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Candidate Attacks and Voter Aversion:
The Uncertain Link Between Negativity and Campaign Satisfaction

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Abstract

We examine the link between how politicians campaign and how voters perceive both them and the campaign generally. We focus on negative campaigning in particular. Drawing on data from the 1998 and 2002 California gubernatorial races, we find that voters do not necessarily perceive changes in advertising tone as they occur. Furthermore, they do not consider all negative advertising unhelpful or uninformative. Finally, those voters who are mostly inclined to support negative campaigning in the abstract—the politically sophisticated—are the least satisfied with campaigns, suggesting that factors other than the tone of advertisements may explain voter discontent with the electoral process.

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I. Introduction

Americans love to hate both negative advertising and political campaigns. Eighty-two percent of Americans believe that "negative, attack-oriented campaigning is undermining and damaging our democracy" and a majority believe that unethical practices in campaigns occur "very" or "fairly" often (58%).[1] The conventional wisdom is that these two aversions must be related. The notion that negative advertising leads to lower turnout (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995) seems to imply this relationship: voters' aversion to negativity produces dissatisfaction with the candidates and the campaign, which in turn leads voters to stay home on Election Day. However, the connection between negative advertising and lower turnout is far from certain (see Lau *et al*. 1999 for a review). One potential explanation for the uncertain reality of "demobilization" is that voters' perceptions of and response to negative campaigning might be more complex than a simple and inevitable aversion.

In this paper, we examine the 1998 and 2002 California gubernatorial elections to investigate whether voters recognize negative advertising and respond with greater dislike for the candidates and the campaign. Our investigation draws on three different sources of data. First, we combine time-series survey data on perceptions of negativity in the 1998 California gubernatorial race with content analysis of advertisements aired during the same time period. This analysis shows how voter opinions about the conduct of the candidates relate to changes in the actual negativity of the race. Second, we analyze a survey of Californians conducted near the end of the 2002 gubernatorial campaign to assess what individual-level characteristics produce aversion to negativity; we then compare these factors to those that influence voter satisfaction with the campaign. Third, we use a series of focus groups conducted in California during the fall of 2002 to explore how people's perceptions of what constitutes a "negative ad" differ.

Each set of evidence illustrates the lack of a one-to-one relationship between negative campaigning and perceptions of negativity, and between aversion to negativity and dissatisfaction with the campaign and candidates. We show that voters do not perceive negativity uniformly or unambiguously. We show that voters do not necessarily see negativity as unequivocally bad. We also show that attributes that lead voters to countenance negativity, the most prominent of which is political involvement, also lead them to quite harsh

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assessments of campaigns generally. Thus, while negative advertising may be distasteful to many, it cannot wholly explain dissatisfaction with politicians and their campaigns.

II. Theory and Expectations

Inconclusive research on negative campaigning and turnout has led scholars first to more nuanced definitions of what constitutes "negative." Jamieson, Waldman, and Sherr (2000) focus on political advertising and argue in particular for a distinction between "advocacy, "attack," and "contrast" advertising. Advocacy involves solely positive messages about the candidate being advertised. Attacks involve solely negative messages about the opponent. Contrast advertising also involves claims about the opponent, but these are paired with statements about the candidate so that the overall message is more balanced. Jamieson and her co-authors write, "when we conflate comparison/contrast with attack under the heading of negativity, we blame candidates for offering a form of discourse that is both informative and accountable" (49). Our own classification of television advertising takes into account this potentially important distinction.

A second line of inquiry concerns voters themselves, and in particular whether and why there is slippage between how they perceive the campaign's tone and how one might objectively characterize that tone. Sigelman and Kugler (2003) examine three campaigns (including one we examine here)—the 1998 California, Illinois, and Georgia gubernatorial campaigns—and find that voters' perceptions of the campaign did not accord with how social scientists would gauge the tone. Moreover, there was considerable cross-sectional variance in perceptions of the campaign, variance that was related to such things as political information, whereby informed respondents were likely to perceive the campaign as more negative. This paper is also concerned with the "slippage" between what actually happens in the campaign and what voters perceive, as well as with the individual-level attributes associated with such perceptions.

We posit that the link between negativity in campaigning and campaign dissatisfaction requires three steps in the minds of voters. First, they have to recognize negativity as such. Second, they have to be averse to the use of negativity, or to a particular instance of negativity. Third, that aversion must then lead them to develop a generalized negative attitude about the candidates and/or the campaign.[2] Only after these cognitive steps have taken place could negativity conceivably produce a decline in turnout or affect vote choice. We hypothesize that none of these steps is guaranteed. First, voters may not recognize changes in negativity—the kind of slippage discussed by Sigelman and Kugler. Second, voters may not oppose all uses of negativity.

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[1] These figures come from a November 1999 survey conducted by Lake Snell Perry & Associates for the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Institute for Global Ethics, and from a September 2000 survey conducted by Yankelovich Partners, Inc. for the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University.

[2] We remain agnostic for the moment on how attitudes about the candidates are related to attitudes about the campaign more generally. It may be that these should be kept distinct, or it may be that they are so strongly interrelated that distinguishing them is unnecessary. Ultimately we will employ indicators that refer to the candidates by name and that refer to campaigns more generally.

Finally, opinions about a campaign and about the candidates will be based on many factors, and negativity could prove relatively minor.

We also hypothesize that there will be cross-sectional differences in this process of attitude formation. We will focus in particular on political involvement, a constellation of related factors that capture engagement with the political process, all of which should increase familiarity with politics: education, interest in politics, and knowledge of politics. Other research shows that such constructs fundamentally shape how people process political information, form attitudes, and act on those attitudes (*e.g.*, Zaller 1992). The central question is, does greater familiarity with politics breed contempt for or complacency with negativity and campaigns? By contempt, we mean that the more voters know and care about the political process, the more they will dislike what they see. On the other hand, it may be that the more voters know and care about the political process, the more desensitized to or savvy they are about its nature. Consequently, more informed and interested voters may be less outraged by campaign practices and may be more sanguine about such things as political attacks.

III. Research Design and Data

Our three approaches each utilize a different source of information. First, we assess how voters perceive negativity over the course of the 1998 California gubernatorial campaign. This campaign featured the Democratic Lieutenant Governor, Gray Davis, running against the Republican Attorney General, Dan Lungren. Davis won in an uncharacteristic landslide, garnering sixty percent of the two-party vote. Conventional wisdom held that Lungren lost because he was "too conservative" for California, *e.g.*, pro-life.

The public opinion data come from a rolling cross-sectional survey commissioned by the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. The rolling cross-section is composed of small daily cross-sections, typically with fifty to one hundred respondents in each. Because it relies on daily interviews, its granularity is fine enough to track changes in opinion very closely, and to capture the impact, whether immediate or delayed, of campaign activity. Rolling cross-sections make the date of interview a random event and thus allow one to identify more precisely temporal effects (see Johnston *et al.* 1992; Johnston and Brady 2002). The Annenberg survey sampled respondents in the San Francisco-Bay Area media market from September 22, 1998 to November 2, 1998.[3] The total sample size was 2,902.

We also measured the tone of the television advertising that ran in the San Francisco media market where the Annenberg respondents lived. These measures derive from data originally collected by the Campaign Media Analysis Group (CMAG), based in Arlington, VA. Their technology tracks satellite

[3] The Bay Area media market includes San Francisco and all communities to the south, up to and including San Jose (*e.g.*, Palo Alto). On the east side of the Bay, it includes Berkeley and Oakland, as well as other communities to the north (Richmond), south (San Leandro, Hayward, and Fremont), and east (Orinda, Lafayette, and Walnut Creek). North of San Francisco, it includes communities in Marin County, such as Sausalito and San Rafael, as well as Napa and Sonoma Counties. It does not extend as far north as Sacramento.

transmissions from the major national networks and recognizes the digital "fingerprint" of various television programs and advertisements. With that fingerprint, CMAG then records when and where each political advertisement ran, and which candidate (or party or interest group) was its sponsor.[4] For the 1998 California governor's race, the CMAG data span the period from September 7 to November 3. During this period, Davis and Lungren aired a total of 3,609 advertisements in this market.[5] Davis aired the majority of these (1,847 vs. 1,762), though Lungren was not far behind, reflecting, perhaps, his hope that he could woo voters in the less reflexively liberal parts of the Bay Area, such as some of the suburban communities.[6]

We combined the public opinion and advertising data so that advertising content in essence became another variable in the survey. The advantages of this merged dataset are several. First, it is ordered by time, so that one can observe campaign effects as they occurred dynamically. Second, there is precise information available about the information environment surrounding the individual; indeed, one can characterize the actual advertising that was aired up to and on the day when the respondent was interviewed. Finally, one can look for campaign effects while both controlling for and conditioning on important individual-level factors, such as partisanship and political attentiveness.[7]

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[4] This technology was first utilized by campaign organizations themselves in 1996, when the Clinton, Dole, and Perot campaigns monitored each other's advertising in real time (Devlin 1997: 1082). Freedman and Goldstein (1999) were the first to demonstrate the power of this data source for political science, using it to argue that negative advertising does not depress turnout (see also Goldstein and Freedman 2002a). Goldstein and Freedman (2000) show further that in Senate elections advertising increases the probability that voters will choose the candidate so advertised (especially when voters themselves watch relatively more television).

