As a result,

---

[3]Charles McDowell, Jr., Campaign Fever (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1965), p. 176.

Goldwater was constantly concerned that he was not getting his message across to the public. This gave the Democrats a great opportunity. They seized upon the Republican candidate's uncertainty on issue stands and created the image of a "trigger-happy" Goldwater. In the final analysis, Goldwater was running against LBJ, the Democratic record and fear.[4] As will be seen, he was forced several times to change his campaign strategy. A good deal of his efforts were devoted to responding to the thrust of his opposition. The Republicans, stopped by Goldwater from really lacerating Johnson in return, could only portray LBJ as a politician of dubious ethics, questionable associations and brutal egoism. The ghosts of Bobby Baker, Walter Jenkins, the Johnson television monopoly in Texas and the Johnson struggle for power were brought into the campaign. These were mild attacks as compared to the Democratic assult upon Goldwater.

Keeping all of these ideas in mind, an examination of the Goldwater 1964 Presidential television campaign can now begin. In September, on paper, the Republican television campaign seemed far superior to the Democratic attempt. Heading this particular section of the complex event was the Interpublic Group of New York, the largest marketing communications group of companies in the world. The Interpublic

---

[4]Theodore H. White, The Making of the President, 1964 (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1965), p. 322.

people worked through Lou Guylay of the Goldwater strategy board. Computers analyzed the last three national campaigns by party, state, and ethnics. Charts were prepared to show "swing states." Maps designated 200 major television markets and how the largest audiences could be reached at the smallest price. Here a problem arose. As was mentioned previously, Goldwater kept to himself. It had been stated that he did not want any criticism of his campaign moves.[5] He never made it clear exactly what his stand on an issue would be. The media specialists could not reach Goldwater in order to determine what he wanted to say in his appeal. Thus, Interpublic was forced to work blindly. They had no time to lose. During the first week of the campaign, the war of the television commercial began. Republican strategists made it clear that they intended to use the medium on a large scale--$4.5 million out of the $13 million budget would go for television.[6] Another problem by the name of Ralph Cordiner arose. Cordiner was the finance director of the campaign. Because he decided to end the campaign in the black, he cancelled advance time spots on national television scheduled for the last ten days of the campaign. In October, when funds grew larger

---

[5]Harold Faber, The Road to the White House (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 172.

[6]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 122.

and as money began pouring in from the Republicans, it was too late to rebuy the time. Cordiner ended the campaign with the historic record for a financial chairman--the largest surplus in dollars ever shown for any campaign and the largest deficit in votes and offices lost.[7]

The Goldwater campaign faced some drawbacks that were detriments to the success of the election. First, the Republican party was not united. As was just mentioned, the strategists intended to make great use of television in the campaign. Goldwater himself said that he would rely on the medium more than it was ever relied on before. Yet, the financial director, Cordiner, was opposed to this. Another drawback came in the form of other Republicans who made use of the television medium to tear Goldwater down. Through appearances on news shows such as "Face the Nation," Scranton and Romney managed to convey to the public that they did not support Goldwater and even considered him a threat to the unity of the Republican party. On NBC and CBS, Scranton accused Goldwater of wanting to start his own political party. A third drawback related to the lack of communication between the media specialists and Goldwater himself. A last drawback that concerned the television medium involved the "trigger-happy" Goldwater image proliferated by political commercial spots. Unfortunately, as

---

[7]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 318.

this paper will later point out, Goldwater enhanced this image of being "bomb crazy" on television himself.

The Goldwater campaign had five phases: offensive, defensive, offensive, defensive and the defiant Goldwater. These phases were reflected in the candidate's use of television. The first offensive phase began with a five minute spot seen in 187 cities. The theme pictured the Republicans as a party of peace through strength. Failures of the Democratic party, such as the Berlin wall, the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba and the Vietnam war were capitalized. The first defensive phase of the campaign began on Friday, September 18, with Goldwater's first half-hour address to the nation over television. Goldwater's personal use of the medium here became apparent. Fear that he would say something wrong made him steer away from the press conference type show. Instead, he relied on set performances before chosen audiences. According to Faber in his book, The Road to the White House, Goldwater exerted a real charm when he spoke informally but his fear of saying something wrong prevented this type of approach.[8]

The first defensive phase of the campaign continued with a program entitled "Conversation at Gettysburg." This was a dialogue filmed between Goldwater and Eisenhower at the General's farm. After this program, the ratings

---

[8]Faber, The Road to the White House, p. 172.

confirmed Goldwater's suspicion that he was not communicating with his audience. Here were the results:[9]

"Peyton Place"	25.1
"Petticoat Junction"	19.6
"Conversation at Gettysburg"	6.5

This program was to defend Goldwater from the charge of being "trigger-happy." It was an attempt to guarantee Goldwater's military judgement by approval from the General-President. Stanley Kelley in The National Election of 1964, called "Conversation at Gettysburg" a pallid, unconvincing journey to the Eisenhower farm.[10] Eisenhower gave Goldwater his blessing and declared that the talk of the Senator's desire to use the atomic bomb was "tommyrot."[11] According to White in The Making of the President, 1964, the program spoke only to those Republicans whose loyalty had caused them to watch.[12] It was further described by White as a meaningless, dreary half-hour. Originally, the program was patterned after Kennedy's address to the Houston ministers in 1960, in that Goldwater desired the same effect--

---

[9]John Howard Kessel, The Goldwater Coalition (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968), p. 200.

[10]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 123.

[11]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 329.

[12]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 329.

a clearance to his name concerning a certain issue. The difference was that Kennedy had expressed how he felt. When Goldwater finished, the nation still did not know how he felt about the atomic bomb. This can be blamed on Goldwater alone. The very reason that this program was needed was because of Goldwater himself. On television, he had suggested using low yield atomic weapons in Vietnam to defoliate trees on the major supply routes. This would remove the protective covering of the enemy. Within a twenty-eight minute broadcast, he had used the words nuclear weapons and mass destruction a total of twenty-six times.

The second offensive phase of the campaign was begun because of Republican criticism that Goldwater was failing to come across to audiences. It began with Goldwater's address before the annual conference of United Press and Publishers in Washington, D.C. on October 6. The address was televised that evening. This same speech would have been given a week earlier in Cincinnati, but television time was not available. The format for the show was the same one that Goldwater had developed in the primary elections. Films of the person asking a question were shown on the back screen while Goldwater was photographed as he answered the questions. This method allowed spontaneity while it guaranteed that precious television time would not be wasted in answering frivolous questions. The people who asked the questions were from a varied section of occupations.

On this show there was a teamster, executive secretary, dairyman, housewife, a retired supervisor, narcotics specialist and an electrician.

On October 15, the world passed through a crisis. Khrushchev was no longer Premier of the U.S.S.R. On October 17, Red China exploded a nuclear device. Both of these events shrouded the exposure of the Walter Jenkin's case that had occurred on October 14. Johnson, as President, addressed the nation. Goldwater requested equal time in order to make his views known. Both NBC and CBS turned down the Senator's request. ABC, however, offered to give Goldwater fifteen minutes of air time. Guylay urged Goldwater to accept and use the time to ask for contributions so he could buy air time to fully present his opinions. Goldwater, during his fifteen minutes, accused Johnson of killing the amendment to section 315 of the Communications Act. He also accused Johnson of refusing to debate with him and of stopping the senate investigation of the Bobby Baker case. His speech illicited from 140,000 contributors more than a million dollars.[13] That week, Goldwater appeared on national television four times. Tuesday evening he broadcast from the Morman Tabernacle. Wednesday, he gave his analysis on the Kremlin shifts. Thursday, his speech on civil rights was broadcast from Chicago. On Friday, he

---

[13]Kessel, The Goldwater Coalition, p. 211.

appeared in a program entitled "Brunch with Barry," during which he chatted with leading Republicans.

It was during this same busy week that the candidate revealed that he was a good deal more decent and less ruthless than some of his supporters and technical aides. Goldwater cancelled the televised showing of a film entitled "Choice," sponsored by an organization called Mothers for a Moral America. The film was designed to contrast the two Americas--the immoral America associated with Johnson or the America of the Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights and Senator Barry Goldwater. Goldwater also cancelled a film called "Ballot Box 13," an effort to depict alleged irregularities in President Johnson's eighty-seven vote victory in his race for the Senate in 1948.

During the final week of the campaign, both parties stepped up last minute television appeals. Ronald Reagan broadcast from Ohio that the country was drifting closer to socialism in what was one of the biggest successes of the campaign. It attracted more than $1,000,000 in Republican contributions during the last week of the campaign.[14] Goldwater made a fourteen state telecast to the South from South Carolina. For election eve, Goldwater taped a dull and contrived family scene.

---

[14]Faber, The Road to the White House, p. 251.

The Republicans cut back on their national television exposure during the last weeks of the campaign when it became apparent that the Goldwater cause was lost. This demonstrated a failure either to use television as a short-run means of regaining balance, or as a powerful instrument to create long-run effects that favored the cause of the conservatives. It was felt that the entire television campaign of the Republicans was run rather unimaginatively.[15] One excellent tactic that the Republicans did employ was to combine political appeals with personality appeals. This was done through the use of movie stars. This was all a part of the appeal for funds. In this way, the Republicans put substantial amounts of money into their treasury. In total, the Republicans raised $2 million via the broadcast medium.[16] The Democrats did not do as well. The unfortunate part of the Republican campaign, as noted in the previous discussion, concerned the fact that Goldwater probably failed to get the attention of those who were not already his followers.[17]

---

[15]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 135.

