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May I Interest You in a Freshly Brewed Presidential Candidate?

An Analysis of Presidential Campaign Television Advertisements in the United States, 1952-2016

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to shed light on the relationship between the commercial advertising model AIDA (Awareness/Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) and political television advertising, with a historical perspective being of extra interest. In order to do so, the study made use of theories concerning the AIDA-model, representation, rhetoric (with focus on *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*), and the professionalisation of political communication. The methodology involved qualitative analyses of 18 official political campaign advertisements from nine United States presidential elections between the years 1952-2016. One issue-ad from each candidate (Republicans and Democrats only) from every other election was strategically chosen for examination. Each advertisement was then analysed both as it relates to its rhetorical content as well as its structure with the defined four stages of the AIDA-model in mind, with any potential patterns between the rhetoric and the structure being taken into account.

The results of the study suggest that while the AIDA-model can be recognised in political television advertisements in the United States since the inception in the 1950s, the advertisements from the post-modern phase of the professionalisation of political communication (1985-) seem to place more emphasis, compared to the modern phase (1950s-1985), on the *desire* stage of the AIDA-model. Furthermore, no distinct differences could be found between the parties from a pure rhetorical and structural standpoint, and both appear to be on practically identical evolutionary paths. An explanation to this could be the escalating reliance on hiring independent experts and specialist to manage the various areas involved with running a political campaign, which is a characteristic of the ever-increasingly professional environment of political communication.

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1. Introduction

> *Arguably the most formative development in the political communication process of present-day democracies, the professionalization of political communication is the near-universal response of political parties (as well as many other would-be shapers of public opinion) to the dissolution of previously more firm anchorages of political attitudes, the increasing centrality of television and the proliferating demands of multiple news outlets for instant comment and appearances. American politicians have led the way in the professionalization of publicity and still embrace it with fewer reservations than their counterparts elsewhere.* (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995: 207)

A copious amount of money is spent each United States presidential election as the political parties do what they can to promote their chosen candidates, who they believe is best suited to be the 'leader of the free world' for the four years ahead. In 1970, political advertising was for the first time its own separate category, and the total sum spent reached $12 million. In 2002, that figure had risen to nearly $700 million (Lilleker, 2006). Unsurprisingly, this number keeps growing. In the 2012 election between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, the estimate was $3 billion on television ads alone (Dingfelder, 2012). And finally, according to a projection report by Statista (n.d.), this figure has more than doubled in just four years, reaching a staggering $7.16 billion in broadcast and cable TV ads in the lead-up to the 2016 presidential election between Donald J. Trump and Hillary Clinton, with another $3.05 billion being spent on other platforms. Suffice it to say, political advertising plays a major role each election season.

The communicative interaction between political actors, the media, and citizens is referred to as political communication (Strömbäck, 2013), and is an important area of study. As citizens, it is imperative to be aware of how politicians use various methods and language in order to persuade, as such knowledge can aid individuals in creating their own opinions and viewpoints regarding various issues (Heradstveit & Bjørgo, 1996). Moreover, in large, national elections, there will not be much personal contact between the candidates and their prospective constituencies, which forces the public to rely on the media to experience and be informed about the candidates (Holtz-Bacha et al., 1994). As such, there is value in studying not only the content being produced but also how it may have changed over time.

Political communication is said to have been 'professionalised', which involves the change in how political actors communicate to the public. For instance, while volunteers were perhaps heavily used in the past in various areas of running a campaign, it is now standard to employ professionals who may strongly influence how a campaign is being run, while the candidates

in question may not always be as much in charge (Strömbäck, 2009, 2014). One commonly suggested reason for this change and increased dependence on professionals is the "growing detachment of citizens from politics" (Mancini, 1999: 241), as efforts are made to reverse this ill-advised trend.

In this study, I will qualitatively analyse political television ads through two perspectives. First, a rhetorical analysis will be performed to find out both what is being said and how it is being said, with focus on the use of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. Then, the common marketing and advertising model AIDA (Awareness/Attention-Interest-Design-Action) will be applied to the advertisements in order to find out if the political ads align with 'regular' commercial ads as it concerns the structure. And if there is a match, if there are any patterns in how the rhetorical devices are used in the various stages will be addressed. Furthermore, this study will be performed with a historical perspective in mind as the basis of the analysis will be to investigate whether the content of political TV ads has changed throughout history, beginning with content produced for the Dwight D. Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson campaigns in 1952 up until the campaigns of Donald J. Trump and Hillary Clinton in 2016.

1.1 Political advertising in the United States

Political advertising can, in short, be summarised as "paid-for [promotions] in support of political parties or issues or specifically, the marketing of a political campaign" (Doyle, 2011: 297), and has a long history in United States politics. Political advertisement has been a part of presidential elections since the very beginning, with posters, handbills, and other printed materials being utilised in the lead-up to election day. However, what truly cemented advertising as such an integral part of US campaigning was the development and rise of electronic media. It got started in the 1920s as the radio began serving as a popular medium for campaign commercials, and has since then been overtaken by the television (Kaid, 2006). In the US, candidates are permitted to by purchase advertising slots on television, which is not a universal standard. This gives the candidates full responsibility as well as control over their advertisements, and they get to fully decide how they are presented in front of the television audience (Holtz-Bacha & Kaid, 2006).

The first presidential candidate that made use of the television to spread campaign advertisement was Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952 (Kaid, 2006; Trent et al., 2011; Jarding et al., 2017). In a time span that reached three weeks, the Eisenhower campaign invested $2 million in a series dubbed 'Eisenhower Answers America', where the presidential nominee answered questions from US citizens in 40 20-second commercials. Eisenhower's opponent Adlai Stevenson, however, refused to personally feature in any TV-ads, and even went as far as criticising the Eisenhower campaign for trying to sell their candidate like 'soap'. This tactic

did not pan out, as Eisenhower won the 1952 election in a rout. No other presidential candidate has since opted not to appear in television ads (Jarding et al., 2017).

Regarding content, political advertisements are of course not all the same, and various strategies are applied to achieve different goals. In broad terms, political ads are characterised by being either about issues or about image. Issue ads focus on political subjects, such as tax regulations, foreign policy, or other areas that are of political interest. On the other hand, image ads revolve around the personal qualities and characteristics of a candidate and can be about their political background, experience, and so forth. Furthermore, both issue ads and image ads can be either positive (about one's own issue position or personal characteristic) or negative (towards opponent's issue position or personal characteristic). Negative advertisements have in later elections seen a significant upsurge, both on the presidential level as well as on the state and local level (Kaid, 2006). Additionally, William Benoit's 'functional theory of political campaign discourse' (see, for instance: Benoit, 2001; Brazeal & Benoit, 2001; Benoit & Stein, 2005) states that issue and image ads are used either to acclaim (positive praise of one's own strengths), attack (negative attention to opponent's weakness), or defend (repudiate an opponent's attack). Typically, it is said that acclaim is the most common function applied during election seasons, followed by attack and defend.