[5] Davis aired eleven different ads. Lungren aired twelve. (See Prior (2001) and Goldstein and Freedman (2002b) for a discussion of why it is important to study the actual ads aired in a given market rather than the ones produced overall.) A few further details about the CMAG data are in order here. Initially, CMAG's data from October and November had only vague labels for the advertisements, making it nearly impossible to determine which advertisements they were. After further labor on CMAG's part, they were able to provide information that enabled us to identify almost all of these advertisements. In the San Francisco market, some 186 specific incidences of advertisements had no identification at all—not even an indication of whether they were Davis' or Lungren's—and had to be excluded from the dataset. Three of Lungren's advertisements could not be identified and coded for their content (in San Francisco they aired a total of 375 times). One of Davis' advertisements, which aired 209 times in this market and in which former Speaker of the State Assembly Antonio Villaraigosa endorsed Davis, was in Spanish and so CMAG did not record its content. However, given that relatively few voters watch Spanish-language television, our inability to code its content is not critical. All in all, the vast majority of advertisements (83%) could be identified and coded for their issue content.

[6] CMAG's system also picks up television advertisements aired on behalf of the candidates by third parties. However, in this race their data show very few such advertisements, and none in the San Francisco market in particular. There were advertisements of this sort (*e.g.*, by the Sierra Club) in that year's Senate race between incumbent Democrat Barbara Boxer and her opponent Matt Fong.

[7] In analyzing this same race, Sigelman and Kugler (2003) employ the 1998 NES Pilot Study, which included a 400-person sample in each of three states, California, Illinois, and Georgia. Their measures of campaign content come from newspaper coverage of the races and from a small sample of political ads from the University of Oklahoma's Political Commercial Archive (five ads per candidate). Our combination of CMAG and Annenberg data therefore represents an improvement in that we have a much larger and complete collection of political ads, as well as information on when and how often those ads aired. Furthermore, the public opinion data provide crucial temporal leverage that a cross-section such as the 1998 NES Pilot Study cannot. We also possess similar datasets for the 1998 Illinois gubernatorial race, which we will analyze in future iterations of the project. The only potential disadvantage of the Annenberg data is that in California they were collected only in the San Francisco media market, which is obviously not representative of the rest of the state.

The second empirical task is to examine what factors influence opposition to negative campaigning and how these opinions on negativity relate to overall assessments of a campaign. To do so, we draw on a survey of Californians conducted prior to the 2002 gubernatorial election. The survey has a sample size of 1,814 adult citizens aged 18 and older.[8] It was conducted from October 28 until November 5, 2002 and included interviews both in Spanish and English.

The survey focused on the 2002 gubernatorial race in particular. This race featured relatively unpopular candidates: the incumbent Davis, who had only a 39 percent favorable job rating according to a September 2002 statewide poll, and Republican Bill Simon, who was plagued by questions about his business ethics. Davis dominated Simon in terms of advertising and focused his message on these ethical questions. Unenthusiastic reactions to this race were commonplace. Said Mark DiCamillo of the Field Poll quite early on in the campaign, "It's just a turnoff election. Voters are voting for the candidate they dislike the least, rather than rallying behind the candidate they support. I haven't seen an election like this in my whole career" (*San Diego Union-Tribune*, 5 July 2002). At the election's end, Michelle Allman, a 26-year-old homemaker from San Bernardino County had this to say while standing outside a car wash: "All I cared about was voting for someone besides Davis or Simon. I saw their names, skipped right past them and went to the other ones, and then I did an 'eeny, meeny, miney, mo.' I don't even remember the name of the guy I voted for. Because it didn't matter" (*Los Angeles Times*, 6 November 2002).

During the 2002 election, we also helped design and conduct a series of focus groups in September and October. The six focus groups were held in three different California cities, Walnut Creek (a suburb of the Bay Area), Fresno, and Los Angeles, though participants came from surrounding areas as well. In Walnut Creek, one group was composed of young people aged 18 to 35, and the other of older people aged 55 and above. In both Fresno and Los Angeles, one group was composed of strong partisans and the other of independents or "swing voters."[9] Each focus group had 9-15 participants, and every effort was made to recruit a group of participants diverse with respect to education, income, ethnicity, and party identification. Each session lasted approximately two hours.[10]

We hope that combining these three approaches provides a more complete explanation for voter reaction to negativity. The time-series data from 1998 can illustrate how campaign assessments change in response to campaign events. The 2002 survey can show what factors lead to aversion to negativity and

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[8] The total sample size is actually 2,000, but we removed self-identified non-citizens from the analysis. We thought it theoretically more valid to consider the opinions of only those respondents who are legally able to vote. This is not to say that non-citizens do not or should not participate in politics in other ways. But to examine their attitudes towards a process that they are only able to observe seemed incongruous.

[9] "Swing voters" were defined as partisan independents who said that they usually voted a split ticket.

[10] The Walnut Creek focus groups took place on September 9, 2002. From this point on, we will refer to the group with participants who were 55 and over as "WC1" and to the 18-35 group as "WC2." The Fresno focus groups took place on September 26, 2002. The group of independents will be referred to as "F1" and the group of strong partisans as "F2." The Los Angeles focus groups were held on October 1, 2002. Again, the group of independents will be referred to as "LA1" and the group of strong partisans as "LA2."

campaign dissatisfaction. The focus groups can add depth to and perhaps provide caveats for the quantitative analysis.

IV. Do Voters Recognize "Negative" Campaigning?

The first step in this analysis of opinion and advertising data from the 1998 race was to code the latter for tone. To do so, we examined each advertisement and determined whether it was a positive ad, a contrast ad, or a negative ad, following the proscription of Jamieson, Waldman, and Sherr (2000). A positive ad referred only to the candidate sponsoring the ad, and a negative ad only to that candidate's opponent. A contrast ad contained references to both candidates. Here are examples of each kind:

> Positive (Davis ad): "Gray Davis, a tough, no-nonsense leader. As Assemblyman, he increased sentences for criminals selling drugs. As Comptroller, his audits put scam artists behind bars. He withheld paychecks from politicians until a balanced budget was passed. He went to court and stopped Pete Wilson from raiding public pension funds. As Governor, he'll fight the tobacco industry, protect a woman's right to choose, and stand up to oil companies who want to drill off California's coast. Gray Davis, experiences that will move us forward.
>
> Contrast (Lungren ad): "I'm disappointed that my opponent has chosen to get personal and misrepresent my beliefs on abortion. As a lifelong Catholic, I believe that abortion is wrong. But I understand the need to make exceptions in the case of rape, incest, and when the mother's life is in danger. It's true we have differences. As a parent I think you ought to know if someone intends to perform an abortion on your fourteen-year-old daughter. Gray Davis disagrees. I don't believe taxpayers should be required to pay for all types of abortions. Gray Davis thinks you should. Now that you know the facts, don't you think it's time to get back to the major issues of the campaign?"
>
> Negative (Davis ad): "Is Dan Lungren out of step with California? The *San Jose Mercury News* reported Lungren's voting record was to the right of Newt Gingrich. Time after time in Congress, Lungren voted against education. Against Headstart. Against student loans. Against school lunches. And against education for the handicapped. It's no wonder that for six straight years, Lungren was rated zero by the National Education Association. If education is important to you, make sure it's important to the next governor.

Having coded the ads in this fashion, we constructed a summary measure of advertising tone by simply subtracting the number of negative ads each day from the number of positive ads. This measure in essence assumes that tone is ordinal, with contrast ads "in between" positive and negative ads. Figure 1 displays the trend in this measure for both Davis and Lungren. Two periods of movement are evident, a notable decrease in the volume of positive advertising through September and the first half of October, followed by a comparable increase in positive advertising. This suggests that Davis and Lungren began the campaign (at least in the Bay Area media market) with messages that were on balance positive, but soon thereafter "went negative." However, as Election Day drew nigh, both Davis and Lungren turned positive again, perhaps intending to end the campaign on a warmer and fuzzier note.

[insert Figure 1 about here]

How do these trends in advertising compare to voters' perceptions? The Annenberg survey included a number of questions that measure how voters viewed the behavior of the candidates. Before answering this

series of questions, voters were randomized into one of three conditions. In the first, these questions referred to "the candidates for governor" and did not specify either candidate by name. In the second condition, they explicitly referred to Lungren, and in the third to Davis. The question wording of the measures was as follows:

- "Responsible": "Thinking about the [candidates for governor|governor's race], overall, would you say the [candidates for governor are|Lungren, the Republican, is|Davis, the Democrat, is] conducting campaigns that are very responsible, somewhat responsible, somewhat irresponsible, or very irresponsible."
- "Useful Information": "[Are|Is] the [candidates for governor|Lungren|Davis] giving voters a great deal of useful information, some, not too much, or no useful information at all?"
- "Encouraging": "Would you say that the way [candidates for governor are|Lungren is|Davis is] campaigning is encouraging people to vote and participate in politics, or is it turning people off from politics? Is it [encouraging people|turning people off] a great deal or somewhat?"
- "Negative": "Do you think that the [candidates for governor are|Lungren is|Davis is] conducting a campaign that is very negative, somewhat, not too, or not very negative?"
- "Criticizing": "How much time would you say the [candidates for governor are|Lungren is|Davis is] spending criticizing [their|his] opponent? A great deal of time, some, not too much, or aren't they doing this at all?"