[16]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 135.

[17]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 135.

PART 2

JOHNSON - 1964

Just as in the case of Barry Goldwater, the background of Lyndon Baines Johnson had a definite influence upon his political image. Lyndon grew up in hardship near Stonewall, Texas. He could be pictured as a barefoot lad attending a country school and hunting in the hills. Then there was Lyndon, the young man. During this stage, he was a drifter who roamed out to California only to return to Texas two years later "with empty hands and empty pockets."[18] He ended up in the unemployment office. A dramatic change seemed to take place in the young man at this point, a change that would shape the second half of his political image. Johnson was possessed with a great amount of energy and drive. About this time, he began applying his motivation to constructive purposes. He went through college in three and a half years. Then he taught public speaking in a Houston high school. He next received his first political appointment as Secretary to a congressman and moved to Washington, D.C. From this information, an image of Johnson as a political figure began to form. It was not difficult

---

[18]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 37.

to picture him as the ambitious country boy possessed with the drive to lift himself from his present condition. Unfortunately, this healty drive was later to be pictured as a craving for power.

Johnson's personal characteristics fit very well with his background. His mannerisms were not from the Eastern schools but of the earth. The earth seemed to give him the strength and range to deal with all levels of Americans. Johnson's speech was earthy. He often mispronounced words and he delivered his ideas with a simplicity of style. LBJ was able to use his speech traits and country mannerisms to work for him in the 1964 campaign. He was his own master strategist and he called his own shots. Johnson knew, though he was called "corny," that people wanted simple unsophisticated answers to their questions and fears. Because he firmly believed this, Johnson did not even attempt sophistication. He did not feel that sophistication would fit the "country boy form Texas" role.

Another personal characteristic of Johnson's went along well with his country style. According to Harold Faber in his book, The Road to the White House, he was a gregarious man who liked people and who wanted to be liked.[19] At times, this need became almost a mania. Johnson grabbed and shook the hands of crowds until his own hands bled.

---

[19]Faber, The Road to the White House, p. 151.

He reached out for the people and wanted to touch them. He possessed one great asset of public speaking perhaps developed during the time he taught speech in high school. This was to acknowledge persons in the crowd individually with his eyes or an inclination of his head. There seemed to be some connection between this desire to be one of the people, his driving ambition and a vanity, supposedly a Johnson family characteristic. Perhaps his need to be with people was an outlet for his vanity. His constant exposure can also be viewed as a part of his driving ambition. The man was truly a dynamo of energy. There was no limit to the hours he worked or to the people he saw or talked to on the phone. He drove himself and fed on exhaustion, driving his body and nerves far beyond a reasonable capacity for human work. One last personal characteristic that cannot be ignored because it played a large role in the formation of his political image, was LBJ's intelligence. Now, it is assumed that any President of the United States must possess a certain amount of intelligence, but Johnson had added a shrewdness that he applied, not only to amassing a personal fortune, but to climbing in politics as well. The Republicans attempted to use this shrewdness to tear down Johnson's image during the 1964 Presidential campaign.

The conclusion that one draws from a combination of background and personal characteristics presented Johnson

as the man with the "common touch."[20] It was apparent when he was with people. It was apparent when he spoke. It was apparent when he carried out the ceremonial duties of his high office and, it was most apparent over the television medium.

Charles McDowell, in his book, Campaign Fever, stated that Lyndon Johnson's television campaign began slowly and deceptively.[21] Johnson announced at the start that he would stick close to Washington, D.C. He would concentrate on being a busy President doing the duties of his office. This was part of his image that he was attempting to build. More and more, Johnson found time to get out among the people, making headlines and taking a large share out of the evening television news. This was a privilege of an incumbent, and Johnson used it well. He had little need to book commercial television time for either spots or special programs because a President commanded time by his actions alone. His opponent, as was seen in the world crisis of October 17, was not given equal time or exposure because Johnson attributed his appearances to duties of his office, not the election. Here was an excellent example of Johnson's shrewdness at work. After

---

[20]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 114.

[21]McDowell, Campaign Fever, p. 175.

the Federal Communications Commission determined that Presidential televised press conferences were political during an election, Johnson began to make television appearances on news shows and in news coverage. He made certain that he appeared only when he was protected by the 1959 amendment to the Communications Act, thus assuring that Goldwater could not receive free, equal time. In May, 1964, an election year, Johnson installed a permanent television studio in the White House and made use of its many advantages.

Johnson's instinctive shrewdness told him how important television would be in the campaign. He had had the advantage of working with the master of the medium, John Kennedy. He could draw on their campaign together for ideas. He knew that first of all, he had to create an appealing image. Kennedy had done just that. Johnson did not want to compete with Kennedy and attempt the same image, because he knew he could never achieve it. So, he turned to an opposite characterization. Where Kennedy had dispensed sophistication, Johnson radiated folksiness. He swore to the public that he would remain calm, rational and sane in the event of a crisis involving nuclear warfare. After all, he was a good staunch country boy who had come up the hard way and he knew when to make the right move. Johnson's appeal was not only to convince the people that he could deal calmly with a nuclear crisis, but to convince

the public that Goldwater would not. To portray this, Johnson made use of a television spot showing him as the reflective President in the White House while a voice described his duties. Another spot concerned Appalachian poverty. Faces of the poor mountaineers were shown on the screen while a voice over a folk music background stated that unless the cycle was broken, millions of children would live lives of poverty like their parents. Undoubtedly, the connection concerned the fact that Johnson understood poverty and would make an effective attempt to end it. When he spoke over television, Johnson mentioned the good life, peace, national unity and nuclear responsibility. He did not fail to mention these ideas when he received free network time on October 18, to address the nation on two world developments--removal of Premier Khrushchev from office and the explosion of a Red Chinese nuclear device. He wanted his image to become associated with these positive values.

Doyle Dane Bernback was the agency that created the famous anti-Goldwater television spots that were so influential in causing the Senator's "trigger-happy" image. This agency reached the audience through emtional appeal. One television spot, referred to as the "Daisy Girl Spot," was particularly effective. On the screen, a tow-haired moppet was plucking petals from a daisy, babbling the count as she went. The film faded to a countdown of an

atomic testing site and dissolved into a mushroom cloud. Though the film mentioned neither the Republicans or Goldwater specifically, it achieved its purpose and associated the Senator with the bomb for the duration of the campaign. The film was used only once, but, since it was put on in the best possible time period, it was enough to touch the nerves of the audience. Those who did not see it had it called to their attention by the cries of outraged Republicans. Johnson's media strategists had counted on the fact that once would be enough to stimulate substantial comment about one of Goldwater's weakest areas--nuclear responsibility.

About ten days after the "Daisy Girl Spot" came another cruel political spot, this time dealing with the test ban treaty. This film presented a beautiful little girl licking an ice-cream cone while a gentle, motherly voice in the background explained that children needed Vitamin A and calcium, not strontium-90 or cesium-137. Goldwater, the voice said, was against the test ban treaty. Another television spot dealt with social security. This film, showing two hands tearing up a social security card, was shown over and over during the campaign and probably had greater penetration than any other paid political use of television. The question was raised as to why Goldwater simply did not address the nation over television concerning the social security issue. This would have eased a lot

of minds. But, he did not do this. Thus, this television spot had an amazing amount of impact. Another television spot showed a wooden East Coast falling into a hidden swimming pool and being moved away by a hidden swimmer. An announcer recalled that Goldwater had said that the country would be better off if the Eastern Seaboard could be sawed off and let float out to sea.

Other television spots portrayed Goldwater as only being concerned with the welfare of Arizona. One, with the backdrop of the Grand Canyon, explained to the audience that Goldwater was opposed to federal benefits everywhere except in his home state of Arizona. Another spot assured voters, and especially Republican voters, that if they had doubts about voting for Goldwater, they were in pretty good company. The screen showed a man walking away from the San Francisco Convention stepping on posters bearing pictures of Rockefeller, Romney and Scranton. The voice then illustrated that these very Republican leaders were worried about Goldwater's policies. A four and a half minute television appeal was entitled, "Confessions of a Republican." This again illustrated that the Republican party was not 100 percent behind Goldwater and that he was reckless and vacillating in his policies.

As was mentioned previously in the Goldwater section of this paper, Johnson did refuse to debate Goldwater. He claimed that Goldwater was beating himself on issues and

that some of his positions were so preposterous that there was nothing to debate. Harris, one of LBJ's staff, did not think it was "good business" for an incumbent candidate to debate.[22] According to Harris, the incumbent had to be responsible while the other party need not be. He might have to conceal facts not known to the other candidate. For the balance of the campaign, the Republicans occasionally jabbed at LBJ for his unwillingness to debate.

Johnson's own personal use of television was geared to show him at his best. Mrs. Johnson had commented in a television interview that when the President spoke extemporaneously, "He is infinitely better, and much more himself."[23] Perhaps this can be connected to his background. The less formal the situation the more at home Johnson would become. LBJ was not at his best in a half-hour show such as "Face the Nation." His best stretch was 12 to 15 minutes.[24] His managers had originally booked five television half-hours through the campaign with a full hour reserved for election eve. At least one half-hour program was canceled and then reinstated for the Jenkin's case. Election eve was cut to 30 minutes. Only one of these

---

[22]Cummings, The National Election of 1964, p. 129.