2. Aim and research questions

2.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate the extent of which political television advertising follows the same structure as commercial advertising with a distinct focus on the AIDA-model, which is an area that has yet to be thoroughly explored, and if this has changed over time when looking at it from a historical perspective with the theory about the professionalisation of political communication in mind. Furthermore, this study aims to identify any patterns that may exist regarding the use of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* as it concerns the four stages in the AIDA-model.

2.2 Research questions

1. Which patterns can be found in the use of rhetorical devices in relation to the AIDA-model in political television advertisements?

2. Which differences can be found in political television advertisements from a historical perspective, beginning with the inception in the 1950s through 2016?

3. Previous research

Political communication is a popular field with a wide range of studies covering various topics. In this section, 15 of these studies will be described, which deal with political advertising, rhetoric, and reception, before a concluding paragraph which will aim to position my study.

3.1 Effects of political advertisement

In a study on the effects of political advertising on a sample of young citizens in the 2008 US presidential election, Kaid et al. (2011) analysed the effects of ads from Barack Obama and John McCain with a focus on theory on advertising effects. The participants were required to watch eight TV advertisements from the candidates and to answer a pre- and post-test questionnaire. The study found that exposure to political advertising resulted in the participants learning more about the issue positions of Obama and McCain than about their personal attributes. Moreover, the participants' evaluations of the candidates changed when comparing before and after watching the ads, as the evaluations increased for Obama but decreased for McCain. Finally, the study also found that the participants' levels of political information efficacy increased because of watching the advertisements.

In another previous study on the effects of political advertising on young voters, Kaid et al. (2007) evaluated the effects of advertisements from the 2004 US presidential election between George W. Bush and John Kerry. The participants consisted of 764 university students who watched 10 ads in total while answering a pre- and post-test questionnaire. The study reached several conclusions. For instance, the results showed that the advertisements led to the participants learning more about Bush's image while learning more about Kerry's issues. Additionally, cynicism amongst the viewers did not increase, but feelings of political information efficacy did substantially increase amongst the participants.

Furthermore, Tedesco (2002) analysed the effects of political television advertising during the 2000 Robb-Allen senatorial election in Virginia. A sample group of 93 university students were asked to first fill out a pre-test questionnaire, then watch 10 political advertisements, and finally complete a post-test survey. The study observed that the series of political advertisements shown to the participants resulted in increases in candidate image evaluations. Moreover, it found that ads that evoked positive emotions resulted in positive image evaluations, while negative emotions led to negative image evaluations. Finally, it was revealed that the evaluations of the candidates were not influenced by cynicism after watching the advertisements, which disproved one of the study's hypotheses.

3.2 Content, rhetoric, and patterns in political advertisement

Mackay (2014) studied the use of clichéd juxtapositions and pleasing patterns in political advertising. The methodology of choice is said to have been influenced by studies using critical discourse analysis (especially with a historical approach), and due to political ads being multimodal, the theory concerning social semiotics was also applied. The material consisted of two advertisements from the 2012 US presidential election alongside satire ads for comparison. In the conclusion of the study, the author states that clichéd juxtapositions are effective for politicians when they need to get a message out "that arrests and scares yet reassures" (ibid.: 118). Furthermore, three main reasons why the ads are characterised by clichés are laid out. First, clichés are easy to use, they are easily recognised, can hide complexity, and meet the audiences' expectations; the recipients expect to find clichés in the ads. Second, clichés have an archetypical quality which allows "for the 'message' to be expressed in terms of what is 'universal', what has a 'grain of truth' about it, a commonsense value to which we respond not only mentally but physically" (ibid.: 118). And lastly, the use of clichés could be said to be a genre stipulation in order for the ads to fulfil their purpose.

Moving on, Brazeal and Benoit (2001) analysed the content of a sample of political advertising on the congressional level between the years 1986-2000 by applying the functional theory of political campaign discourse. Along with the theory, the content of the ads was categorised into three themes: acclaim ads, attack ads, and defence ads. Content that fit either acclaim or attack was then classified as either being about policy (involving past deeds, future plans, and general goals) or about character (involving a candidate's properties, abilities, and attributes). The study reached several conclusions: acclaims proved to be the most common, followed by attacks and defences; policy was discussed more often than character; past deeds were emphasised more than future plans and general goals; personal qualities were emphasised more than leadership ability and ideals; incumbents most often acclaimed while challengers most often attacked; and incumbents more often acclaimed on past deeds while challengers more often attacked on past deeds.

In another study based on the functional theory of political campaign discourse, Benoit and Stein (2005) analysed 715 brochures that were used as direct mail advertising during 15 different campaigns between 1948-2004. Working with 16 hypotheses, the study reached several conclusions based on a content analysis of the gathered material. Among them were that acclaims were again the most common, followed by attacks and defences, and most messages were about policy rather than a candidate's character. When ideals were the main theme, 86 per cent were acclaims and only 14 per cent were attacks. Comparing Democrats and Republicans, the study found that, for instance, Republicans acclaim more and attack less than Democrats, and that Democrats focused more on policy compared to Republicans.

A conclusion the study reached was that, although "causality is notoriously difficult to establish" (ibid.: 219), the winning candidates focused more on policy and less on character compared to the losing candidates.

Moreover, Torres et al. (2012) performed a content analysis of television ads from the 2004 US presidential election. The authors coded each ad according to its main purpose, which could be about a candidates' image or a specific political issue, for instance. The study found that around 40 per cent of all candidate-sponsored TV ads had a negative focus, with 90 per cent of attack ads being direct attacks towards the opponent, be it personal or about policy. A conclusion was that, although negative ads have long been considered to be risky due to threats of backlash, that fear may now have decreased to the extent that the possible repercussions are not considered to be dangerous enough to avoid running negative ads. A reason for this, the authors state, could be due to the new media climate in the US. Because of the media clutter due to all the various media channels, an ad needs to be not only original but also attention-grabbing, which negative ads often are.

In another study on TV ads, Devlin (1994) performed an analysis of the 1992 New Hampshire primary election spots. The study focused on three issues in particular: the importance of initial ads, consistency in ads, as well as the use of negative ads. Beyond watching and analysing the ads, the author also interviewed the creators of the ads and spent a week in New Hampshire during the campaigns. The study reached several conclusions. For instance, being consistent showed to be beneficial compared to changing or creating new images, with an example being Bill Clinton consistently facing the camera compared to Bob Kerry who ran three different bio ads. Furthermore, both candidates who won their respective primaries used no negative ads at all, and the winning candidates also aired the least ads during the primary compared to their adversaries. Additionally, the author states that heavy spending does not necessarily mean success, as the second-place candidates spent twice as much as the front-runners, but that heavily investing in attacking ads can prove beneficial for challenging candidates.