In terms of voters' perceptions of negative campaigning, these last two indicators are obviously the most relevant measures. But it will be interesting to observe how these other measures perform as well. Do voters' beliefs about the two candidates' negativity or level of criticism tend to go hand in hand with their beliefs about how informatively or responsibly the candidates are behaving? If not, then it may be that negative advertising is not necessarily perceived as irresponsible or uninformative or, as argued by Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995), discouraging to voter participation.

To track voter perceptions, we took the daily averages of each of these indicators under the three experimental conditions and then smoothed these averages to separate true opinion change from sampling fluctuations.[11] These trendlines are presented in Figures 2a, 2b, and 2c. In each case, higher values indicate more positive campaign conduct—*e.g.*, more responsible, informative, less negative or critical, and so on. The scale of the y-axis runs from the most negative to the most positive evaluation, which should aid in interpreting the magnitude of the change.

[insert Figures 2a, 2b, and 2c about here]

Figure 2a presents the trendlines for the indicators referring generically to the "candidates for governor." At the outset of the survey (September 22), the mean levels of most of these indicators are close to the mid-point of the scale, with the exception of the frequency of criticism, since the vast majority of respondents, no matter when they were interviewed, believe that the candidates are spending a great deal or some of the time criticizing each other. As the campaign progresses, voters do tend to believe that the

[11] Specifically, we employed the kernel smoothing procedure in Stata 7, with a bandwith of 0.3.

candidates are becoming more negative and more critical. Similarly, voters believe on average that the candidates are behaving less responsibly and are less encouraging of participation; both of these trendlines also dip through the end of September and middle of October. Interestingly, however, the trend line for informativeness ("useful info") remains almost entirely flat. Although voters do perceive the candidates as more negative, less responsible, etc., they do not necessarily see them as providing less and less useful information.

A second notable finding is that at the campaign's end several of these trends, notably responsibility, informativeness, and encouragement, cease their downward slide and actually begin to increase (though it should be noted that at best voter perceptions were only slightly positive in absolute terms at the campaign's end). Figure 1 showed that the candidate advertising became more positive late in the campaign, and it appears that voters also registered this shift. However, the indicators capturing perceptions of negativity and criticism do *not* increase in the same fashion. These trends are essentially unchanging through the latter half of October. Perhaps the candidates' earlier foray into "attack" advertising left such a residue that the positive advertising in the last few weeks was insufficient to cleanse the palate, as it were. Finally, it is worth noting that there are no real strong discontinuities in these trendlines that would indicate a sudden response to a dramatic event or change in the campaign's discourse.

Figure 2b presents the trends in perceptions of Davis. These manifest some similarities to the trends for "the candidates." Perceptions of Davis' responsibility, negativity, and level of criticism became less favorable in the first half of the campaign, during the period when he aired an increasingly large number of negative ads. However, the trendlines for "encouraging" and "useful info" do not display similar movement; indeed, if anything, voters believe that Davis is on average providing a *larger* amount of useful information during this period. Thus, as was the case when respondents were called upon to evaluate "the candidates for governor," increasing negativity in advertising does not translate into less favorable evaluations on every single dimension. A final point: there is no real upward movement in any of these indicators at the campaign's end, even as Davis' advertising became more positive.

Much the same conclusions can be drawn about perceptions of Lungren's campaign conduct, as depicted in Figure 2c. As the campaign progresses, respondents tend to perceive him as more negative, more critical, less responsible, and (slightly) less encouraging of participation. These trends largely transpire early in the campaign and appear impervious to Lungren's mostly positive advertising at the campaign's end. Simultaneously, however, there is no comparable decrease in how much useful information voters believed Lungren was providing. In sum, there appears to be some correspondence between advertising tone and public perceptions of campaign conduct, though not consistently over time, and not consistently across all of these measures of opinion.

A problem with the results as presented thus far is that they do not account for any individual-level characteristics that might affect voters' perceptions. Perhaps the most obvious candidate is voters' own

partisanship. There is good reason to expect that preexisting commitments to a party affect how voters perceive the two major-party candidates (see, *e.g.*, Bartels 2002). In particular, we might expect that voters are likely to perceive their own party's candidate as behaving more righteously, and this may in fact mitigate their reaction when the candidate begins to air negative advertising. This hypothesis seems all the more plausible given that the Annenberg survey's question wording identified Davis as "the Democrat" and Lungren as "the Republican." Figures 3a, 3b, and 3c present trends in perceptions of the candidates' negativity, with separate trendlines for Democrats and Republicans.

[insert Figures 3a, 3b, and 3c]

Figure 3a reports reactions to "the candidates for governor." Not surprisingly, since this question did not separate Davis and Lungren, there are few partisan differences; as before, voters perceive the candidates as acting more and more negatively, until about the middle of October, after which perceptions remained essentially constant. However, Figures 3b and 3c do reveal notable partisan bias. Democrats tend to view Davis as acting positively, though their opinion grows slightly less favorable during the course of the campaign. By contrast, they see Lungren as acting negatively, and increasingly so as the campaign progresses. Figure 3c reveals that Republicans quite naturally have a more favorable impression of Lungren's campaign conduct than Davis'. However, in the early weeks of the campaign this bias narrows, as Republicans actually come to see Lungren as acting more negatively, while their perceptions of Davis remain unchanged. It is not until the end of the campaign that Republicans and Democrats' opinion of Lungren begins to polarize somewhat. Thus it appears that while partisanship does color perceptions of campaign conduct, it does not necessarily render voters impervious to their own candidate's potential "misconduct." [12]

To estimate more rigorously the effect of advertising tone on voters' perceptions, we combined measures of tone with the Annenberg survey data, and then constructed a simple model where perceptions are a function both of tone and party identification (this is the usual seven-category scale, coded such that higher values indicate Democratic partisanship). When Davis and Lungren are the focus of the analysis, we also estimated a model including an interaction term between tone and party identification, since the previous figures suggest that Republicans and Democrats may respond differently to advertising by their own and the opposition party's candidate.

An important question prior to the analysis is how to specify the functional form of the relationship between the volume of advertising and opinion. One possible measure is the simple number of ads aired on the day the respondent was interviewed—*i.e.*, the quantity presented in Figure 1. This measure assumes that the effect of advertising is essentially instantaneous and ephemeral: voters are affected by what they see today

[12] We also examined the effect of political involvement (in this case, an index combining self-reported media exposure (*i.e.*, frequency of reading the newspaper and watching television news), interest in the campaign, and self-reported frequency of turnout). There were few notable or consistent differences in perceptions of the candidates' campaign conduct among different levels of attentiveness, although Sigelman and Kugler (2003) find that political involvement tends to make citizens perceive the campaign as more negative.

but that is gone by tomorrow. Or one could lag this measure by some period of time—one day, two days, *etc.*—if one believes advertising's effect is not instantaneous (though still ephemeral).

A problem with such a measure is that ephemerality is an undesirable assumption. It seems likely that advertising's impact would persist for some period of time. If one assumes that this impact is essentially endless, then a second possible measure is the cumulative number of ads—calculated such that the value of the measure on any given day is the sum of that day plus all previous days. Fan (1988) argues that, while individual media messages have mostly minimal effects, a series of messages can have a substantial cumulative effect. Campaign advertising is just such a series of messages: a small number of ideas or messages or themes repeated over and over for the weeks and months leading up to an election.

However, there is also reason to suspect that advertising's impact is not endless. A barrage of advertising may not be as potent one month after it aired, especially when compared to more recent advertising. This intuition points the way to a measure of advertising volume that is cumulative but also takes into account the likely decay of information. The measure is cumulative in that the amount of advertising on any given day is a function of that day's advertising plus the advertising that has come before. The measure takes into account decay by weighting previous coverage by a factor less than 1, such that over time the value of old information dwindles relative to the value of new information. The actual formula employed is:

$$(\text{Cumulative Advertising})_t = \text{Advertising}_t + [(\text{Cumulative Advertising})_{t-1} \times 0.7]$$

The weighting factor of 0.7 means that the value of information decays to essentially 0 after about two weeks—*i.e.*, information with a value of 1 will have a value of .01 thirteen days later. This measure will thus register large shocks to the information environment, such as a glut of advertising on a particular day, as well as capture the history of information flow to that point. We then lag this measure one day, since respondents may not have seen the advertising that aired on the day they were interviewed.[13]

[insert Table 1 about here]

Table 1 presents the results of the models when "the candidates for governor" was the reference term. As expected, party identification has little effect in these models, since the question did not reference either candidate by name. Moreover, there appears little relationship between advertising tone and any of these measures of perceptions. Only in one case, "encouraging," is there a statistically significant relationship: as the tone of the campaign grew more positive, voters came to perceive the candidates as better encouraging voter participation. In substantive terms, if one compares voters interviewed at the campaign's most negative point to those interviewed at the most positive point, the expected increase in the favorability of perceptions is a modest .275 on a 4-point scale.