[23]Kessel, Goldwater Coalition, p. 250.

[24]Kessel, Goldwater Coalition, p. 250.

half-hour broadcasts need be elaborated upon because it was the best summation by staff planners of what the Democratic party had to say about the candidate of the opposition. They stated that he was a radical. Johnson pointed out that his opponent's ideas were a "radical departure from the historic and basic currents of American thought and action."[25] He ended by challenging America with the statement: "The choice is yours."[26]

What, then, was the television image of Lyndon Baines Johnson? Theodore White said that LBJ brought a "finished style of country oratory to a national audience."[27] White then went on to liken LBJ to an actor giving a top performance. According to Frank Shakespeare, anything other than an honest portrayal of oneself on television will come across to the audience as being phony.[28] It is now history that Johnson did fall in public opinion during his last four years as President. The fact remains that he did win the election. Perhaps the key to this was not in Johnson's own image, but in the image which he managed

---

[25]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 356.

[26]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 356.

[27]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 357.

[28]Frank Shakespeare, Radio-TV News Directors Association Conference, Detroit, October, 1969 (tape recording).

to give his opponent. Therefore, LBJ used television not to directly create his own image, but first to establish a negative image of his opponent. Only after this had been done did Johnson concentrate on presenting himself as the opposite to Goldwater. Johnson was really a forceful, hard, tough, rough and aggressive leader. He played up the folksy role during the election and even during his term in office. Once again, Johnson owed his 1964 victory to the successful negative "trigger-happy" image that he was able to give to Goldwater. He owed his decrease in popularity over the next four years to himself. Shakespeare believed that if Johnson had projected himself to the people as what he was rather than what he would liked to have been during his four years in office, he might have been more effective as a President.[29]

During the campaign, Johnson, in his shrewd political way, offered an image that varied sufficiently to please the majority of the audience. There was the image of "Mr. President"--the solemn grave man who appeared on television to talk of the seriousness of the nuclear bomb. There was the "Kindly Lyndon"--shown reaching out to the crowds in his desire to be one of the people. There was also "Imperial Lyndon," "Fair-Share Lyndon," "Old Doc Lyndon," "Lonely Acres Johnson" and "Sheriff Johnson." LBJ had thought that

---

[29]Shakespeare, Radio-TV News Directors Association Conference.

he had found a way that he could be the President of his ideals and successfully camouflage his own identity. He was to find that this was not true.

The results of the election are well known. Johnson won by a landslide. Here were the final electroal results:

Johnson-- 486

Goldwater-- 52[30]

Even the voter turn-out was high--62.0 percent.[31] It was generally felt that television's usage in a political campaign did affect the voter turn-out. There was not enough data at hand to permit a categorical judgement on the effect of television so there was no evidence that television did anymore than any other media to influence voter behavior.

---

[30]White, The Making of the President, 1964, cover.

[31]White, The Making of the President, 1964, p. 357.

CHAPTER 3

PART 1

NIXON - 1968

Joe McGinniss in his book, The Selling of the President, set forth the idea that when a candidate used television to become elected to a political office, his ideas did not matter.[1] Rather, it was his image with which the public was concerned. The candidate did not have to be a statesman or a crusader, he only had to show up on time. The television politician had no need to concern himself with his predecessors for he would not be measured against them. He would be compared to Mike Douglas. Because of this, his style became very important to his success. He had to possess the ability to project electronically. The 1968 Presidential election was proof that the above theory was a reality. The election was referred to by McGinniss as the first "electronic election." Nixon, the winner by a small margin, was the "computerized candidate." Humphrey, the loser, was the "humanized candidate." Nixon's use of the broadcast medium was unique in that no candidate had ever used such completely controlled television.

---

[1]Joe McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968 (New York: Trident Press, 1969), p. 29.

The background of Richard Milhous Nixon was discussed in detail in Chapter One of this thesis. Nixon's background since 1960 was crucial to his image development. In 1960, Nixon suffered a terrible political setback in his defeat for the Presidency but once again, his Quaker training convinced him of the importance of hard work, diligence and luck. These, he firmly felt, would bring him to success. After his defeat for the governorship of California to Pat Brown, he became a lawyer with a top New York law firm. These years were extremely important to his success as a television politician. Here he learned three things that changed his view of the world and of himself.[2] First, Nixon achieved a sense of "having made it." Secondly, he observed and became closely acquainted with John Mitchell who was to be his 1968 campaign manager and other members of the firm. Thirdly, Len Garment, a young eager junior partner of the firm, introduced him to people in the world of broadcasting. Nixon became wealthy as a lawyer, but he was not happy. He had been deeply involved in politics and wanted to go back to it. In 1952, he had publically told audiences that he was not a quitter. He went on to prove this true. In 1968, Nixon made what has been referred to as one of the greatest historical returns to politics that the world had ever witnessed. To understand how he

---

[2]Theodore White, The Making of the President, 1968 (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1959), p. 45.

achieved his success, one must study his use of the broadcast medium. This examination must begin with an examination of his personal characteristics.

As has been mentioned before, Nixon was strong willed and believed in perseverance. He possessed an energy and drive to try in the face of the worst failures. Fortunately, Nixon was able to learn from his mistakes. While he was with the law firm, he learned to watch and use the medium of television. He also realized its importance in a political election. Thus, these years with the law firm did not completely divorce Nixon from the political scene. Although he did not seek the 1964 nomination for himself, he helped campaign for Goldwater and later, helped rebuild the shattered forces of the Republican party. The year 1966 was an inviting one for Nixon. The Vietnam ache was felt in almost every home and on every campus. Riots were raging. Johnson was quickly losing supporters and all of the big Republican leaders as Rockefeller, Romney and Reagan were preoccupied by home state struggles. Along with his campaign group known as "Congress '66," Nixon helped elect Republican congressmen. In that election the Republicans swept up 47 seats.[3] By 1968, Nixon was definitely back on the political scene and running for the Presidency.

---

[3]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 49.

The 1968 campaign required a completely new image of Nixon. In order to achieve this, a completely new campaign approach was required. The 1960 campaign had been badly managed with too many over-lapping and conflicting authorities.[4] Correspondents had not been treated well. As their resentment for Nixon had grown, it spread to the nation in their reports. Nixon did not really understand the broadcast medium and therefore he did not know how to use it.[5] He presented himself to the American people and they did not like the image. This was understandable because he came across as cold, grumpy, aloof and indifferent. He claimed that he had lost the election because the American voter was an adolescent whom he had tried to treat as an adult.[6] Possibly the most influencing factor in the campaign was Nixon's fear of the medium. He considered it a gimmick and its use as a political tool offended him. It had never been around when he had learned to play the game of politics. Because his attitude was wrong, he did not accept television as a necessity and therefore he did not use it correctly. McLuhan said of the 1960 election,

---

[4]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 327.

[5]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 32.

[6]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 33.

"Without TV, Nixon had it made."[7] Nixon was defeated in 1960. As Joe McGinniss said, "But Nixon survived, despite his flaws, because he was tough and smart, and--some said--dirty when he had to be."[8] He was elected President of the United States in 1968.

The 1968 campaign reflected much that Nixon had learned and experienced. This time, the control radiated from the staff plane. Nixon had made the statement several months before that the entire campaign would be built around television. He had said, "We're going to build this whole campaign around television. You fellows just tell me what you want me to do and I'll do it."[9] Seventy-five percent of the difference between 1968 and 1960 was within Nixon himself.[10] While he had been out of office he had taken time to learn about television. He had listened to the people in the medium and he had watched. During those years, audiences grew up and television had grown up. When Nixon examined his mistakes, he understood

---

[7]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 33.

[8]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 32.

[9]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 81.

[10]"How Nixon Changed His TV Image," U.S. News and World Report, (February 2, 1970), Vol. LXVIII, No. 5.

what to do correctly and he gained confidence. He listened to what the television experts told him and he followed their strategy. Roger Ailes, one of the most important medium experts in the campaign, believed that the candidate must set the style himself.[11] Nixon was mature and had had years of political experience. To attempt to change his style would only cause confusion and make him insecure. The television experts did eliminate those elements which they found to be distracting or annoying in the performance. For example, Nixon had a terrible habit of clearing his throat on camera. The medium experts instructed him to stop this. Nixon also made a hissing "S" sound in his speech which the medium experts attempted to overcome. Lastly, they worked with Nixon to improve his poor eye contact with the camera. Always, the medium people made certain that Nixon understood the technical procedures completely. They provided him with a diagram of the set up for each television show and made certain that he understood exactly where each camera would be placed. All of this contributed to building Nixon's confident air on television. Gone completely were his snarl and self-pity of 1960. The years had made him mellow and he appeared to his audience to be genuine and authentic.[12]. Also, the

---

[11]"How Nixon Changed His TV Image," U.S. News and World Report, 68.

[12]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 324.