Furthermore, Bligh et al. (2010) analysed the rhetoric of Hillary Clinton during the 2008 US presidential campaign, with focus on whether her rhetoric altered after a particular event that received scrutinising media attention. During the New Hampshire primaries, Clinton had choked up and been brought to tears while delivering an answer to a question from a voter. After winning the primary, Clinton claimed to have 'found her voice'. The authors performed a content analysis of 87 speeches and interviews that took place during Clinton's primary campaign. In order to conduct the analysis, Diction 5.0, "a content analysis program specifically designed for political discourse" (ibid.: 834), was used. Taking into consideration

the issues of media coverage and gender stereotypes, the study found that Clinton's rhetoric did in fact differ when comparing before and after the event in New Hampshire. For instance, it was found that she used more self-references post-New Hampshire (such as 'I' instead of 'we') and that she opted to use less masculine language about action and instead used more feminine concepts.

In contrast, Jenkins and Cos (2010) performed a rhetorical analysis on Barack Obama's 2008 campaign. The material consisted of five speeches from 2004-2008. The authors argue that Obama made use of a rhetorical pragmatism, which "is understood as discourse that negotiates uncertainty, generates knowledge based on human interests, expresses individualism (pluralism), and builds communities" (ibid.: 184). Regarding negotiating uncertainty, Obama was found to repeatedly deliver messages of hope. He consistency "provided meaning for his audience" (ibid.: 189). To generate knowledge, Obama relied on a few different strategies. For instance, he used evidence from US documents, relied on examples from the lives of well-respected Americans, and used extracts from the constitution. Obama was also effective in expressing individualism, as he used many personal stories to connect with his audience, and "presented himself as an average American whose story was part of the larger American story" (ibid.: 195). Likewise, he was successful in building a community through his rhetoric. Obama proposed "a communitarian version of the American Dream" (ibid.: 197) and no matter the location he was in, he always spoke to the entire American population and praised Americans for their work while reminding them that they are at their strongest together.

In a longitudinal content analysis concerning the years 1789-2000, Lim (2002) analysed five trends in presidential rhetoric. All inaugural addresses and annual messages during this time period were studied by performing a computer-assisted content analysis. A difference involving the method in comparison to related studies was that the traditional content analysis tool of word categories was not enough, but the study also analysed patterns concerning "specific and representative *keywords*" (ibid.: 331) to strengthen the analysis. The results supported "the thesis of institutional transformation" (ibid.: 345) regarding political rhetoric. The changes from pre- to post-twentieth-century include the rhetoric becoming more democratic, and in the last 30 years, the language is said to have become "dramatically more people-oriented and compassionate, more intimate, more focused on the trustworthiness of the rhetor, and more anecdotal" (ibid.: 345). Furthermore, five trends are recognised as being the foundation of "The rhetoric of the rhetorical president" (ibid.: 346), with the rhetoric being *anti-intellectual, abstract, assertive, democratic,* and *conversational.*

In another rhetorical content analysis, Howard and Hoffman (2007) analysed how George W. Bush and John Kerry articulated their stances regarding policy-making and youth issues during the 2004 presidential campaign. The material consisted of a selected sample of campaign speeches with the intent of analysing how issues targeted to youths were addressed, with each sentence being coded as belonging to one of four categories: (1) rhetoric and fact (factual statements that do not deal with policy); (2) support of past performance; (3) critique of past performance; and (4) pledges. The study reached several conclusions, such as that Kerry's rhetoric was more centred around policy compared to Bush, but overall it could be said that Kerry focused more on singling out young voters by more often appealing directly to their needs, while Bush instead applied a more broader strategy by appealing to young voters as being a part of the general constituency.

3.3 The professionalisation of political communication

Focusing on the theory of the professionalisation of political communication, Vliegenthart (2012) provided a longitudinal analysis of Dutch election campaign posters. The material consisted of posters from the years 1946-2006. Based on literature revolving the professionalisation, five sets of hypotheses were presented which were then examined through a systematic analysis. First, the study found that there seemed to be a decrease in consistency regarding content and focus relating to images and written texts, but that the use of party logos increased. Second, how often the posters contained explicit calls to the recipient to vote did not change to a significant degree. Third, regarding personalisation, the analysis found that both the use of and prominence of pictures of political leaders increased, while textual mentionings of political leaders decreased. Fourth, the author found partial evidence that there had been a shift from ideology-centred messages to policy-centred messages in terms of images as ideological references did decrease but no significant trends could be seen for policy references, while no ideology-to-policy shift could be seen in the texts. Finally, the study also revealed that, overall, campaign posters rarely featured attacks on political opponents, and there had been no increase in the level of negativity towards opponents over time.

In another study on the professionalisation of political campaigning, Lisi (2013) investigated the political climate in Portugal during the 2009 election. With Portugal being a 'third wave' democracy, the author expressed an expectation of a high degree of professionalisation in the Portuguese parties' campaigning. To measure the degree of professionalisation, the material analysed was made up of a candidate survey and party elite interviews. In contrast to the author's expectations, the study revealed only low levels of professionalisation. It was found that the use of new information and communications technology was limited, as was the use of external consultants. Instead, the parties' national headquarters were crucial in organising

the campaigns. Compared to parties in old western democracies, e.g. the UK, France, or Italy, the political parties in Portugal did not exhibit the same level of professionalisation. Lisi argues that these results suggest that, in terms of campaign professionalisation, there is sufficient variation across countries to rebut the claim of homogenisation that others have brought forward.

Additionally, Tenscher and Mykkänen (2014) performed a comparative analysis to examine the professionalisation of political campaigns in Europe, with focus on the party-centred theory of professionalisation. Party-level campaign data from Germany and Finland, collected from eight national parliamentary (NP) and European Parliamentary (EP) elections from 2004-2011, was analysed with an added focus on campaign strategies rather than just material resources. The authors tested a set of hypotheses and reached numerous conclusions. First, they found that the degree of professionalisation of a party's campaign rose from one election to the next, both as it related to campaign structures and campaign strategies. Second, the results showed that the professionalisation was higher in a party's campaign for first-order (NP) elections compared to second-order (EP) elections, again concerning both campaign structure and strategy. Third, although previous research suggested that German parties would be more professionalised than Finnish parties, the study found no evidence to support this claim as the discovered differences were not constant. Fourth, the results undoubtedly confirmed that big parties with more resources were more professionalised than smaller, less backed parties. However, no clear link was found between party size and a professionalised strategy. Finally, it was determined that left-wing parties resorted to more professionalised campaigning than right-wing parties, which was in contrast to what the authors had originally thought.

3.4 Research gap

As seen above, political communication is a broad field with studies being performed on many different areas. And of course, the studies presented here are just a snippet of the research available. With my study, my intent is to empirically add to all this knowledge through a study that involves campaign rhetoric, but perhaps more importantly deals with the professionalisation of political communication. For added value, this study will look at the professionalisation at a specific angle that has yet, as far as I can tell, to be explored in great detail, nor has it been studied from an historical perspective to analyse its progression. That is, of course, through the analysis of political TV advertisements with the distinct logic of the AIDA-model as a point of reference.