[insert Table 2 about here]

[13] We have done some robustness checks using different kinds of ad measures: the raw number (contemporaneous, lagged once, lagged twice), the previous three days' advertising, and the previous weeks' advertising. By and large, the results are substantively similar to the ones we report here.

Table 2 presents models of Davis' perceived conduct. The first model includes the weighted, cumulated measure of his advertising tone as well as party identification. As expected, party identification does have a strong and robust impact on evaluations across all five indicators: Democrats tend to evaluate Davis more positively than do Republicans. However, as in Table 1, advertising tone has little effect. Only in the case of "encouraging" is the coefficient close to significance (p=.08). When interactions between tone and party identification are included (Model 2), there again appear few effects of note. In the case of "useful info" and "encouraging," the interaction terms are close to significance. Their positive sign suggests that it was in fact Democrats who responded more strongly to the Davis' advertising tone.

[insert Table 3 about here]

Table 3 presents models of Lungren's perceived conduct. While party identification continues to have its hypothesized effect, there is little indication that Lungren's advertising tone had any effect on how voters perceived his behavior. This is true regardless of whether tone is interacted with party identification.

The results thus far lead us to several conclusions about whether the public recognizes negative advertising. First, though the tone of both Davis' and Lungren's advertising became notably more negative and then notably more positive over the course of the campaign, voter perceptions were more placid. They appeared to register the growing negativity of the race in late September and early October, but not the growing positivity at the campaign's end—a less-than-complete empirical match that may explain the mostly null multivariate results. It may also be that media coverage later in the race emphasized the campaign's negativity even as the candidates changed tactics, and thus voters' perceptions changed little. An extension of the analysis would be to add measures of media content to supplement the advertising content. Second, even when the public does perceive the candidates as acting more negatively, they do not necessarily see them as providing less useful information or as somehow discouraging voters to participate. This result gels nicely with the section to follow, in which we discuss how voters may differentiate scurrilous from more edifying "attacks." Third, voters' perceptions of the candidates are filtered through their own partisan proclivities. This raises the possibility that, despite voters' professed dislike for attack advertising, they may in fact employ a double standard of sorts, reacting with much more disdain when it is their party's opponent going negative. Finally, the multivariate results we present suggest that there are few robust links between advertising tone and voter perceptions. We must treat this conclusion as provisional at this point, as it is based only on one summary measure of tone and may fail to capture complexities both in the campaign's discourse and in voters' information-processing. But nevertheless, there appears some striking initial evidence of slippage between what the candidates say and what the voters hear.

V. Reactions to Negative Campaigning

It is a cliché to say that voters dislike "negative campaigning," which they perceive as involving unwarranted attacks and mudslinging. Research has also shown, however, that negative information may be

more memorable (Lau 1985) and, perhaps as a result, campaign consultants consider negative campaigning effective.[14] Above we suggest that one reason campaigns might indulge in conduct so apparently repulsive to voters is that voters themselves do not necessarily perceive it as unsavory. In this section, we explore in more detail how voters feel about negative advertising, drawing on the survey conducted during the 2002 California gubernatorial campaign and on the six focus groups conducted during that same period.

The 2002 survey included a question that asked voters whether they supported or opposed conduct that could be described as negative. We strove to develop a question that would not elicit knee-jerk opposition, so we eschewed phrases like "negative" or "attack." Our question instead referred to negative campaigning as candidates "criticizing" each other. We also attempted to create a balanced question that would give voters reasons to oppose and support criticism between candidates.[15] Finally, this question also contained a question wording experiment, in which half of the respondents were asked about "political candidates" and the other half were asked about "Gray Davis and Bill Simon." The advantage of this experiment is that we can compare how voters feel in the abstract and how they feel when specific candidates are mentioned. The question wording was:

> Version 1: Some people say that in general, political candidates should never be critical of their opponents because campaigns have gotten too negative, while others say that candidates need to criticize their opponents because it is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of all candidates. Which of these comes closest to your view?
>
> Version 2: Some people say that Gray Davis and Bill Simon should not be critical of one another because campaigns have gotten too negative, while others say that they need to criticize one another because it is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of both candidates. Which of these comes closest to your view?

Version 1 produced an evenly divided response: 51 percent said that candidate should not criticize and 49 percent that they need to criticize. Version 2 produced a more skewed distribution: 62 percent said that candidate should not criticize and 38 percent that they need to criticize. These results suggest that voters are not universally or reflexively opposed to criticism in campaigns, but that this opposition may increase when voters are reminded of a specific campaign, particularly one that featured quite a great deal of criticism, as did the 2002 gubernatorial race.[16]

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[14] The political consultant Dennis Johnson writes, "Why would professional researchers and campaign consultants descend into the gutter of personal vilification? Professional campaign strategists are highly pragmatic: if the tactic works, use it; if it's ineffective, scrap it" (Johnson 2001:77).

[15] We developed this question in a series of pilot studies that were carried out among students and community members in and around the University of California, Berkeley.

[16] Mentioning Davis and Simon explicitly made voters more averse to criticism but, in another survey experiment, we found that mentioning Davis and Simon also made voters less likely to say that campaign conduct makes a difference in how they evaluate the candidates. This suggests that voters, when cued to think about a specific campaign, are more averse to the practices of the candidates and yet less likely to punish them for this behavior.

Focus group participants often expressed their dislike for negativity and cited a variety of reasons as justifications, including the irrelevance of an attack, its inaccuracy, the sheer number of attacks, or the perceived detraction from discussion of other issues:

> Jeff: Instead of debating the actual issues, they're just trying to attack the individual for, you know, some personal experience that they might have had, that isn't actually relevant to the job that they want to do, or the job that they will do (F1).
>
> Walter: They straight up lie….They try to break their opponent's back by saying something that's not true about them (F2).
>
> Linda: I think, again, that the campaigns are too long, and if they were shorter, they would have less time to do the mudslinging and all that, and they would have to focus on the issues (F1).

Many focus groups participants, however, indicated a willingness to accept a negative campaign message if it provided useful information. They defined useful ads as those making important information available, those divorced from partisan bickering, and those that helped voters assess a candidate's character. Here is a sample of the reasons given by participants who supported some negativity in campaigns:

> Margaret: When I learned or I believe I learned that Simon had a lawsuit against his company, that was critical information to me, because I didn't know Simon. (WC1).
>
> John: If it's pertinent and important, you know, but not just mudslinging. It's got to be truthful and honest, and not biased as a result of party separations.
>
> Doug: I don't think all negativity is bad in this campaign, because it really casts doubt upon somebody's character. And if they're going to grease their own pockets, then, you know, let's face it, that's one of the best ways to know the guy's character, if he's in it for himself… If they're falsifying their taxes and it's public, someone is going to call them on it, and then you want to know that negative information, and sling as much mud as you can on that guy before he goes in and does some serious damage.

Tone and timing (*e.g.*, leaving no time for one's opponent to respond) as well as the format of the attack (length and documentation of claims) also factor into whether participants viewed an attack as acceptable:

> Jeff: I don't mind when they're saying, you know… 'We stand this way on this and they stand that way on that.' It's when, it's just, you know, the ad and the dramatic music behind it, and then show a close-up on it, and like freeze-frame it in black and white, try to make it all super-dramatic.
>
> Donald: You can't… if somebody is mudslinging in a 20-second [sound]bite, you're not going to get any information. He's going to say Simon did this or Gray Davis says that—what did he really do? We don't know. In 20 seconds or whatever it is, you get no information.

Finally, some focus group participants stated that no matter how much they disliked negativity, it would not necessarily affect their assessments of the candidates. One participant, Charles, said that for him negativity cannot overcome issue differences: "No matter how 'positively' someone says they're going to raise taxes, I probably won't vote for them" (F2).

The feedback of the focus group participants suggests that a blanket term like "negative campaigning" may conceal distinctions that voters make between acceptable and unacceptable attacks. Some participants did not perceive "attacks" as wholly negative and even viewed attacks that satisfy certain criteria

as helpful. Some participants viewed criticism—even in the form of a pure attack—as an acceptable and even necessary part of campaigns, as long as it is fair, relevant, and truthful. While participants generally agreed on these criteria, they defined ideas like fairness, relevance, and truth in various ways. As one participant, Laverne, put it, what is perceived as fair criticism by some may be viewed as an unfair attack by others: "Because what I think is a personal attack, you might not. I mean, we have to define that."

The variation in response to this survey question about candidate criticism, as well as the variety of comments offered by focus group participants, provide one reason for "slippage" between how candidates campaign and what voters perceive: so-called negative campaigning is not always objectionable or consequential to voters' decision-making.