1968 campaign saw a great improvement in the Nixon relations with the press. Though the relationship was never to reach perfection, no longer did the press ignore him. White referred to Nixon's 1968 image as being "voracious with an almost insatiable curiosity of mind."[13] Nixon seemed to have a hunger to learn, to find out how things operated, to understand and explore. Most important of all, he had learned how to listen to the advice of others. He was no longer fully dependent upon himself.

The above has described the Nixon image change from 1960 to 1968. To better understand just how this change came about, it would be best to examine in detail the 1968 television campaign. The first important aspect of the campaign shed light on why Nixon's attitude toward television was so negative in 1960. Between the Nixon medium experts and the campaign leaders, there was a constant battle in progress. The staff tried to discourage Nixon's use of television in the campaign. Particularly in favor of this was Nixon's campaign manager, John Mitchell.[14] Aside from him, other old political friends of the old school advised Nixon not to rely on television. In the opinion of these people, all Nixon had to do was use

---

[13]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 143.

[14]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 81.

the words "law and order" in each speech six times in order to win. Of course, Nixon's television experts held strongly to their beliefs and insisted upon building a positive television image for the candidate. Each expert contributed a little of his experiences and knowledge to build the 1968 Nixon image.

William Gavin, a school teacher, contributed some very sound advice for the campaign.

> Voters are basically lazy, essentially uninterested in making an effort to understand what we're talking about . . . Reason requires a high degree of discipline, of concentration; impression is easier."[15]

An example of Gavin's theory was used in the New Hampshire primary. This technique was a saturation by film. Only the best shots of the candidate were shown. Following frequent presentations of this film came a quick parading of the candidate in the flesh. This was to insure the fact that he became for the public a living presence. It was essential, according to William Gavin, that Nixon came across larger than life, the stuff of a legend. It was only the aura which surrounded charismatic figures that drew followers, not the figures themselves. Gavin stressed that the aura must be built by use of television gimmicks.

Another important television expert involved in the Nixon campaign was Harry Treleaven. His position was the

---

[15]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 36.

creative director of advertising. It was up to him to work on the more serious side of Nixon's personality problems and especially his lack of humor. Treleaven believed that one could not be too obvious about humor.[16] To explain this, he referred to Romney's cornball attempts to be funny and how they actually did him harm. If Nixon had to be witty, then, Treleaven insisted, a professional should write his words. Also, Treleaven suggested that Nixon be presented as often as possible in a situation rather than in a cold studio.

Frank Shakespeare, a CBS executive on sabbatical, was also part of the advertising media group. He eventually became the most important medium expert in the campaign. He believed firmly in presenting the candidate's true self to the American people.[17] If the candidate portrayed himself as he really was, then the public would buy the image. For example, during the first debate with Kennedy in 1960, Walter Cronkite asked the candidates what they thought of the swear words used by Harry Truman during his term as President. Nixon replied that the Presidency was an awesome office and that children might be watching the speech.

---

[16]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 37.

[17]Frank Shakespeare, Radio and Television News Directors' Conference, Detroit, October, 1969 (Taped recording).

Therefore, the President should be a symbol of the country. Kennedy simply answered that he would leave that problem up to Mrs. Truman. In his answer, Kennedy was being his own charming, witty self. Nixon, in his answer, was phony. If he had been true to himself, he would have replied that the question was absurd and that they should move on to the next question. With the help of men like Frank Shakespeare, Nixon learned to portray his own true image to the public. Shakespeare summarized what he felt to be television's importance in the campaign by saying:

> Let me say this. Without television, Richard Nixon would not have a chance. He would not have a prayer of being elected because the press would not let him get through to the people. But because he is so good on television, he will get through despite the press. The press doesn't matter anymore.[18]

Roger Ailes, another of the Nixon television entourage, was mostly concerned with the idea of portraying the image that Nixon himself had developed.[19] He also stressed the importance of the candidate's understanding the technical end of the set up. Ailes expressed his belief that after the 1968 Presidential election, all other candidates would have to be performers in order to be elected. He placed great stress on the power of the broadcast

---

[18]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 58.

[19]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 69.

medium. To work with Ailes, Shakespeare, Treleaven and Gavin, the Nixon staff hired the agency Fuller and Smith and Ross. Together, these people made up the advertising staff of the campaign.

Nixon possessed several strong advantages in this campaign. To begin with, he had learned much during his years of exile. He had learned to listen to others and to ask aid from them when he needed it. He had learned to know himself and the true image he would project. A second advantage was the smoothness of the Republican convention as compared to the Democratic scandal. The Democrats were bound to the image of violence and chaos from the very beginning of the campaign. The biggest advantage that Nixon possessed was his newly found belief in himself. When Shakespeare asked him if he would run for election in 1968, Nixon replied that only a few men can rise to the position to run for the Presidency. Yet, only a few have that certain "thing." Nixon believed that since he was one of those men, he had to run in order for the system to operate. He concluded by saying that he did not know what would happen but, "I have to go for it."[20] Another advantage concerns the fact that he no longer had to defend his own or the party's administration. Lastly,

---

[20]Shakespeare, Radio and Television News Directors' Conference.

Nixon wanted to win. Politics was in his blood and he could not do without it.

> . . . Probably the greatest magnet of all is those who have known great crisis--its challenge and tension, its victory and defeat--can never become adjusted to a more leisurely and orderly pace. They have drunk too deeply of the stuff which really makes life exciting and worth living to be satisfied with froth.[21]

Nixon also embarked upon the 1968 campaign with several disadvantages. By the summer of 1967, he was still marked as a loser. He would have to make the greatest political return in history in order to win. Several Democratic candidates for the Presidency had waited four years and had then successfully run for election. Nixon waited eight years and was the first Republican to achieve such an outstanding return to politics.

Perhaps the goal of the 1968 Nixon campaign can be called the attempt to achieve the true Nixon image. The achievement of this goal was to be based on the use of the great media to influence the public. Through these, Nixon would reach the people. The situation looked fairly bright. The country was moving to the right and he was the ablest conservative. Nixon only had to prove that he was electable. To do this, he had to win the primaries by using television. The question that the Nixon staff asked

---

[21]David C. Whitney, The American Presidents (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969), p. 356.

themselves was how they should present their candidate. Because of Nixon's failure in the debates of 1960, the experts knew that they could not package the candidate. He had to be shown as he really was in life. The television experts decided to use a spontaneous approach with no rehearsal. It would be a one-to-one approach in which Nixon would be the most relaxed. The primaries in New Hampshire set Nixon's frame for the media program. He would be real, yet use only controlled television. He would reach the nation by spots and not only the commercial half-hour approach used in the 1960 campaign. He would depend upon the medium of television and not on barnstorming to convey his message. For the primaries, Nixon taped a television show where he was questioned by six citizens. No rehearsal was used. The video showed reactions of the studio audience to what Nixon said. The people saw Nixon for what he was in real life. The national campaign was patterned after this show except that the actual campaign programs would go live and not be taped in advance.

The first of these half-hour regional shows was to be presented for the campaign opening in Chicago. Nixon's entire day was built around his television appearance. All day he rested and avoided crowds. He used television make-up for the show. According to Roger Ailes, the producer, the set was very masculine. It had a backdrop of

wooden paneling, a blue carpeted center stage platform with chairs arranged in a semi-circle for the panel around the platform. The bleachers for the audience were behind the panel. Before the show, Bud Wilkinson, the Master of Ceremonies, attempted to calm Nixon by joking with him. The actual show began with a film portraying Nixon as he had entered Chicago earlier that noon, arms outstretched, beaming, on top of an open car. Hundreds and thousands of citizens, some volunteers and others recruited, cheered in welcome. This certainly created a contrast with the Democratic convention that had been held one week earlier. The convention had featured Hubert Humphrey, blood, tear gas and violence. That day in Chicago, Nixon was the unifying hero, the man to heal all wounds. There were no crowd disorders, just dignified Republican enthusiasm. Bud Wilkinson appeared next on the studio stage, a placid, composed, substantial, reassuring figure. He introduced Nixon, his friend, as a great man who had won the respect of the world's leaders. Then Nixon appeared. He was grinning, waving, thrusting his way to the blue riser. Suddenly, he represented a true alternative--peace and prosperity to end discord and unwarranted attack.[22] The response of the audience was genuine. Next, the panel began to question

---

[22]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 64.

him. This first panel consisted of a variety of people. There was a Negro, a Jewish attorney, the president of a Polish-Hungarian group, a suburban housewife, a businessman, a representative of the white lower middle class and two newsmen. Nixon stood alone against the panel without even a prop for support. Immediately, the audience became sympathetic to him. He had won before he had begun.[23] All the old concepts of his 1960 image were destroyed that evening for the audience. He had become a leader. There were ten such regional shows presented.

Nixon also used regional commercials in the campaign. He shot a series of very controlled spot commercials over and over again until each was just right. The set for these was designed with a desk and a window for psychological lightness. Nixon, to be informal, either sat or leaned on the desk. Because of the usage of many such spot commercials, 1968 was called the year of the "spots." It was decided that the old half hour exposures were ineffective.

Humphrey wanted Nixon to debate him on national television. Nixon would not consent. Nixon wanted his campaign to be regional. He would use the same speeches and pitches over and over and only the press would be bored. They did not matter, because Nixon had never planned on the

---

[23]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 64.

press for support. Finally, after much criticism that he was trying to avoid a national confrontation, he went on "Meet the Press" and "Face the Nation" just before the campaign's close. As a result of his regional repetition, by October, the television networks were having difficulty in finding novelties in his speeches.