4. Theoretical frame and concepts

4.1 Professionalisation of political communication

Central to the analysis and discussion in this study will be the theory on the professionalisation of political communication. As Strömbäck (2014) explains, public relations and strategic communication have become increasingly important for politicians due to the progressive rise of the media and since party loyalty amongst voters has decreased over the years, forcing politicians to apply new strategies to adjust to the new climate. This adjustment is referred to as the 'professionalisation' of political communication, and it is commonly said that there are three phases that political communication has gone through: the pre-modern phase, the modern phase, and the post-modern phase. The post-modern phase is categorised by the use of paid professionals in the various areas involved in running a political campaign, who need not be affiliated with the party or candidate beforehand, and the notion of perpetual campaigning (Strömbäck, 2014; Norris, 2004). Examples of these professionals, as brought forward by Negrine and Lilleker (2002: 313), include "pollsters, analysts, spin-doctors, advisers, communication and public relations specialists all coordinating their activities within the 'war room'".

It is important to note, however, that it is not only the post-modern phase of political communication that can be said to have been professionalised. As Norris (2004) explains, this process actually started with the modern phase, which began as early as the 1950s and lasted through the mid-80s. It was during this time that campaigning became nationally coordinated instead of relying on state and local party organisations, and professional consultants were brought in to replace party officials and volunteers at the head of the campaigns. The importance of campaigning early, with more than a year until an election, became clear and recognised as being as important as the short, final campaign leading up to election day. Furthermore, as Norris (2004) notes, the advanced technologies in the current post-modern phase has actually brought back traits that were common in the pre-modern times, such as more localised and interactive modes of communication.

To expand further on the theory as a whole, as previously cited, Blumler and Gurevitch (1995: 207) refer to the professionalisation of political communication as "the most formative development in the political communication process". Moreover, the authors label professionalisation as the "antithesis of amateurism" (ibid.). In order to successfully use the media, to understand news values and create appropriate political advertising, one need to adhere to the skills of experts whose only purpose is to eventually stand victorious. As such, the role of specialist political consultant has cemented itself as an important aspect of modern politics. Another impact of professionalisation that Blumler and Gurevitch (1995)

touch on is that the concept of electioneering has been revamped and assimilated into a procedure of political marketing, where constituents are seen more as consumers to be swayed than citizens to be enlightened, and the candidate is now a product groomed to meet consumer needs. The effect this has had on campaigning is, of course, prominent, as more resources are devoted to collecting all various sorts of data on voter perceptions and expectations, on opponent's ratings, and so on.

However, it is not only the campaign structure that has seen a significant change – so has the political appearances and rhetoric to more suitably match with supposed media requirements. This can be seen through the common strategies of providing hard-hitting 'soundbites', and arranging public events that are highly visible and/or carry symbolic appeal. It is also a cause for the rise in negative ads being run as it is compatible with the beforementioned hierarchy of news values (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995).

4.2 Representation

As this study deals with television advertisement, the material consists of representations. "In the modern world the majority of people gain the majority of their information and knowledge about the world through mass media texts" (Long & Wall, 2012: 102), be it from television, social networks, newspapers, and so on. Today's vast media consumption allows people to feel knowledgeable and educated about the world around them, although the reliability of this knowledge should be questioned. The way media actors opt to use rhetoric, construct a narrative, or use language to signify a particular viewpoint puts the degree of citizen enlightenment to doubt. It is crucial to remember that the various media forms "are not divorced from the social, cultural, political and historical contexts of their making" (Long & Wall, 2012: 102), and as such, media representations can be very influential.

At its core, representation delivers meaning through language. Hall et al. (2013) introduces three different approaches to explain this process: the reflective, the intentional, and the constructionist (or constructivist) approach. In the reflective approach, as its name suggests, the language simply reflects reality by acting like a mirror to display the world at its true, original self. The intentional approach is the complete opposite. Here, what creates meaning is not the original source but rather the author who uses language to impose "his or her unique meaning on the world" (Hall et al., 2013: 10). The meaning of words is dependent on the author's intentions. However, both of these approaches have their flaws. As a result, "Media Studies is usually concerned with the third approach, because it avoids the naïve assumption that texts offer a simple 'mirror on the world', but also avoids the trap of assuming that the world has no effect on meaning" (Lacey, 2009: 147), with the third approach being the constructionist/constructivist approach. Here, the material world does

not transmit meaning by itself, but meaning is rather constructed through representations of concepts based on the material world via various language systems. It is the symbolic function of the material that create its meaning (Hall et al., 2013).

These symbolic functions, then, are not set in stone, and as Lacey (2009: 146) puts it, the communication between the media and its audience "is inevitably a representation: the media can only 're-present' the world". In the political advertisements of this study, the candidates attempt to represent the world the way they see it, and through their rhetoric, they attempt to persuade their audience into believing in their version of reality.

4.3 Rhetorical Political Analysis

The representations in this study will be analysed through the means of a rhetorical political analysis [RPA]. RPA, as described by Crines et al. (2016: 80), "concentrates on examining the arguments made in political speeches and the methods for justifying the positions that political elites advance". By applying RPA, researchers can investigate how political notions are rhetorically articulated in order to gain approval; how political arguments are formulated, what effects they have, and how they persuade (Finlayson, 2004, 2007).

In rhetorical strategy, a cornerstone is how to formulate the appeal, and there are three classical primary techniques to persuade through an appeal: *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* (Finlayson, 2007; Crines et al., 2016). Appeals to *ethos* concern the character of the speaker, their credibility, authority, expertise, and so on. This can also be achieved through the use of an external reference; by positive endorsement from someone else who possesses the abovementioned desirable traits. *Pathos*, then, is about an appeal to emotions to be evoked or exploited, for instance by trying to incite fear or hope in the listener and thereby influence them in a desirable direction. Appeals to *logos* are about being logical; to persuade by referring to facts and statistics that support the claims and statements being made (Finlayson, 2007; Crines et al., 2016; Carlsson & Koppfeldt, 2008). For example, a politician that changes their mind on an issue could, by an appeal to *logos*, be attacked for being untrustworthy with the accused's change of stance as a reference, as:

> *The quasi-logical argument here is something like this: people who change their minds often cannot be trusted, 'X' has changed their mind often and therefore cannot be trusted. This chain of reasoning rests on commonplace assumptions such as 'good leaders are those who are resolute and do not change their minds' or 'people with unchanging views can be relied upon'.* (Finlayson, 2007: 557-558)

4.4 The AIDA-model

Finally, we land at the AIDA-model. The AIDA-model is used to "analyse and measure the customer's journey from ignorance to purchase" (Doyle, 2011: 19). The acronym stands for *Attention* (or, alternatively, *Awareness*), *Interest*, *Desire*, and *Action*. As Carlsson & Koppfeldt (2008) explain, the first step is to create *awareness* of the product. Then, the focus is on keeping the consumer *interested* in the product and to create a *desire* for the product, which, if the advertisement is successful, should lead to *action* from the consumer with the end-goal being a purchase of the product. Additionally, another explanation of the *action* phase has included explicit "calls to action toward purchasing the product" (Lee & Hoffman, 2015: 9). Furthermore, Rowley (1998) identifies three separate stages of promotional communication in which the AIDA-model is situated. The first two phases, *attention* and *interest*, are a part of the 'cognitive stage' during which potential customers are made aware of the product at hand. The third phase, *desire*, is the lone actor of the 'affective stage' where customers are now forming opinions and attitudes about the product. Finally, the *action* phase is in the 'behaviour stage', where the experiences from the previous two stages lead to some form of behaviour (an *action* such as a purchase, for instance) from the customer.