Another reason for slippage is that different kinds of voters may perceive criticism differently. To investigate this possibility, we explored the effect of various demographic and political attributes on views of candidate criticism, employing a multivariate logit model. The dependent variable coded such that 1 indicates support for candidates criticizing each other and 0 opposition to criticism. We estimated models of support for negativity using the generic version of this question, the version referencing Davis and Simon, and an omnibus measure combining both versions. The model includes standard demographic and political indicators, including age, gender, race, citizenship, level of education, party identification, ideology, and reported interest in politics. These variables mimic standard National Election Studies indicators where possible. Our measure of political information is based on a series of questions asking respondents to identify the offices held by Diane Feinstein, Tony Blair, and Colin Powell. In this sample, the mean number correct was 1.7 (s.d.=1.2). We also created a scale to measure a value that we hypothesized to be important in opinions of campaigns: commitment to deliberation (see Fishkin 1991). The index combines responses to these three statements:

> People should always try to understand political opinions different from their own.
>
> In a democracy, people should spend a lot of time talking about political issues.
>
> A democracy should provide many opportunities for people and politicians to talk to one another.

Table 4 presents the results. In general, political involvement, whether measured by education, interest, or information, is associated with a greater likelihood of endorsing criticism. Taking the results of the "combined" model and holding other variables at their means, a shift from the 25th to the 75th percentile in education is associated with a .05 increase in the probability of finding criticism necessary. The comparable effect for political interest is .04; for political information, it is .05. Thus, these effects, though statistically significant, are not substantively large. And, interestingly, they are in some tension with the results of Sigelman and Kugler (2003), who find that political involvement tends to make citizens perceive the campaign as more negative. This suggests that the politically involved may simultaneously find campaigns

more negative but yet be more receptive to negative campaigning, at least when framed as "criticism" that illuminates the "strengths and weaknesses" of candidates.

[insert Table 4 about here]

The only other variables that exert any impact are gender and occasionally ethnicity. The coefficient for gender suggests that women dislike criticism between candidates more than men do. The magnitude of that effect is more than twice as large when Davis and Simon are mentioned than when the generic "political candidates" are the reference, suggesting that when specific instances of criticism are evoked, women may be even more averse than men. The effect of being female, *ceteris paribus*, reduces the likelihood of supporting criticism by -.08 in the generic condition, by -.15 in the Davis and Simon condition, and by -.11 overall.[17] The ethnicity finding is confined to naturalized Latinos and, less consistently, to naturalized Asians. These groups are also more likely to support criticism, though the reason is a bit obscure. Perhaps naturalized citizens are so keen on participating in the electoral process that they do not mind fisticuffs?

A natural question to ask of these results is: why does political involvement increase support for criticism? Focus group comments provide several potential reasons for this difference. First, the politically involved may be more likely to appreciate what might result from a critical exchange between candidates, such as clear distinctions between their policy positions (as the quote above from Doug, a Republican with a fair amount of interest in politics, illustrates). Second, the involved feel more capable of parsing a critical exchange and extracting useful information, whereas those with less political knowledge and skills may have less ability to discern the fairness, relevance, and truthfulness of an attack. Explaining why she dislikes campaigns, Linda, an independent with little interest in politics, said, "There is a lot of lying, and those of us who are not really politically minded, like myself, end up more confused when it comes to actual voting" (F1). Finally, the politically involved may just consider such exchanges *de rigeur* and a normal part of how the game is played. As one participant, Mark, put it: "Mostly, it's basically just the essence of marketing, you know, the true essence, is basically to sell… It's about "I'm better than the next guy" (WC2).

How do these results speak to the possible disjuncture between campaign discourse and voters' perceptions of it? We find that, when provided with a reason for supporting criticism, voters are roughly evenly split in their response, although their opposition to criticism increases when the two gubernatorial candidates, Davis and Simon, are mentioned directly. This suggests that "negative campaigning" is not always noxious. The responses within the focus groups shed light on why this can be so, *e.g.*, when an attack provides important information about the candidate being criticized. Moreover, we find some cross-sectional differences among voters, with men and the politically involved more likely to support criticism. This suggests, as Sigelman and Kugler (2003) find, heterogeneity among the electorate in how they perceive campaigns and campaign practices.

VI. Campaign Satisfaction and Negative Campaigning

The next question is whether voters' reaction to negative campaigning has anything to do with their reaction to the 2002 California gubernatorial campaign and to the candidates. To assess this connection, we rely on two indicators. The first asked respondents: "Would you say you are satisfied or not satisfied with the choices of candidates in the election for Governor on November 5?" In the survey, a majority of respondents (58%) said they were "not satisfied" with the candidates. The second indicators asked "More generally, do you think that election campaigns in California have gotten better in the last 10 years, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?" This is not entirely an ideal question, in that a respondent could think campaigns in California were awful 10 years ago and awful now, which would lead her to say "the same" even though her opinion of the campaign was hardly positive. Moreover, the question does not reference the 2002 campaign specifically. Nevertheless, it is difficult to believe that responses to this question would bear no relationship to responses to the gubernatorial campaign. In this sample 49 percent said "worse," 40 percent said "the same," and only 10 percent said "better."[18] These results were also born out in the focus groups. When we asked participants to name things they liked about campaigns, the response was a deafening silence, or else participants ignored the question altogether and launched into passionate descriptions of their dislikes. The breadth of complaints and the ease with which participants listed the things they dislike about campaigns was striking.

To explore the sources of campaign satisfaction, we begin by looking at the bivariate relationships between the two measures discussed above and various demographic and political variables, including views of negative campaigning. Table 5 presents the results.

[insert Table 5 about here]

There are some notable variations in campaign satisfaction evident in Table 5. Younger people were much more satisfied than older people. Whereas 62 percent of the youngest group was satisfied with the gubernatorial candidates, only 39 percent of the oldest group was satisfied. Similarly, while 62 percent of the very young said that campaigns in the last 10 years were the same or better, 48 percent of the very old gave this response. The trends across categories are largely monotonic.

There were also some interesting differences across ethnic groups. Whites were the least satisfied of any group. By contrast, majorities of blacks, Latinos, and Asians expressed satisfaction with the gubernatorial candidates and with campaigns generally. Within Latinos and Asians, native citizens and naturalized citizens

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[17] The bivariate relationship bears this out as well. The percentage of men and women who support criticism in the generic case is 54 and 44, respectively. In the Davis and Simon condition, there is a larger gap: 46 vs. 31 percent.
[18] This question actually randomized respondents into two subsamples. The first subsample heard the question wording above. The second subsample heard a question that said, "Overall, *in terms of ethics and values*, do you think election campaigns in California *etc*." This experiment produced only a little variation in response—*e.g.*, 46 percent said "worse"

also manifest differences.[19] In particular, naturalized citizens are almost always more positive than native citizens. Indeed, naturalized Asians and Latinos are generally the most favorable among all ethnic/citizen groups: 73 percent of naturalized Latinos were satisfied with the candidates; 82 percent of naturalized Latinos and 71 percent of naturalized Asians thought California campaigns were the same or better. This result is unexpected, but it seems plausible that naturalized citizens, who have expended considerable energy to earn citizenship, would be more enthusiastic about the political process they have worked so hard to participate in.

Partisanship and commitment to deliberation have some effect as well. It appears that Republicans are less satisfied than Democrats with the gubernatorial candidates (40% vs. 49%), but Independents were the most dissatisfied (32%). Democrats were also more likely to say that campaigns have gotten better or stayed the same. However, these differences are not substantively that large. The differences among levels of deliberation are generally in the hypothesized direction: those high in commitment are less satisfied with the candidates and the campaign.

Perhaps the most dramatic differences were evident across levels of education and political information. The least educated, those who had some high school education or less, were mostly satisfied with the candidates (69%) and neutral or positive about campaigns generally (72%). By contrast, those who had some post-graduate study were very unsatisfied with the candidates (28%) and less positive about campaigns (41%). The relationships across levels of information are equally striking.

There are also some differences based on views of negative campaigning. Those who received the generic version of this question did not differ in their satisfaction with Davis and Simon, but those who endorsed criticism when Davis and Simon were mentioned explicitly were slightly more likely to say that campaigns in California had stayed the same or gotten better (54%) than were those who opposed criticism (50%). This same version of the question also generated variation in both measures of candidate or campaign satisfaction: 48 percent of those who endorsed criticism were satisfied with the candidates (vs. 41% of those who opposed criticism) and 56 percent believed that California campaigns had not worsened (vs. 47%).[20]

As the astute reader may already have noticed, there is something of a paradox in these results. We find that familiarity with politics—whether measured by formal education, age, political information, or political interest—breeds greater dissatisfaction with the candidates and with campaigns. These findings thus suggest that familiarity does indeed breed contempt: those who are politically involved and therefore more likely to follow current events, including the gubernatorial campaign, find the proceedings more distasteful. However, these results are in tension with the results of the model for opposition to negativity. While the

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in the former condition and 51 percent said "worse" in the "ethics and values" condition—and so we combined those questions into a single measure.