At the time when Nixon's old political advisers began to convince him of the unimportance of television, Gene Jones was hired by the Nixon staff. His specialty was still pictures with an audio track in the background. Jones incorporated this idea into political advertisements for Nixon. These commercials were most effective on television and freed Nixon from the burden of doing a film or of making a studio appearance. Jones created eighteen commercials. All were stills with the audio except for one done on film that was called "Woman." This commercial showed a woman walking alone down a New York City street at night. An announcer's voice told how violent crime was becoming in the country. The audience was certain that the woman would never reach her destination without being mugged--but she did. Each of these commercials cost about $25,000.[24] One of the commercials using stills opened with fast paced still scenes from Vietnam showing wounded

---

[24]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 112.

soldiers. Nixon's voice assured the audience that he would end the war honorably. The spot closed with a montage of soldiers' faces and ended with a close-up of an American GI. According to Joe McGinniss, the power of this commercial lay in the ineffectiveness of war.[25]

The Nixon campaign in the South was run by Fred LaRue. The basic goal was to prevent Southerners from voting for George Wallace. To achieve their goal, Nixon's staff came up with a ballad type song in current country and western music style. The ballad was called "Bring Our Country Back," and was sung by nationally famous artists over radio and television. The song was technically written so that local talent could also carry it off.

The Nixon campaign also made use of celebrity endorsements. Connie Francis sang the national Nixon jingle and was interviewed on a sixty second spot. The spot was run over television during "Laugh-In," and the next day Jack Gould, of the "Times," wrote that it had embraced all the ills of an oversimplified campaign spot.[26]

Nixon, as was mentioned before, had been criticized for avoiding national coverage of television. Finally, in the last weeks of the campaign, he went on both "Meet the

---

[25]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 90.

[26]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 77.

Press" and "Face the Nation." He did quite well on both of these because he had learned, according to Frank Shakespeare, to use the medium and not to fear it.[27]

For election eve, Nixon had scheduled two, two hour telethons--one for the East Coast and one for the West Coast. This meant four hours of television. Voters phoned their questions into the studio where attractive operators wrote them down. These girls included Tricia and Pat, of course, and a Negro girl as well. Runners would then bring the questions to the producer's table. From here, the questions went to a back screening room where the staff substituted similar questions which they had written previously. Bud Wilkinson read the questions on the air and gave credit to the caller. Nixon then read the answers from a studio card. This show also opened with a Jackie Gleason endorsement on film. Nixon asked that the cameras be close enough so that he could be physically conscious of them. He wanted an intimacy between himself and the American people. His goal was to converse on the program in a low key, easily and informally. Under no circumstances did he want to make a speech. He said that he needed the cameras close to push him into low key so he could enter the audience living rooms. Nixon did a fine job on these

---

[27]Shakespeare, Radio and Television News Directors' Conference.

telethons because he was relaxed and in a good mood. He sat in a chair and crossed his legs. His smile seemed less forced than usual. Both his voice and rhetoric were pleasantly subdued. This program caught Nixon's style at its peak. He leaned into the cameras to answer questions in a conversational tone. To break the monotony of the program, Wilkinson walked across the room to where Julie and Tricia were answering the phone and asked them what seemed to be uppermost on the callers' minds. Then, David Eisenhower read a letter from his grandfather in an earnest fashion. There was a chat with Mrs. Nixon. She answered a couple prepared questions and the audience applauded. So conditioned was she to applauding as a response that she smiled and began to applaud with the audience. Realizing what she had done, she jerked her hands to cover her face while Ailes in the control room switched to another shot. According to McGinniss, Nixon came over as pensive and concerned but his extreme fatigue did cause him to make some minor mistakes.[28]

The results of the 1968 campaign were most interesting. Toward the end of the campaign, Humphrey began gaining ground and Nixon began losing some of his. Here were the results:

---

[28]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 149.

Nixon --31,770,237 votes or 43.40%
Humphrey--31,270,533 votes or 42.72%
Wallace -- 9,906,141 votes or 13.53%[29]

Nixon's margin was only four times as large as the margin he lost to Kennedy in 1960. Here were the electoral votes:

Nixon --302
Humphrey--191
Wallace -- 45[30]

The question was asked as to why Nixon, with such a controlled campaign, begin to lose ground. He had had the perfect campaign, the computer campaign. Yet, this perfect television campaign had, according to Joe McGinniss, ". . . collapsed beneath the weight of Nixon's grayness."[31] There were many basic reasons for this. One was Humphrey's gradual divorce from the Johnson policy on Vietnam and another was the last minute return of wayward Democrats to the party. Perhaps another contributing factor was Nixon's personality. If the medium experts were to show him walking on a beach, as he loved to do, the public would not buy it. McGinniss stated that Nixon just had the type of personality that people could not associate with

---

[29]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 396.

[30]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 396.

[31]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 161.

such an activity.[32] The fact remained that Nixon won the election. He had had a very controlled, technically perfect campaign. Roger Ailes stated in connection with the campaign, "This is the beginning of a whole new concept. This is it. This is the way they'll be elected forevermore. The next guys will have to be performers."[33]

---

[32]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 161.

[33]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 155.

PART 2

HUMPHREY - 1968

To make a comparison of the Nixon campaign with the Humphrey campaign, one must compare an emotion with a computer. Humphrey's greatest asset, his humanistic spirit, was possibly his greatest downfall in the political world. Nixon's cold calculating determination was perhaps the road to his eventual success. Humphrey was born in May, 1911, in a room over his father's drugstore in a small town, Wallace, South Dakota. Hubert was influenced by his father, a true grass-roots independent, one of the few Democrats in a Republican area. In their home, which was very close knit, Hubert's father was boss. He was an exuberant, boisterous, imaginative, authentic village romantic. His basic philosophy was that all things were possible. All of the above were qualities that Hubert himself later acquired. Perhaps the most important was his talkativeness. This can also be attributed, in part, to his father's influence. On the whole, Hubert's childhood was sunlit and happy. When the depression hit, Hubert was forced to leave the University of Minnesota to work in the family drug store in Huron, South Dakota, and study pharmacy. Six years later, he returned to the university to complete his

degree. His experience with poverty had left no scars because his personality had already been formed. Humphrey went on to get a master's degree in political science. His first political job was mayor of Minneapolis. It is important to note why he was elected to this position. Usually, the Republicans held the office, but Humphrey convinced the Democratic chairman to join the Democrats and the Farm Labor Party against the Republicans. This showed that Humphrey did possess shrewd political ability.

Humphrey was an open and gregarious man. He was little given over to the pretention which seemed to affect many politicians. A definite personality trait was his genuine love of people. This was easily seen when he was in a crowd for his reaction was most positive. He was often late for his next engagement because he stayed to shake so many hands. The Humphrey trademark was a wide happy smile, but for all this pleasant exterior, he was a determined fighter. Just as Humphrey's pleasant disposition can be traced back to his happy childhood, so can another of his traits--his compulsive speech. This compulsion to talk made Humphrey appear to have an overbearing personality. His style of speech reminded one of a Midwestern revival preacher of a generation ago. Some regarded him as too old fashioned for the period in which high values were placed on a cool approach. He was also a human dynamo, full of energy and drive. Humphrey's exuberance and

compulsion to talk were inherited from his father and harbored by life in the small town where talk and chatter were general pastimes.

The firendliest personality does not necessarily create the best political image. Humphrey was not universally well liked.[34] When he started his career, he was an ultra-liberal and this meant trouble for his political image. Political maturation led him to abandon his extreme positions but he was still viewed by some as a radical. Humphrey was viewed as a talking machine by some and American voters tended to distrust a talker.[35] He would babble, exhort, over extend himself and then attribute it to glands and the days of being the "know-it-all kid" in his father's drugstore. He has always had difficulty in making a direct, clear statement concerning an issue. It has often been said of him that he made so many conflicting statements and said them in so many conflicting ways that he frequently did not make sense. One of Humphrey's aides said of him:

> The trouble with Humphrey is he never takes time out. He's never alone with himself. If the guy would only

---

[34]Harold Faber, The Road to the White House (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company), p. 124.

[35]"The Humphrey's: The Right image for '68," U.S. News and World Report, Vol. 65, (September 9, 1968), p. 124.

> sit down with himself and say, 'What am I all about?' But he's afraid to ask himself that question.[36]

Newsmen never took what he said seriously. This did not aid political credibility or image. Another blow to his image was that Humphrey never had the chance to shine on his own but had always been in someone else's shadow. As a result, he became just like any other politician. Presidential material must be different. Another drawback to Humphrey's political image was the fact that first impressions of him were often negative. One White House official said that his first impression of Humphrey was terrible.[37] He said that Humphrey acted as though he had come to Washington to take over. He bragged about being mayor and many people turned away from him. Lastly, because he loved people, he was almost incapable of saying "no" to the request of any human being. He had trouble turning down marginally important or inconsequential requests for his time and effort.

A further understanding of Humphrey's political image can be seen in a comparison to that of Richard Nixon.[38]

---

[36]Robert Sherrill and Harry Ernest, The Drugstore Liberal (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1968), p. 6.

[37]Sherrill and Ernest, The Drugstore Liberal, p. 11.