The AIDA-model was originally constructed in 1898 by St Elmo Lewis, whose objective was to explain the process of personal selling:

> *The stages, Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action, form a linear hierarchy. In order to be motivated to actually make a purchase, customers must progress from being aware of a product's existence to being interested enough to pay attention to the product's benefits and advantages, to having a desire to benefit from the product. Lewis believed that the fourth stage, Action, would come as a natural result of movement through the first three stages.* (Doyle, 2011: 20)

As Doyle (2011) continues to explain, this thought process was then adopted by advertising and marketing theorists, and the final stage, *action*, became the ultimate goal of all advertising and marketing. However, it is the *desire* stage that is described most often being the most difficult, as it needs "to both show consumers that there is a product available which will satisfy their needs, and show them that they can satisfy that need by purchasing the product in question" (ibid.: 20), which would in turn lead to *action* from the consumer.

In politics, as Johnson-Cartee and Copeland (1991, 1997) describe, AIDA is one of two cognitive advertising models alongside AIAD (Awareness-Interest-Action-Desire), and it is the extent of audience involvement that decides which model is best suited. For high-involvement situations, such as a presidential or other major national race, the audience can

be labelled as an active one. "High-involvement audiences go through a process of a change in beliefs, then in attitudes, and then in action" (1991: 52), which creates a perfect context for the AIDA-model. With low-involvement audiences, however, the last two steps are reversed, which makes the AIAD-model more suitable as "an individual's attitude(s) changes to be consistent with the person(s) behavior(s)" (1997: 22).

5. Method and material

5.1 Qualitative research

In qualitative research, the focus lie "on the *occurrence* of its analytical objects in a particular context, as opposed to the *recurrence* of formally similar elements in different contexts" (Jensen, 1991: 4), which is instead the main focus of quantitative studies. The focus is on the *meaning* of the research object, and qualitative studies rely on interpretations (Jensen, 2012). As Flick (2007) explains, 'qualitative research' arose as an alternative to 'quantitative research' following critique towards the latter and its development in the 1960s and 1970s, and has now been in development for quite some time. Instead of focusing on numbers to derive results, the empirical material in qualitative studies is made up of texts.

However, to define 'qualitative research' is a harder task than it might seem, as it "crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011: 3) and there are multiple methods and approaches that fit under the umbrella term of 'qualitative research'. Additionally, as Flick (2007) brings forward, there are different discourses in different disciplines, such as in psychology and sociology, and the meaning of 'qualitative research' can differ geographically. Despite this, Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 3) have attempted to offer a generic definition of what 'qualitative research' is:

> *Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*

For this study, a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate in order to find answers to the research questions. The main purpose of the study is about *what* is being said and *how* it is being said, and ultimately *why* with the aforementioned theories in mind.

5.2 Analytical tools

During the rhetorical analysis, the focus was on how a message is structured with regards to the use of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*, and how the sender uses language to achieve its purpose. Examples could be the various use of rhetorical tropes and methods that help the sender convey a message in a certain way. Each candidate's entire ad was covered to see which of the

rhetorical devices were used and whether one was used more predominately than the others, and if they were used during specific times. Any patterns that occurred when comparing the ads to each other were to be accounted for. The visuals and other audio (music, etc., anything that was not spoken) also played a role in the analysis when it added something to what was being said, such as strengthening a certain appeal. In other words, while *what* was said was certainly important, it was of even more interest to look at *how* it was said with rhetorical theory in mind.

Then, the texts were analysed with the help of the AIDA-model. In order to identify the different phases, Lee and Hoffman's (2015: 9) description of AIDA was used as a base:

- *Attention: capturing the customer's attention and awareness toward the ad stimuli/product,*
- *Interest: raising the customer's interest and curiosity by highlighting the features and benefits of the product,*
- *Desire: stimulating desire and demonstrating how the product is superior to competitors, and*
- *Action: implementing calls to action toward purchasing the product.*

The 'products' in this case were simply the candidates themselves and/or the particular political viewpoints that were the focus of the advertisements. In other words, I first looked at how the viewer was made *aware* of the issue at hand, followed by how the ad attempted to maintain the viewer's *interest* in the issue. Then, focus turned to whether there was an effort to create a *desire* for the proposition or political viewpoint surrounding the issue, and finally if there was an outright call for *action*, for instance by urging the viewer to vote for a specific candidate.

However, as it was a qualitative study, potential subjectivity issues did exist (Esaiasson et al., 2017). The AIDA-model does not come with an instruction manual in the sense of how to pluck the various phases from an advertisement; to identify the various phases requires subjective interpretation, and there were instances where the phases were more distinct in one ad compared to another even if they were identified in both. Sometimes, the identification of a certain phase, *desire* in particular, could be seen as rather dubious when it was not blatantly obvious in the rhetoric, but I have made efforts to stay consistent throughout all 18 advertisements covered in identifying all four phases.

Following this analysis, a comparison was made between the material with the historical aspect being of main priority, along with the theory about the professionalisation of political

communication. This was done by analysing the discovered differences in the advertisements throughout the years, both as it relates to rhetorical content and structure.

5.3 Material

As the focus of the study was on the professionalisation of political advertisement with a historical perspective, the material consists of official television campaign ads from various US presidential campaigns ranging from the year 1952 to 2016. Only ads from the fall campaigns were reviewed, i.e. only advertisements that aired after the candidates were nominated by their respective parties.

5.3.1 Sample

Due to the limited size of the study, doing an all-encompassing analysis of all ads was not a possibility. As such, through a strategic choice, only one TV advertisement produced by each presidential candidate (Republican and Democrat only) in every other election ('52, '60, '68, etc.) were featured. All available ads from each campaign were reviewed before selection. The ads were chosen based on what was a central issue during the election, i.e. an issue that both candidates produced a campaign advertisement about. As such, the chosen advertisements from an election were directly comparable.