[19] There are only five naturalized blacks and five naturalized whites in this sample. Thus we do not break down blacks and whites by citizenship status.

[20] Though we do not present any multivariate models here, it is worth noting that these bivariate relationships are robust in such a model.

politically involved are less satisfied with the gubernatorial candidates and with campaigns generally, they are also more tolerant of criticism between candidates, which is allegedly a primary reason why one might be dissatisfied with a specific campaign or with campaigns overall. Political involvement thus appears to work in opposite directions.

One potential resolution to this tension is as follows. Perhaps the relationship between views of negative campaigning and satisfaction with campaigns is actually mediated by political involvement. In particular, it may be that this relationship is strongest among those low in involvement, but weakest among those high in involvement because political sophisticates are more accepting of negative campaigning for the reasons specified earlier (*e.g.*, they perceive it as potentially providing a practical précis of politicians).

[insert Table 6 about here]

Table 6 reports how levels of campaign satisfaction vary with support for or opposition to criticism, further breaking down that relationship by different measures of political involvement.[21] If the hypothesis stated above were true, we should see a declining relationship as political involvement rises. In general, that is not consistently true. In some cases, political involvement weakens the relationship—*e.g.*, the effect of views of negative campaigning declines among those with post-graduate education relative to those with only some high school education—but this decline is not monotonic across all categories. Similar complexities emerge when political information and interest are employed. At times, higher levels of information or interest do not appear to have their hypothesized effect at all, and when they do, that effect is not monotonic.

Thus, we are still left puzzling over this paradox: though the politically involved are more likely to sanction criticism in campaigns, they are by far the most dissatisfied with campaigns. It may be that the dissatisfaction of political sophisticates derives from other sources, such as a lack of emphasis on "the issues" or the perceived dominance of special interests and money in campaigns. Since negativity seems to dominate modern campaigns, especially those addressed here, it would be especially significant if these other aspects of the campaign were more responsible for voter dissatisfaction.

VII. Conclusion

Having examined different kinds of data, both quantitative and qualitative, from two California gubernatorial campaigns, we find considerable evidence that how politicians campaign does not necessarily determine how voters perceive them. In terms of the three-step model proposed at the outset, we find that voters do not always seem to recognize negative campaigning when it occurs. Second, we find that they do not necessarily consider negative campaigning exclusively uninformative or unhelpful. There is furthermore variation within the public in how they feel about negative campaigning, with the politically sophisticated

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[21] When looking at satisfaction with candidates, we employ the measure of support for criticism that references Davis and Simon, since only this version of that question has any empirical traction (see Table 5). When looking at satisfaction

more likely to see its potential merits. Third, we find no necessary link between attitudes towards negative campaigning and satisfaction with candidates or with campaigns. While political sophisticates are more supportive of negative campaigning, they are by far the least satisfied with candidates and with campaigns. And conversely, while those who are less educated or less interested in politics are more opposed to negative campaigning, they are also more satisfied with the campaign. While there are limitations to the present analysis, based as it is on only two campaigns, it nevertheless suggests that we must look beyond the tone of campaigns such as advertising to discern the causes of voter discontent. Having done so, this may help clarify the true relationship between campaign practices and other important phenomena, including participation on Election Day.

with California campaigns, we employ the omnibus measure that combines both versions, since each version has a similar impact (again, see Table 5).

Table 1. Models of Candidate Conduct

	Responsible	Useful Info	Encouraging	Negative	Criticism
Advertising Tone	0.0003	0.0005	0.0011*	0.0004	0.00004
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0005)
Party Identification	0.020	0.017	0.010	-0.004	-0.017
	(0.016)	(0.014)	(0.020)	(0.013)	(0.012)
Constant	2.531**	2.456**	2.211**	2.155**	1.565**
	(0.075)	(0.049)	(0.078)	(0.073)	(0.050)
R-squared	0.004	0.004	0.006	0.001	0.002
S.E.E.	.726	.760	.894	.758	.687
N	889	943	870	930	937

*Cell entries are unstandardized regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variables are coded from 1 (least favorable) to 4 (most favorable). **p<.01; *p<05.*

Table 2. Models of Davis Conduct

	Responsible	Useful Info	Encouraging	Negative	Criticism
Model 1					
Davis Advertising Tone	-0.0006	0.0008	0.0013#	-0.0011	-0.0002
	(0.0006)	(0.0009)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0005)
Party Identification	0.039**	0.129**	0.147**	0.170**	0.130**
	(0.012)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.013)
Constant	2.555**	2.240**	2.191**	1.966**	1.499**
	(0.0548)	(0.0829)	(0.0576)	(0.0657)	(0.0571)
R-squared	0.012	0.111	0.124	0.134	0.104
S.E.E.	.747	.752	.810	.890	.785
Model 2					
Davis Advertising Tone	-0.0004	-0.002	-0.001	-0.002	0.0004
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Party Identification	0.038*	0.145**	0.157**	0.173**	0.127**
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.018)
Tone × Party ID	-0.0001	0.0008#	0.0005#	0.0001	-0.0002
	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
Constant	2.559**	2.183**	2.153**	1.958**	1.511**
	(0.060)	(0.090)	(0.063)	(0.067)	(0.073)
R-squared	0.013	0.117	0.126	0.134	0.104
S.E.E.	.747	.750	.810	.891	.786
N	791	811	693	818	800

*Cell entries are unstandardized regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variables are coded from 1 (least favorable) to 4 (most favorable). **p<.01; *p<05.*

Table 3. Models of Lungren Conduct

	Responsible	Useful Info	Encouraging	Negative	Criticism
Model 1					
Lungren Advertising Tone	-0.001[#]	0.0003	-0.0006	-0.0006	-0.0005
	(0.0007)	(0.001)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0007)
Party Identification	-0.004	-0.132**	-0.126**	-0.126**	-0.103**
	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Constant	2.659**	2.873**	2.781**	2.734**	2.104**
	(0.046)	(0.049)	(0.054)	(0.057)	(0.057)
R-squared	0.004	0.105	0.086	0.093	0.074
S.E.E.	.729	.793	.844	.808	.746
Model 2					
Lungren Advertising Tone	-0.003	0.002	-0.002	.00003	-0.001
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Party Identification	0.001	-0.137**	-0.120**	-0.129**	-0.100**
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.014)
Tone × Party ID	0.0003	-0.0003	0.0004	-0.0002	0.0002
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Constant	2.639**	2.892**	2.757**	2.744**	2.093**
	(0.054)	(0.045)	(0.054)	(0.058)	(0.058)
R-squared	0.004	0.105	0.087	0.094	0.075
S.E.E.	.729	.794	.844	.808	.747
N	801	798	706	803	784

*Cell entries are unstandardized regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variables are coded from 1 (least favorable) to 4 (most favorable). **p<.01; *p<05.*

Table 4. Models of Support for Negative Campaigning

	Version of Question		
	Generic Candidates	Davis & Simon	Combined
Education	.18**	.01	.10*
	(.08)	(.08)	(.05)
Political Interest	.20*	.18#	.16*
	(.10)	(.11)	(.07)
Political Information	.07	.16*	.10#
	(.07)	(.08)	(.05)
Female	-.31*	-.64***	-.44***
	(.15)	(.15)	(.10)
Age	.04	-.01	.004
	(.05)	(.05)	(.04)
Black	.22	.25	.31
	(.30)	(.34)	(.22)
Asian (native-born)	.41	-.95#	-.21
	(.45)	(.52)	(.31)
Asian (naturalized)	.69	.32	.49#
	(.46)	(.39)	(.28)
Latino (native-born)	-.08	-.16	-.03
	(.26)	(.29)	(.19)
Latino (naturalized)	.56#	.53#	.60**
	(.33)	(.28)	(.21)
Other race	.66	-.31	.41
	(.44)	(.62)	(.33)
Democrat	.38	.17	.26
	(.25)	(.27)	(.18)
Republican	.46#	-.03	.27
	(.25)	(.28)	(.18)
Liberalism	.009	-.05	-.004
	(.07)	(.08)	(.05)
Deliberation	-.22	.002	-.02
	(.17)	(.17)	(.11)
Constant	-1.04	-.79	-1.25
Log likelihood	-544.6	-525.7	-1150.9
χ^2	36.3**	42.8***	62.4***
Pseudo-R^2	.03	.04	.03
N	812	826	1750

*Table entries are logit coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variable is coded 1-(candidates need to criticize) and 0-(candidate should not be critical). ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10 (two-tailed).*