[38]"H.H.H.'s Catch-Up Campaign," Newsweek, Vol. 72, (November 4, 1968), 29.

Both were small town boys. While Nixon wanted things clear cut, Humphrey wished to experiment. Both were civic minded politicians, but both favored different types of community organizations. For example, Nixon would have raised money for the high school football team while Humphrey would have raised money for missionaries. Nixon set a pace with mechanistic efficiency and calm calculation while Humphrey was sporatic and humanized. Humphrey stated concerning this:

> I think American politics ought to be humanized, not mechanized, not computerized. You ought to find out what the fellow is really like--look at him, feel him, smell him, hear him. That's what a campaign is about.[39]

Humphrey, at his best in a speech, conveyed a depth of sensitivity that Nixon could not match. At his worst, Humphrey was an endless exercise in self-interruption.[40]

To complete an examination of the Humphrey image, two more factors must be considered. First, Humphrey had a good family image. Muriel, his wife, was herself a skilled politician. Their four children were all over twenty and successful. A last factor was rather negative. Humphrey did not possess those qualities that Americans seemed to prefer in their Presidents--reserve, loftiness

---

[39] "H.H.H.'s Catch-Up Campaign," Newsweek. p. 29.

[40] "H.H.H.'s Catch-Up Campaign," Newsweek. p. 29.

and what psychologists called the father image.[41] A woman reporter said of him, "Mr. Humphrey is so accessible, so friendly and so unpretentious that it is hard to think of him as a potential President."[42]

Like all of the other Presidential candidates mentioned in this thesis, Humphrey began the campaign with certain problems which he had to overcome. First, an obvious disadvantage was that Humphrey had been identified with the politics of an unpopular President. He had not shown how his policies differed from those of Johnson. Another disadvantage was that Humphrey amazed people with his oversimplified views of everything. After his Asian trip in 1966, which he had made for Johnson, he issued a very oversimplified view of Communism to the American public. Another obvious disadvantage was the Democratic convention held in Chicago. The medium pictured for the public the clubbings and violence that had occurred. All of the proceedings were dominated by the big city boss, Daley. Humphrey's name was linked to all of this. Deep divisions occurred within the party. A young congressional candidate said, "A lot was lost in Chicago. I lost my voice shouting. Mayor Daley lost his image, and the

---

[41]"The Humphrey's: The Right Image for '68," U.S. News and World Report, p. 17.

[42]"The Humphrey's: The Right Image for '68," U.S. News and World Report, p. 17.

Democrats may well have lost the election."[43] The campaign, from this point on, was chaotic. Humphrey was always late because he would get to talking with someone in the crowd. He got carried away by the moment. The last disadvantage was that Humphrey never learned to use television. He had stated, "The biggest mistake in my political life was not to learn how to use television."[44]

Humphrey also went into the campaign with some advantages over his opponent. First, Nixon was marked as a loser. Nixon would have to make a miraculous political return in order to win. Humphrey had a much better relationship with the press than did Nixon. This was because of his excellent press secretary, Norman Sherman. Humphrey was human and he portrayed human emotion. He loved to be with his crowds. He was adept at rallies and often called people by their first names. He read their name tags but they wondered if he remembered them from the previous year. Humphrey also had good eye contact with the crowd.

Humphrey had a team of media experts with him that presented their theories on the best usage of television. Tony Schwartz, a television film and documentary film producer, was part of the Humphrey campaign. He stated, "The

---

[43]Peter Schrag, "From Chicago to November," Saturday Review, Vol. 51, (September 21, 1968) p. 19.

[44]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, Cover.

attitude of this country toward anything in the world can be changed overnight with television."[45] He created masterful spots that were anti-Nixon and anti-Agnew in theme. One of these consisted of an elderly man laughing hysterically and at the end he gasped--"Agnew for Vice President." On the screen a card read--"This would be funny if it wasn't so serious." The laughter faded away. Because Humphrey sponsored the treaty against nuclear proliferation, Schwartz felt that he had an advantage over Nixon who had hesitated about signing the treaty. To play up this fact, Schwartz created the count-down commercials. These began with countdowns in English, French, Russian, Chinese and ended with stupendous rocket blast-offs. The commercial climaxed with Humphrey calling for an end to the arms race.

Muheim, a television film writer, was master of comic gifts. He possessed a hatred for Nixon.[46] Thus, he created one minute spots to poke fun at Nixon and at the foot-in-mouth tendencies of Spiro Agnew.

Another medium expert, Shelby Storck, felt that the media projected a totally false image of Humphrey and said it would be a challenge to portray the true image.[47] He

---

[45]"Selling of the Produce Named H.H.H.," New York Times Magazine, (October 13, 1968), p. 151.

[46]New York Times Magazine, p. 149.

[47]New York Times Magazine, p. 140.

felt that Humphrey was a thoughtful guy, a lot tougher and not at all as affable as he appeared on camera. The Storck technique was to have two cameras following Humphrey around at all times and to put them in the middle of the action. The result would make people feel what it was like to be where Humphrey was and to see him in action. The old voice over film was out of style. It was important to let the character of the candidate write his own script. The final product was the result of careful selection and splicing from thousands of feet of film that reached the cutting room. This was the Schwartz plan of action.

Barry Nova, an account executive in charge of Campaign Planners, a part of Lennen and Newell, was very upset about the treatment of the Democratic convention by the media.[48] He decided to have three general divisions to the campaign. First, there would be a pro-Humphrey segment. This would point out his great past record. Next, would be the pro-Democratic party segment. This would show the benefits fought for by the Democrats that were for the good of the people. These included such bills as medicare and social security, bills that Humphrey himself had supported. Third, Nova decided to go after Nixon on his evasiveness to questions that he was asked.

---

[48] New York Times Magazine, p. 147.

Joseph Napolitan, an abrupt, monosyllabic man, was media campaign manager for Humphrey. He was in charge of the Humphrey image. It was he who put together the packaged presentation of Humphrey.[49] Napolitan dropped the agency Doyle, Dane Bernback, Inc. He claimed that he was not satisfied with their work. Actually, the agency had asked too much money and the Democrats were low on cash at the campaign beginning. Napolitan hired instead Lennen & Newell and subagency, Campaign Planners. Jerry Gross, a Lennen & Newell copywriter, described the difference between the agencies techniques.[50] He said that DDB was a "hip agency" and tended toward the "abstract visual approach--a single image and a documentary statement of Humphrey's record."[51] Lennen & Newell tended to personalize things a bit more. They had a "square" reputation. Instead of talking about medicare, Lennen & Newell would show a man in the street talking about his father getting medicare. The agency wanted to emphasize how people related to Humphrey. Napolitan stated his theory:

> I get the best people, tell them what I want, and then stay the hell out of the way. But I reserve the right to reject whatever they produce. I turned down the

---

[49] New York Times Magazine, p. 45.

[50] New York Times Magazine, p. 149.

[51] New York Times Magazine, p. 149.

> first five television spots I saw on this job. I have a fetish about quality. You can lose votes on television.[52]

To begin an examination of the Humphrey television campaign, it would be best to start with an overview as seen by two reporters, Gorey and Fentress, who covered both campaigns.[53] The Humphrey pace was wild with a rushing quality unlike the Nixon campaign that ran like clockwork. Gorey said that Humphrey appeared to be psychologically incapable of being on time because he had to indulge in verbal overkill. When Humphrey began his campaign he was a bit panicky, but then he gained control of himself. He was the "People's Man." He possessed a quick mind, but at times, he came across as a buffoon. Gorey pointed out that many considered him to be "soft" in that he could not get rid of people but held on to old loyalties. Lastly, the reporters felt that Humphrey did not read or study enough background material. Nixon did this well. Nixon's speeches were perfectly timed and his campaign ran right on schedule.

The televised convention presented a very poor image of Humphrey. As was mentioned, this could have contributed to the loss of the election by the Democrats. Humphrey had

---

[52] New York Times Magazine, p. 139.

[53] "The Candidates Up Close," Time Magazine, Vol. 92 (October 18, 1968), p. 23.

become an insensitive creature who was used by the old bosses. His image was the candidate of the police against the young and peace loving. Via telestar and television microwave, the convention went everywhere. Humphrey became identified with the brutality of the police and the bloodshed that was caused. Humphrey made this statement concerning television and the convention:

> We're going to win, we have to. But if that instrument would stop playing up kooks and rioters, they put them on when the cops are fighting with them; that instrument just recruits trouble.[54]

Tony Schwartz created outstanding commercials for the campaign.[55] The multiple, simultaneous sound tracks of these commercials marked the sophisticated side of Humphrey's advertising effort. The zig-zag thought patterns of the commercials were examples of how Schwartz believed that people thought about everything, including politics. The multiple sound tracks reflected his conviction that the younger generation, freed from the linear print-oriented world of their elders by television, could absorb two or three levels of meaning simultaneously. One of the commercials combined the age-honored political exploitation of mother-hood with the McLuhanesque technique of getting "inside people." The commercial opened with the mother

---

[54]White, The Making of the President, 1968, p. 292.