This selection gave the study appropriate material for the purpose of the analysis as the advertisements cover the entire time period during which political TV advertisements have been used to promote presidential candidates, as well as being consistent as it concerns which of the candidates' videos that were selected.

5.3.2 Pilot study

A small pilot study was conducted of material from campaigns not included in the main study. The function of this pilot study was to test whether the overall purpose of the study was achievable with the intended material. The compatibility between the research questions, material, and methodological tools was examined with positive and encouraging results.

5.4 Validity and reliability

A common potential issue with qualitative studies is that the analysis is dependent on personal interpretations, and different persons may interpret the same text in different ways (Esaiasson et al., 2017). As Jensen (2012: 266) articulates it, researchers performing qualitative research are "*interpretive subjects*", and qualitative studies are distinguished by "the persuasive nature of interpretation throughout the research process". This study kept this in mind throughout the analysis and ensuing discussion, and strived to always have a strong theoretical base to drive the dialogue forward and discuss conclusions.

In addition, in order to get a complete overview of a subject, a review of all available ads would have been preferable. However, this may often not be a practical possibility which creates the need for a limited selection, in which valuable information may be overlooked (Esaiasson et al., 2017). As previously explained, the sample was carefully reviewed beforehand to make sure that each video could act as a representative of the campaign it originated from. Furthermore, the function of each video was kept consistent (issue ads) as to allow proper comparison, especially over time.

To conclude, efforts have been made to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The positive results of the initial pilot study carried over to the main study, where the theory, method, and material were efficient in answering the research questions and fulfil the study's purpose.

6. Analysis

6.1 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower vs. Adlai Stevenson

The 1952 election featured the Republican nominee Dwight D. Eisenhower (with Richard Nixon) facing Democrat Adlai Stevenson (with John Sparkman), with both being challengers seeking to become first-term presidents following Democrat Harry Truman's administration. The two chosen advertisements from the 1952 campaign both deal with issues relating to war policy. In Eisenhower's ad, which is a minute and two seconds in length, the candidate answers a question from a concerned citizen about the country's war readiness. Stevenson's 54-second ad, on the other hand, questions and ridicules the Republican Party's positions on certain policies. As Stevenson refused to appear in any ads, the visuals are entirely made up of cartoon characters.

6.1.1 Dwight D. Eisenhower: "The Man from Abilene"

In "The Man from Abilene", Eisenhower's past military experience is at the forefront. First, a narrator explains how Eisenhower, from the small town of Abilene, Kansas, came to be a crucial part of the successes of D-Day and V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day) during World War II. Then, he is asked whether he believes the country is ready should another war come, to which he responds negatively. The narrator follows up by speaking of Eisenhower's experience in dealing with other world leaders and declares that a vote for Eisenhower is a vote for peace.

A cornerstone in the rhetoric used in this ad is Eisenhower's past experiences in the military – his *ethos*. He is presented as a war hero by citing his involvement in World War II, where "he brought us to the triumph and peace of V-E Day", while previously being a part of D-Day. His *ethos* is also strengthened by referring to his past relations with other leaders, with whom he is said to have negotiated working arrangements, all while pictures are shown of Eisenhower meeting other (presumed) leaders. There is also an appeal to *pathos* in the midst of the *ethos* appeal when the narrator says that the nation is "haunted by the stalemate in Korea", which is preceded by Eisenhower's answer that they are not equipped for war. It presents a dangerous situation; that a war could be on the horizon and they are not adequately prepared. Additionally, the mentioning of and visuals from D-Day and V-E Day can be seen as a play at *pathos*, especially since the footage from V-E Day was only seven years removed and surely still instilled feelings of pride and triumph.

The structure, then, is seemingly well thought out from a marketing perspective. *Attention* and *interest* are attempted to be achieved by showing how a man from a small town in Kansas came to be a crucial part of what lead to the resolution of World War II. Further,

interest is accomplished through a parallel between those historic dates and what the ad calls "another crucial hour in our history", while the text "Nov.4, 1952 Election Day" flashes on the screen, followed by the question from the concerned citizen. The answer from Eisenhower, and especially the following narration, pushes the *desire* of having Eisenhower elected to keep the peace. The ad also concludes with an explicit call for *action*, as it urges the voters to "vote for peace. Vote for Eisenhower".

6.1.2 Adlai Stevenson: "Platform Double Talk"

In this ad, which only features cartoon characters, the Republican Party is portrayed as being two-faced by a character that literally has two heads attached to one body. This character is called "Mr Mac-GOP" (the "GOP", Grand Old Party, is a commonly used nickname for the Republican Party). This two-headed character is asked questions by different off-screen voices about war, aid to Europe, and United Nations support, with each head giving contradicting answers to each one.

Much like in the earlier example of a *logos* argument presented by Finlayson (2007), the GOP character in the ad is depicted as being untrustworthy due to the conflicting messages he is conveying. An example is that, on the Korean war, head #1 says they should stay away, while head #2 wants to expand the war into China. Ultimately, the two heads confuse each other with their answers. All throughout, the voices asking the questions are commenting on the contradictions, referring to it as "doubletalk". The *ethos* of the Republican Party is here attacked by using the *logos* argument that they cannot be trusted and relied upon, citing the conflicting stances taken by supposed Republican representative. The party is shown to be indecisive and unclear, and is accused of trying to confuse the issues by not giving any straight answers. The final line, "don't you be confused, vote for Stevenson for president", suggests Stevenson is a man of his word with a clear stance on every issue – the opposite of the Republican Party.

Regarding the structure, the two-headed GOP character is immediately introduced which could be seen as a way to grab *attention*, especially with the accompanying comment that "he promises to solve all your problems – ask him any question!", which is said in a somewhat sarcastic tone. The following back-and-forth between the increasingly frustrated voices asking questions and the poor answers they are given creates *interest* in the issues. There is no overt progression to a *desire* stage, however, but the built-up frustration in the voices asking questions could be seen as a way to create the *desire* for straight answers which are here not being given by the GOP representative (which the voices make abundantly clear for the viewer). And, just like in the Eisenhower ad, the film ends with an explicit call for the viewer to vote.

6.1.3 Comparison

Both ads focus primarily on *ethos*, although in different ways. While the Republican ad is entirely about the *ethos* of Eisenhower and his past experiences, the Democrat ad is more of an attack on the *ethos* of Eisenhower and his party by using *logos* arguments. Still, it is a question of *ethos* in both cases. The Eisenhower ad still follows the AIDA-model more clearly, as the different phases are more distinct from each other with a natural progression from one to the next.

6.2 1960, Richard Nixon vs. John F. Kennedy

Following eight years as vice president under President Eisenhower, Republican Richard Nixon (with Henry Cabot Lodge) squared off with Democrat John F. Kennedy (with Lyndon Johnson) for the presidency in the 1960 election. The chosen ads are both about economics. Nixon's 57-second ad features Nixon alone in an office, speaking directly to the audience (with the help of a narrator). Kennedy, on the other hand, visits a family and asks them about their economic situation in his one-minute ad.