Table 5. Satisfaction with Campaigns, by Demographic and Political Attributes

		% Satisfied with Candidates	% Campaigns Same or Better in Last 10 Years
View of Negative Campaigning (generic)	Oppose	39%	50%
	Support	40	54
View of Negative Campaigning (Davis vs. Simon)	Oppose	41	47
	Support	48	56
Education	Some high school or less	69	72
	High school graduate	56	65
	Some college	44	48
	College graduate	36	49
	Post- graduate study	28	41
Political Information (number correct)	0	71	61
	1	52	63
	2	35	51
	3	28	43
Age	18-24	62	62
	25-34	53	59
	35-44	43	55
	45-54	37	47
	55-64	27	41
	65 and above	39	48
Ethnicity	White	36	46
	Black	58	55
	Latino (native-born)	54	67
	Latino (naturalized)	73	82
	Asian (native-born)	51	49
	Asian (naturalized)	55	71
	Other race	41	53
Party Identification	Republican	40	46
	Independent	32	48
	Democrat	49	58
Deliberation	low	52	55
	medium	39	50
	high	37	51

Table 6. Views of Negative Campaigning and Campaign Satisfaction, by Political Involvement

	% Satisfied with Candidates			% Campaigns Same or Worse		
	Oppose criticism	Support Criticism	Difference	Oppose criticism	Support Criticism	Difference
Education						
Some HS	66%	82%	+12	67%	79%	+12
HS degree	46	53	+7	60	66	+6
Some college	44	53	+9	44	51	+7
College degree	33	44	+11	46	53	+7
Post-grad	25	30	+5	38	44	+6
Political Info						
Low	67	81	+14	64	73	+9
Med low	48	63	+15	50	52	+2
Med high	34	31	-3	46	49	+3
High	25	38	+13	37	51	+14
Political Interest						
None	71	78	+7	60	58	-2
Not very much	47	64	+7	61	61	0
Some	38	45	+7	44	57	+13
A lot	37	40	+3	38	47	+9