[55]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 45.

holding the baby. She stated that when the baby grew up, she hoped he would not be afraid of violence as she had. The mother went on to say that she would not be scared if she felt that they understood what it was all about and cared. Then she continued her lullaby. The announcer's voice concluded with the thought that everyman had the right to a decent neighborhood. For every jail Nixon would build, Humphrey would also build a house. For every policeman Wallace would hire, Humphrey would also hire a good teacher. At this point the baby gave a contented sigh. This ad implied a concession to the deep inroads the rival candidates, Nixon and Wallace, made into the Democratic strength on the law-and-order issue. The key word in the commercial was "also" that portrayed Humphrey building as many prisons and hiring as many cops as his opponents, while simultaneously building homes and hiring teachers. The commercial had its first airing between antic acts of the Phyllis Diller Show on September 29. It was also planned to be used as a 60 second radio spot.

The advertising men for Humphrey produced a film called "The Mind Changer." This film was described by McGinniss as being awful in many ways.[56] It showed Humphrey and Muskie crawling down a bowling alley in shirt sleeves. It presented Humphrey wearing a fisherman's hat and getting

---

[56]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 137.

lines snarled on a lake near his home. The film, according to McGinniss, took shameless advantage of the fact that Humphrey had a mentally retarded granddaughter.[57] Though it was contrived and tasteless, it was the most effective single piece of advertising in the campaign because it showed Humphrey as a person. It began with the assumption that Humphrey made mistakes and did have faults as a politician but here he was, laughing, sweating, crying in the open air. This was a drastic contrast to Nixon who depended so heavily on the television studio. The film made a mockery of Nixon's campaign by saying, in so many words, that it was impossible to create humanity. It must be there naturally. Hubert Humphrey had humanity. Nixon possessed a slickness and technical proficiency, but Humphrey had a heart.

Because of lack of funds at the campaign's beginning, the Democrats cut down on television exposure. They were slow in starting their media campaign because, after a poll was taken in September to determine which audiences would be receptive to what types of television advertising, the pollsters would not give out the results until they were paid in advance. In a political campaign, it is a well known fact that it is difficult to collect from a loser.

---

[57]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 137.

At the end of September the money began coming in and the media experts began working overtime to produce their advertising. When the party had enough money, they scheduled their first national telecast for September 30. Humphrey, who had reached the boiling point over the controversy concerning his Vietnam policy, broke from Johnson and wrote his own statement. The Vice President stripped the lecturn of his seal and flag. From this point on, he was completely on his own. After this, the money began to flow into the campaign.

Suddenly it was election eve and the Humphrey telethon was on the air. The Nixon staff was amazed at the openness and freeness of the program. Humphrey was answering questions live. He was actually talking to the people who called into the studio. The stage was a morass of wires and cure cards, cameras and unused folding chairs. McGinniss said that this was a deliberate attempt to point up the contrast between Humphrey "the humanist" and Nixon's "contrived slickness."[58] Humphrey swung freely and easily around the stage with a wandering microphone. The girls answering the phone for Humphrey were not as attractive or as well dressed as the Nixon girls. Humphrey scored an identity by showing a film of Ed Kennedy and Lawrence

---

[58]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 156.

O'Brien on the beach at Hyannis Port. This was a vivid reminder of John Kennedy. Humphrey's theme was--rebuild America with trust.

Joe McGinniss summed up the campaign with these ideas:

> Warmness and sincerity are desirable but must be handled with care. Unfiltered, they can be fatal. Television did great harm to Hubert Humphrey. His excesses--talking too long and too fervently, which were merely annoying in an auditorium--became lethal in a studio.[59]

McGinniss went on to say that the performer, or politician, is a guest brought into the living room to talk to one person at a time. This made it highly improper for Humphrey to shout as he did on television and, as McGinniss phrased it, vomit on the rug.[60] Though Humphrey gained votes at the end, he lost the election. The skilled technician, Nixon, won. Humphrey stated, "The biggest mistake in my political life was not to learn how to use television."[61]

---

[59]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 30.

[60]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 30.

[61]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, Cover.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

The original question of this thesis asked: What was the impact of television upon the image of the Republican and Democratic candidates in the 1960, 1964 and 1968 Presidential elections? After studying in depth each election, an answer can be attempted. To begin with, it is necessary to examine the public's dependency upon the television medium.

First, it is necessary to determine if television does have the potential audience to cause any impact in a political campaign. Conclusive survey data has established that the public does find that television is a credible source of information and that it does depend heavily on it for news. During a political election when interest in politics intensifies, the broadcast media loses a few followers to the newspapers and magazines. This number, especially among the general public, is very small. Thus, television does have the potential audience with which to cause some impact in a political campaign.

A Roper survey taken in 1968, was to determine the "relative desirability of the media." The survey asked

the respondent which news media would be retained if he could have but one choice.

Results: 50% voted for television
24% voted for newspapers
17% voted for radio
5% voted for magazines
4% voted no response[1]

The same Roper survey, taken in November, 1968, was used to determine the credibility of the media. When asked which of the four news media they would believe in case of conflicting reports, the people responded in this way:

Results: 44% television
21% newspapers
11% magazines
8% radio[2]

A survey conducted by the American Institute for Political Communication concerned the impact of a political campaign on media credibility.[3] During an election year, the percentage of community leaders reading newspapers increased 8.4% between mid-September and late October. The percentage of leaders viewing television declined 8.3%. After the

---

[1]The American Institute for Political Communication, Evolution of Public Attitudes Toward the Mass Media During an Election Year (Washington, D.C.: The American Institute for Political Communication, 1969), p. 16.

[2]The American Institute, p. 18.

[3]The American Institute, p. 19.

election, the newspaper level of credibility dropped and that of television rose among community leaders. Among the general public during an election year, the credibility level of newspapers rose 3 percent between mid-September and late October. The credibility of television declined 1 percent. In December, television declined while newspapers made a slight recovery. Changes among the general public were far more moderate than among community leaders.

This survey was also concerned with media news dependence and personal characteristics.[4] The average age of those primarily dependent upon television was 28.1 years. This was significantly lower than in all other media. Males were found to be more dependent upon television. A greater percentage of college trained people expressed their dependence upon newspapers rather than television. The highest percentage of the college group depended on magazines. Democrats were found to be more dependent on the broadcast media than Republicans or Independents. Republicans tended to lean toward the print media. Within a typical day, the general public spent an average of five hours and twenty-one minutes with the mass media. Community leaders generally spent four hours and thirteen minutes a day.

Since the potential already existed, it was up to the political candidate to make use of the television

---

[4]The American Institute, p. 4.

medium in order to create an impact upon the election. Television can change the image of a candidate, meaning it can either help or hinder a candidate. In the 1960 election, Kennedy was the lesser known candidate and was said to be the youth who lacked experience. Nixon was well known and ready to assume the top office after many years in politics. Kennedy, in his campaign, made effective usage of television. Nixon refused to turn to the broadcast medium for election aid. He did not understand it and wanted as little to do with television as possible. Kennedy won the election. In the 1964 election, Johnson used television to create a positive exposure for himself and to lacerate Goldwater. Goldwater was restrained and withdrawn. He failed on television to create a positive image for the public. He refused to run many of the anti-Johnson commercials that his staff had prepared. Nixon, in 1968, having learned his lesson in 1960, depended heavily upon controlled television. Humphrey, on the other hand, reduced the effectiveness of his television appearances greatly by being too talkative and overpowering for the camera close-ups.

The question might now be asked as to how television does make it possible for a political candidate to influence an audience either one way or the other in their thinking. Lang and Lang, in their book, Politics and Television, suggest that there are three elements within a television

campaign that will influence an audience--performance, role and personal image.[5] Great importance lies in the manner in which these three elements combine and what, as a result, will be projected to the audience. Audience responses to projection seem to depend upon two factors: (1) The situation in which the public figure is shown, (2) Preconceptions and imagery about him already disseminated among viewers.[6]

The audience has judged the television performance of a candidate as a separate element. Performance and political capabilities were considered separately. The effectiveness or the candidate's television performance was judged on the basis of his theatrical ability. The performances of John F. Kennedy were considered to be excellent. During the 1960 debates with Nixon, Kennedy was able to impress many viewers with his almost flawless, smooth and competent actions. His bodily movements, his speech, his quick answers and overall appearance combined in an outstanding performance. Richard Nixon, in 1960, was the opposite of Kennedy in performance. Although his campaign began well, his poor physical condition and fatigue prevented him from being at his best. As a result,

---

[5]Kurt Lang and Gladys Lang, Politics and Television, (Chicago: Quandrangle Books, 1968), p. 203.

[6]Lang and Lang, Politics and Television, p. 206.

his appearance, speech and general television performing ability were not as effective as they might have been.

In 1964, Goldwater had difficulty in relating to his audiences. He appeared reserved and withdrawn. As a result, even though what he said might have been extremely important, his performance was not regarded as effective. Johnson, on the other hand, came across to his audiences as a man of the people. He did not attempt sophistication. In fact, his approach was referred to as being "folksy" in style. When compared to Goldwater, who was restrained, Johnson's performance appeared quite positive and much warmer.

In 1968, Hubert Humphrey was an overbearing talkative figure whose performances often alienated his audiences. Nixon, in comparison, was flawless and smooth. Every gesture and word had been pre-planned for him and rehearsed innumerable times. This controlled use of television resulted in his performance being impressive to many of his viewers.