6.2.1 Richard Nixon: "Economic Strength"

In an ad that is anything but flashy, Richard Nixon sits on the edge of a desk and speaks to the viewer about the economic situation in America. Nixon is asked by a narrator if there is any truth in the statement that America is not growing financially, with Nixon referencing the wage increases that has taken place during the Eisenhower administration and compares that to the Truman administration. Back then, he cites, substantial price increases meant that wage increases were made negligible. But during his time as vice president, the wage increases "have been real", which Nixon refers to as "honest economic growth". This growth makes America strong, and to stay strong is said to be the only way to keep peace.

In "Economic Strength", Richard Nixon makes a *pathos* appeal with *logos* arguments. The financial well-being of America, a sensitive topic, is discussed, and its continued economic growth is said to be essential in order to keep peace. The *logos* arguments used include that "more Americans are working at better jobs than ever before", and that they are "earning more and saving more than ever before". This is compared to the inflation during Truman's presidency, which "robbed everyone" (another *pathos* appeal). "We have been careful with your money" and "your wage increases have been real", Nixon states, and makes another *pathos* appeal in that it is crucial that this trend continues to avoid another conflict, effectively linking economic growth to America's safety.

'Economic strength' is something everyone (plausibly) should recognise as highly important, if not vital when intending to be a major player in world politics. So, to open the ad with

Nixon getting the question about whether the US is not growing economically should be enough to grab people's *attention*. Nixon's way of then relating to the public's past despair when inflation nullified their supposedly increased incomes, and pointing at his own administration's accomplishments in fixing that situation, makes it more *interesting* by making it more personal and relatable. He then attempts to create the *desire* of him stepping up from being vice president to president by claiming how they *must* keep this positive trend going, because that is how they stay strong, free, and keep peace. To successfully complete the AIDA-model, the narrator explicitly calls for the viewer to vote for Nixon and Lodge.

6.2.2 John F. Kennedy: "Sills Family"

John F. Kennedy takes a different approach in his ad on the economic situation. Kennedy uses the Sills family as a representative of an average, middle-income American family, with the same financial struggles as everyone else: "the great increase in the cost of living". In a sit-down with Kennedy, Mrs Sills talks about how the rent has gone up, along with food, cleaning, clothes, gas, and electric and telephone bills. And this, Mr Sills adds, makes them concerned about their daughters' futures as they want them both to be able to go to college, but they are not able to save any money. Kennedy then attributes the Eisenhower administration's "reliance upon a high interest rate policy" as the culprit for the increased cost of living. To conclude the ad, a narrator chimes in that the situation can be improved, but only if they elect "the man who cares about America's problems"

Although the approach was different, Kennedy likewise appeals to *pathos* with *logos* arguments. The Sills' troublesome situation, where they are concerned about their daughters' futures, is a *pathos* appeal that is relatable for anyone in a similar situation. When Kennedy asks if they are able to save any money, Mr Sills answers in a disappointed tone that they are not. *Logos* arguments are used to describe why they are in this situation, being the increase in rent, food prices, bills, and so on. The way Kennedy places the blame on the Eisenhower administration's high interest policy rate is another *logos* appeal by presenting a logical cause. The ad ends on what could be described as an *ethos* appeal, with the narrator claiming that Kennedy is "the man who cares about America's problems", which suggests that the public's problems are not a top priority for Nixon.

The beginning of the ad is a bit slow, and the initial introduction by the narrator, "this is the Sills family. Recently, John F. Kennedy visited the Sills", is not very *attention*-grabbing nor does it explain what the ad will be about (the visuals do not help, either). It is not until the next section that *awareness* of the ad's intention is made clear, when Kennedy explains how the Sills are dealing with the increase in the cost of living – "one of the great problems that all American families are now facing". Mrs Sills's line-up of *logos* arguments and Mr Sills's

worry about their daughters' futures keep the viewer *interested*, and so does Kennedy when placing the blame on the current administration. Much emphasis on creating a *desire* is not seen until the very end, as Kennedy first calmly says that his "own judgement is that we're going to have to try to do a better job in this field", in a tone that does not sound overly concerned, but the narrator chimes in with a "yes, we can do better" accompanied by the abovementioned line that "must elect the man who cares". And as such, the ad also ends with the narrator urging the viewer to elect John F. Kennedy for president.

6.2.3 Comparison

Both ads employ the same rhetorical strategy, in that it is mainly a *pathos* appeal backed up by *logos* arguments. While Nixon claims that the middle-income families are doing better than they did before the Eisenhower presidency, Kennedy suggests that middle-income families are now struggling. Structure wise, both ads again seem to follow the model, even with Kennedy's slow start. Moreover, they both attempt to create the *desire* that the viewers must vote for them, either to keep the peace (Nixon) or because only one man truly cares about their problems (Kennedy). In this sense, the structures of the two ads very much line up post the introduction, even though the approaches are different in that Nixon does all the talking himself, while Kennedy makes use of a 'regular' family as spokespersons.

6.3 1968, Richard Nixon vs. Hubert Humphrey

Republican Richard Nixon (now with Spiro Agnew as running mate) made a second attempt at the presidency in 1968. Running against him was Democrat Hubert Humphrey (with Edmund Muskie). As it was an election in the midst of the Vietnam war, war-related issues were certainly on the agenda. Nixon's one-minute ad focuses on ending the war in Vietnam, while Humphrey's one-minute ad questions Nixon's stance on the UN treaty to stop nuclear weapons.

6.3.1 Richard Nixon: "Vietnam"

In contrast with the Nixon ad about the economy from eight years prior, this ad about the Vietnam war makes heavy use of both imagery and sound to complement the spoken (voice-over) message. It begins by showing various still images from the war (vehicles, weapons, people, explosions, etc.), with unsettling and worrisome drums being played in the background. As Nixon mentions how military, economic, and diplomatic power has never been used so ineffectively before, a photo is shown of a deceased (or at the least greatly injured) soldier. Nixon speaks about all the sacrifice and support, yet the war is still on-going. He concludes by pledging that, if he is elected, there will be "an honourable end to the war in Vietnam", with a narrator urging the voter to "vote like your whole world depended on it".

The ad is a *pathos* appeal all throughout, from the moment of the initial drumming noise until the last urging request. The imagery plays a key role, and Nixon speaks of all the resources that have been used to no avail, including sacrifices. He paints a distraught picture of the conflict in Vietnam, for which no end is in sight unless the American people "turn to new leadership, not tied to the policies and mistakes of the past". This is also a *logos* appeal in that if what they have been doing is clearly not working, the next logical step would be to make changes. Nixon pledges that he will bring an honourable end to the war, and the narrator rounds off the *pathos* appeal by placing extra emphasis on the importance of the election ("vote like your whole world depended on it").