Figure 1. Advertising Tone by Day

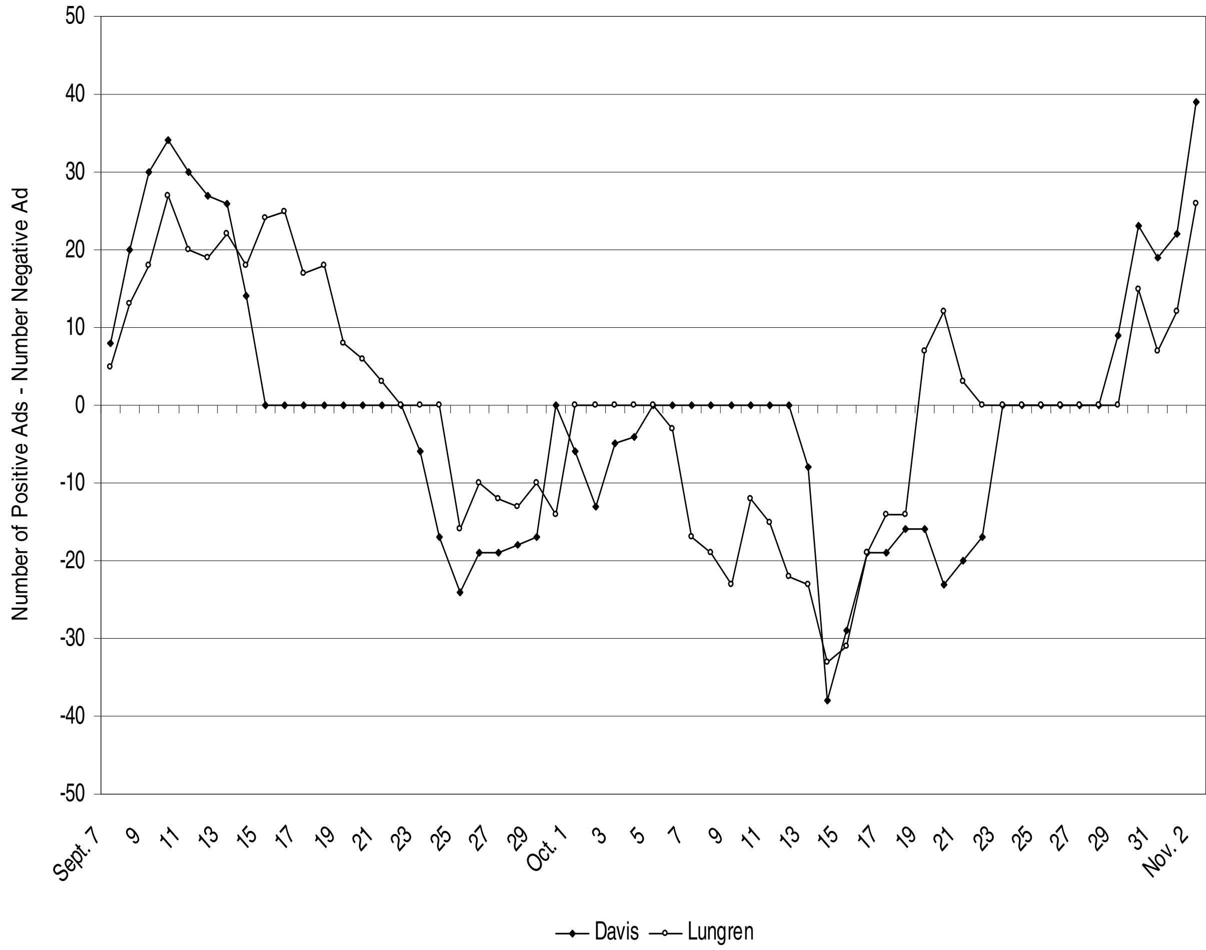


Figure 2a. Evaluations of Candidates' Campaign Conduct

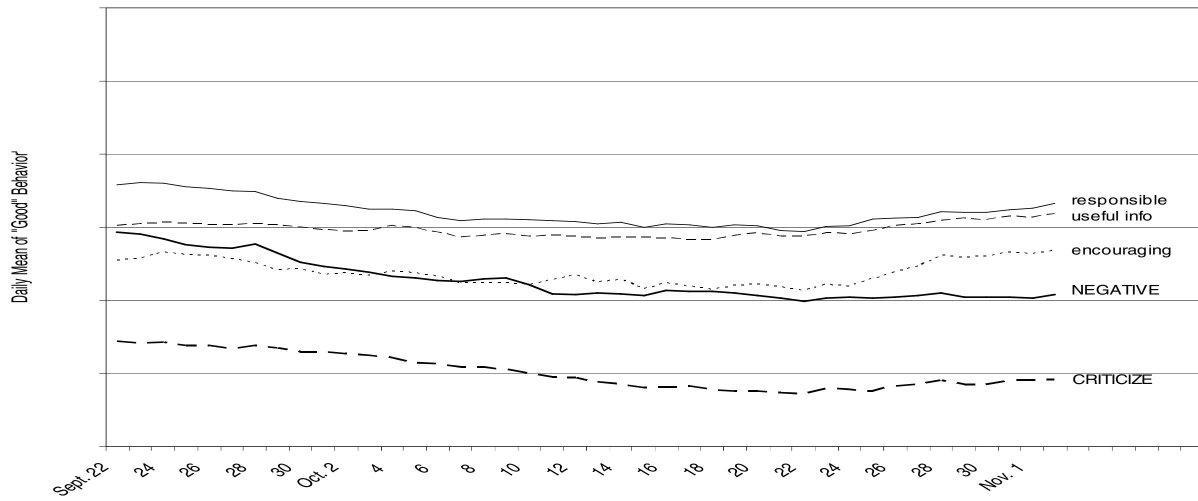


Figure 2b. Evaluations of Davis' Campaign Conduct

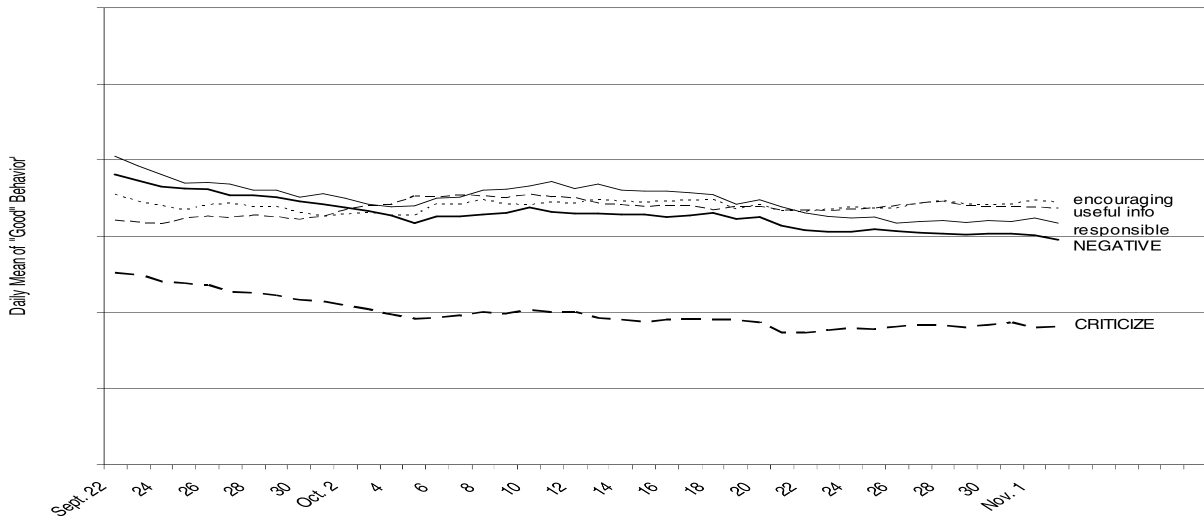


Figure 2c. Evaluations of Lungrens' Campaign Conduct

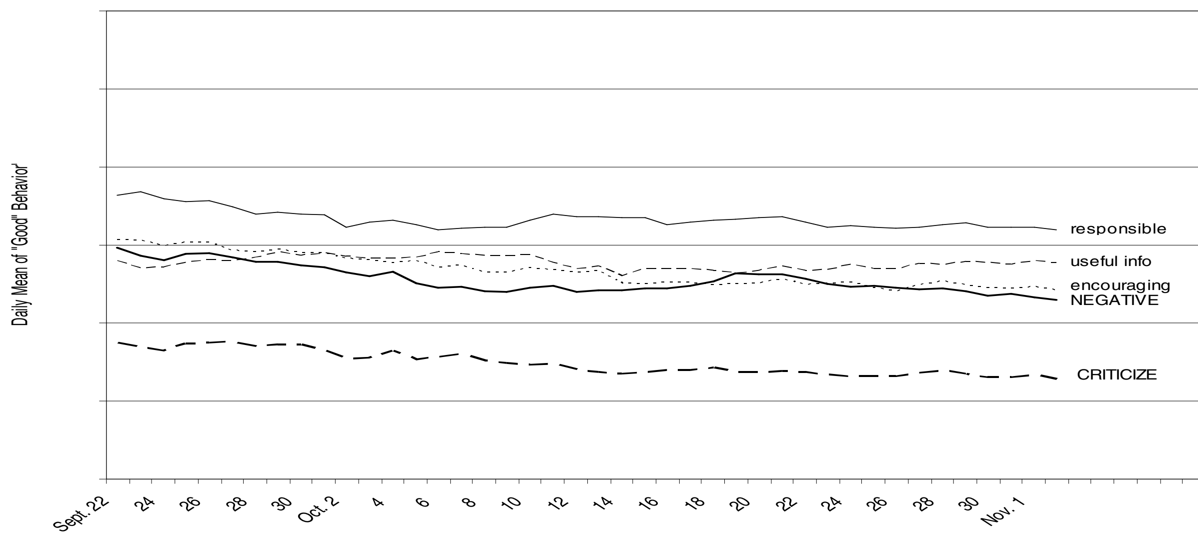


Figure 3a. Evaluations of Candidates' Negativity, by Party

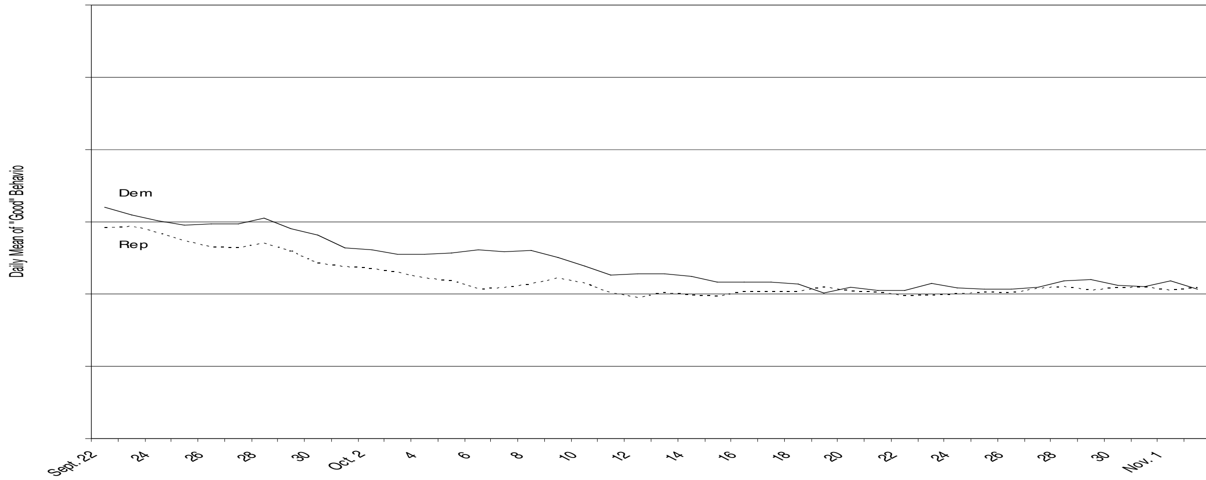


Figure 3b. Evaluations of Davis' Negativity, by Party

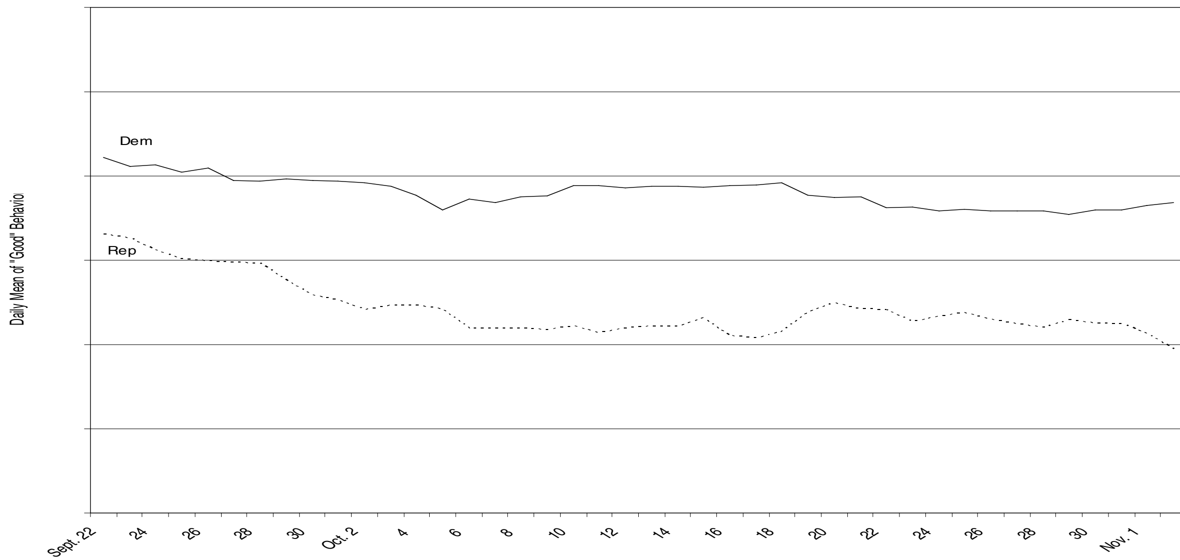
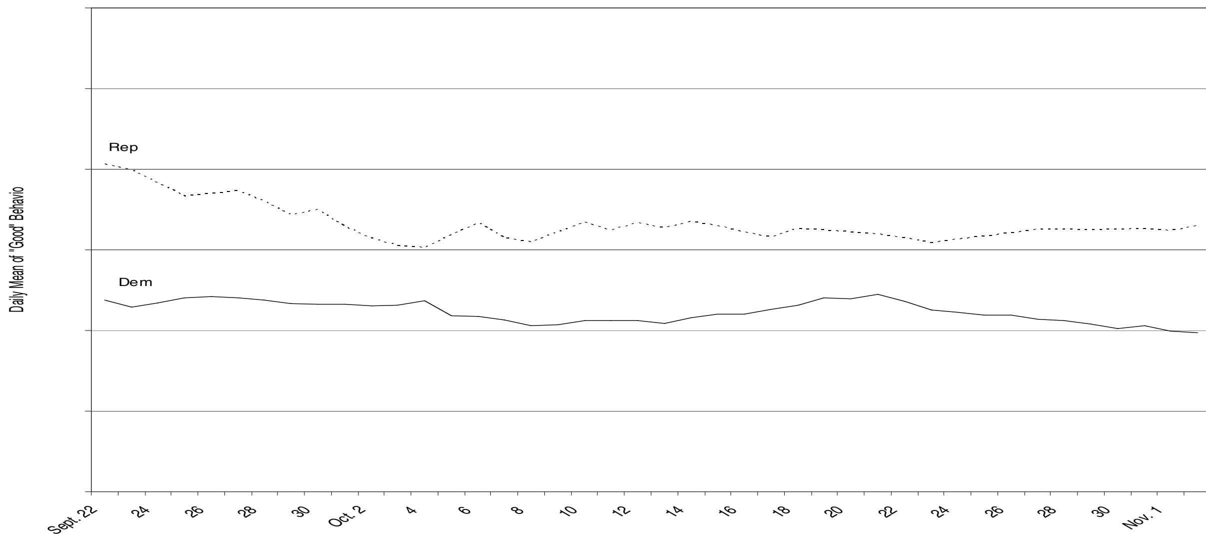


Figure 3c. Evaluations of Lungren's Negativity, by Party



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