Audiences were also influenced by a candidate's political role. The political role of a candidate concerned his political capabilities--his grasp of subject matter, how well he could cope with the issues and the degree of his political influence among other authoritative figures. John F. Kennedy gained the respect of many viewers by his quick perceptive responses during the 1960 debates.

In all of his television appearances, Kennedy seemed to be a competent politician. Nixon also appeared to be competent in his political role. He, too, was perceptive and quick with his statements and answers. It was the combination of the elements of performance, political role and personal image that resulted in the extremely positive projection of Kennedy to his audiences. It was also the combination of these elements which resulted in the negative projection of Nixon.

In 1964, Goldwater was criticized for not making clear his stand on certain issues. He never refuted adequately the accusations made against him by the Johnson staff. An example of this was the "trigger-happy" image of Goldwater which the Democrats created. The public was left with the assumption that Goldwater was not in the least opposed to nuclear warfare. This had a negative influence upon the audience in their perception of Goldwater as a capable politician in a political role. Johnson, in comparison, was much clearer on his policy statements and more rational in his thinking. He appeared, next to Goldwater, to be the calm, competent politician who would give each matter grave consideration before acting in a crisis. The audience was influenced positively by Johnson's political role.

In 1968, Hubert Humphrey, because of an emotional element inherent within his character, appeared less stable

than Nixon in his political role. Humphrey, though long-winded in his addresses, often said nothing of relevance. This left many viewers with a negative impression of his political capabilities and thus, a negative impression of his political role as a politician. Nixon, in pre-planning every speech and answer, achieved a positive effect on his audiences. He was competent, well read and ready with the facts.

The personal image of a candidate was attributed to his effect upon the imagination of each viewer. The candidate's television appearance combined with his poise and charisma to create a certain image in the viewer's mind. John F. Kennedy managed to create the image of a youthful, intelligent, quick witted and competent politician. He was aided by his background as a war hero, Pulitzer Prize winner and a dashing wealthy senator. Identity feelings were aroused by the candidate within the viewer. In the case of Kennedy, a positive personal image was usually the result. Nixon, who did not possess Kennedy's charm and charisma, could not illicit the same emotional response from the audience. Therefore, Nixon's personal image did not create as great a response.

In the 1964 election, the audience identified with the man of the people--Johnson. Johnson's lacerating attacks caused Goldwater to appear irrational and even dangerous. Because Goldwater did not defend himself against

these accusations, the audience believed them to be true. Therefore, the majority of the viewers identified with Johnson.

In 1968, Nixon created for himself a positive image of the very proper politician. He was always on time, always briefed on his issues and always prepared in his statements. Humphrey was never on time and never articulate, though he spoke a great deal. Even though his humanized approach gained him support among the voters, the majority identified with his proper opponent with his organized, controlled campaign.

Another factor which has had an influence on the image of a candidate was the <u>situation</u> in which he was presented to his audience. The Kennedy staff made use of films in the campaign to present their candidate during his moments of great success. The audience saw Kennedy as the war hero, the Pulitzer Prize winner, the family man and as a colorful figure who led an active and full life. Nixon permitted his staff to use only a minimal amount of film. He preferred being presented directly to the people in order to deliver his monologues to them. He only wanted direct confrontation and considered film and controlled television to be political gimmicks.

In 1964, Johnson presented Goldwater to the public as a power-seeking man who was waiting for an opportunity to blow the world apart with atomic weapons. He himself

was presented in the White House as a calm and deep thinking "father," always concerned about his people. Goldwater would not allow the release of an incriminating anti-Johnson film. He presented himself in dull, uninteresting situations. When he appeared with Eisenhower on the former President's farm in Gettysburg, the television ratings were extremely low. At the same time, the Johnson staff worked night and day to present their candidate competently directing the affairs of his nation from the White House.

In 1968, Nixon allowed his staff to create commercials and films depicting him in his triumphal moments. He was seen by viewers entering cities to the tune of bands and cheering crowds. Because he used controlled television, he appeared extremely capable in all of his interviews. Humphrey was first introduced in his campaign at the Democratic convention in a situation where his name was immediately linked with the police, brutality and Mayor Daley. Humphrey's campaign was not controlled or rehearsed and, as a result, he often seemed ill-prepared on television.

A final factor which influenced a candidate's image was the audiences' <u>preconceptions</u> or <u>imagery</u> of him. It was in this area that Kennedy was at a disadvantage. He was not as well known as Nixon and certainly lacked his opponent's years of experience. For this reason, Kennedy had to work twice as hard on the other elements of image creation in order to compensate. Nixon, on the other hand,

was well known. He was considered experienced and competent. Kennedy used his campaign to build his image which had been previously unknown to the majority of the public.

In 1964, Johnson, the incumbent, certainly was well known. His name had been connected with that of Kennedy, a well liked President. The conditions under which he had assumed the Presidential office assured him the sympathy of the audience. Kennedy had begun various projects which would be a great benefit to the working man. Johnson had the advantage of being connected with these projects. Goldwater, on the other hand, was known as an extreme conservative. He had voted in the Senate against measures which were favored by other moderate Republicans. Even in his acceptance speech for the Republican nomination he had said, "Extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice; moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.[7] Aside from this, Goldwater was not generally as well known as Johnson.

In the 1968 campaign, Nixon was marked as a loser. He was also called "Tricky Dick." His goal was to overcome these negative preconceived notions and prove that he was a winner. Humphrey was associated with the politics of an unpopular President--Johnson. He waited until late in the

---

[7]"Goldwater," Encyclopedia Americana, 38th ed., Vol. 13.

campaign to disassociate himself with Johnson's policies. Also, Humphrey had been the brunt of the usual Vice President jokes for four years. In this election, both candidates had to overcome a negative image during the campaign.

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the candidates' use of television in the last three Presidential elections did have an effect upon image and that image was projected through television to the audience. By the 1968 election, the importance of television was fully realized. Nixon, to a greater degree than was ever done before, planned his entire campaign around television. His use of television was so controlled that his campaign was referred to as the electronic election.[8] Thus, television has not only influenced the audience to visualize a certain image of a candidate, but it has also influenced the candidates' behavior in planning the campaigns. It is likely that future candidates will pattern their campaigns after the television techniques of the last three victorious Presidential candidates. At the close of the 1968 campaign, media expert Rogert Ailes said, referring to the use of political television:

> This is the beginning of a whole new concept. This is it. This is the way they'll be elected foreyermore. The next guys up will have to be performers.[9]

---

[8]Joe McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968 (New York: Trident Press, 1969), Cover.

[9]McGinniss, The Selling of the President, 1968, p. 155.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Cummings, Jr., Milton C. (ed.). The National Election of 1964. Washington, D.C.: Brooking Institute, 1966.

Dollen, Charles. John F. Kennedy, American. Boston, Mass.: Daughters of St. Paul, 1965.

Faber, Harold. The Road to the White House. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965.

Kessel, John Howard. The Goldwater Coalition. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1968.

Kraus, Sidney. The Great Debates. Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1962.

Lang, Kurt, and Lang, Gladys. Politics and Television. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968.

MacNeil, Robert. The People Machine. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

Martin, Ralph G. A Man For All People: Hubert H. Humphrey. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1968.

Mazo, Earl, and Hess, Stephen. President Nixon. London: MacDonald & Company, 1968.

McDowell, Jr., Charles. Campaign Fever. New York: William Morrow & Company, 1965.

McGinniss, Joe. The Selling of the President, 1968. New York: Trident Press, 1969.

McLuhan, Marshall. Understanding Media. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.

Salinger, Pierre. With Kennedy. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1966.

Sherrill, Robert, and Ernest, Harry. The Drugstore Liberal. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1968.

White, Theodore H. The Making of the President, 1960. New York: Antheneum Publishers, 1961.

White, Theodore H. The Making of the President, 1964. New York: Antheneum Publishers, 1965.

White, Theodore H. The Making of the President, 1968. New York: Antheneum Publishers, 1969.

Whitney, David C. The American Presidents. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1969.

Wyckoff, Gene. The Image Candidates. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Periodicals

"How Nixon Changed His TV Image," U.S. News and World Report, Vol. LXVIII No. 5 (February 2, 1970), 68-71.

"H.H.H.'s Catch-Up Campaign," Newsweek, Vol. 72, (November 4, 1968), 29.

Miller, Susan Brown. "Backstage with Dick, Hubie, and George," Vogue, Vol. 152 (October 15, 1968), 96-97.

Nelson, Bruce. "Humphrey: The Happy Warrior Continues His Grim Battle," Science, Vol. 162 (October 4, 1968), 100-104.

Schrag, Peter. "From Chicago to November," Saturday Review, Vol. 51 (September 21, 1968), 19-22.

"Selling of the Product Named H.H.H.," New York Times, October 13, 1968), 139-151.

"The Candidates Up Close," Time, Vol. 92 (October 18, 1968), 23-24.

"The Humphrey's: The Right Image for '68," U.S. News and World Report, Vol. 65 (September 9, 1968), 17-18.

Other Sources

The American Institute for Political Communication, Evolution of Public Attitudes Toward the Mass Media During an Election Year. Washington, D.C.: The American Institute for Political Communication, 1969.

"Goldwater," Encyclopedia Americana. 38th ed., Vol. 13.

Shakespeare, Frank. Radio and Television News Director's Conference. Detroit: October, 1969. (Taped Recording)