This time, the analysis of the structure has to include more than just the spoken message to be accurate. The ad lasts for a good ten seconds before a single word is spoken by Nixon, but by this time *attention* and *awareness* of the subject at hand has already been patently displayed through the imagery. What follows is a rather clear progression from building *interest* ("never has so much military, economic and diplomatic power been used so ineffectively") to creating a *desire* to have an honourable end through new leadership. The final call for *action*, "vote like your whole word depended on it", does not audibly mention Nixon, but his name is displayed in big letters for five whole seconds before the ad ends.

6.3.2 Hubert Humphrey: "Bomb (Nuclear Treaty)"

Hubert Humphrey makes use of strong imagery in his war-related ad, too. It starts with a narrator asking the viewer if they "want Castro to have the bomb now?", while simultaneously showing a huge nuclear blast (audio included) as seen from the sky above, and then if they "want any country that doesn't have the bomb to be able to get it?" with drum beats in the background. Focus is then shifted to the UN treaty to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, which Nixon is said to be "in no hurry to pass", which Humphrey opposes. Humphrey is declared as being a supporter of the treaty as he wants to "stop the spread of the bomb, now". "There is no alternative", the narrator concludes

Humphrey's ad focuses primarily on *pathos*. The threat of Fidel Castro having nuclear weapons, with an atomic blast being displayed, is an obvious attempt to produce feelings of fear and dread, and Humphrey follows this up by questioning the *ethos* of Nixon as he is said to be "in no hurry to pass" the UN treaty. Humphrey, of course, opposes this, and the narrator claims that Humphrey wants to stop the spread now "before it mushrooms". This apt metaphor is backed by the previous explosion now being shown in reverse, with the mushroom cloud becoming smaller and smaller. The *ethos* of Nixon is questioned in contrast to Humphrey's in this *pathos* appeal focused on fear, as Nixon is positioned as being the reason for the mushroom cloud to appear, while Humphrey is the one who makes sure it

never sees the light of day. "There is no alternative", as the narrator says, suggests that a vote for Nixon is flat-out dangerous and could lead to Fidel Castro being in possession of nuclear weaponry.

Again, the imaging plays a big role in the structure of the ad. The immediate threat of Castro having a nuclear bomb, with an explosion being shown simultaneously, is a good attempt at getting the viewers' *attention*. The follow-up question and the query about the candidates' UN treaty stances keep *interest* up, and Humphrey calls for a *desire* in the viewer to stop the spread of nuclear weaponry. The last part, "let's stop the spread of the bomb, now. Humphrey: there is no alternative" can also be seen as an implicit call for *action* in the form of a vote for Humphrey.

6.3.3 Comparison
Evidently, both ads are very similar although they do not deal with the exact same situation (Vietnam contra nuclear weapons). Both are *pathos* appeals that focus on the tragedies and dangers of war. Furthermore, both present themselves as being the only answer for a safe future, as the whole world depends on Nixon being elected to stop the Vietnam war, while Humphrey is the lone candidate to stop the spread of nuclear weaponry. Again, the structures of both ads are very similar and undoubtedly follow the AIDA-model without any hitches, although Humphrey's call for *action* is not explicit.

6.4 1976, Gerald Ford vs. Jimmy Carter
In 1976, Republican Gerald Ford was the sitting president as a result of the resignation of President Richard Nixon after the Watergate scandal. Ford (with Robert Dole) sought re-election versus Democrat challenger Jimmy Carter (with Walter Mondale). One of the topics both candidates touched on dealt with workers, and the economic situation for workers. Ford, in his 62-second ad, stands among a group of factory workers discussing how he intends to lower the tax burden of middle-income workers. Carter, in a shorter 33-second ad, speaks directly to the viewer about his intention to get the unemployed back into the workforce.

6.4.1 Gerald Ford: "Workers: Tax Reductions"
In his ad, incumbent President Ford puts the proposals of challenger Carter in contrast with his own and speaks of the differences. The opening of the ad features a working man describing his situating: middle-class, three kids, and his wife "had to go to work to make ends meet". Ford, then, answers this worker by bringing up the differences between him and Carter. While Carter wants to increase taxes for people with incomes over $14,000 a year, Ford says he believes that is "the wrong way to go". Next, he lists his proposals should he be

re-elected which includes an increase in the personal exemption which would give workers a higher net wage. He then references current federal tax laws as being the reason why middle-class workers are struggling as the reason for this personal exemption increase. A narrator ultimately chimes in to confirm that Ford wants to lessen the tax burden on middle-income families.

Gerald Ford concentrates primarily on *logos* arguments in this ad, as the focus is on why his proposals are preferable to Carter's. He brings up figures (the personal exemption would go up from $750 to $1000, for instance) which allows the viewer to put an actual value to his words. Additionally, Ford references current federal tax laws as being the reason why middle-class workers are struggling, which is why this personal exemption increase is necessary. Another potential *logos* appeal could be that Ford is standing amongst a group of workers who would be directly impacted by his proposals, and they continuously agree with his propositions. Furthermore, there is also a *pathos* appeal when the worker describes his situation which is presented as undesirable and is relatable to any other middle-class citizen facing similar issues.

Structure wise, the model can arguably be seen but it is not as clear as previously. *Awareness* of what the issue is about is made clear by the testimony of the worker to begin the ad. The *logos* arguments work well to keep *interest*, but there is not much effort in the rhetoric to create a true *desire* for these changes. However, one could argue that the proposition of a higher weekly take-home wage could be enough to create a *desire* on its own, but nevertheless, the rhetoric could be seen as lacking in this regard. There is also no overt call for *action* regarding a vote for Ford, but the narrator finished the ad with the phrase "let's keep to his [Ford's] steady course", which could be seen as an implicit plea to vote.

6.4.2 Jimmy Carter: "Jobs"

Jimmy Carter's ad consists of Carter speaking directly to the viewer in an outdoor setting. Carter's message is that anyone that is able to work not only should be working, but must be given the chance to work. He states that he does not believe their economic woes will be solved when they have up to nine million people out of work, with up to three million more having given up on finding a job, and another million and a half living on welfare despite being in working condition. A narrator finished the ad by saying that "if you want to put America back to work, vote for Jimmy Carter: A leader, for a change".

The ad could be seen as a *pathos* appeal with a strong focus on *logos* arguments. Carter presents a very unfavourable view of the job market, one that he claims will cause the economic troubles to continue on. He speaks of people who have given up in their attempts of finding employment and that over a million citizens are dependent on welfare despite being

"fully able to work full time", which are sad and frustrating thoughts. The figures work as *logos* arguments, but the entire situation acts as a *pathos* appeal of hopelessness and despair, both for the people wanting to work but cannot find employment, and for the country due to citizens living off welfare checks instead of contributing to the economy.

Initially, *attention* to the topic is created both by Carter immediately mentioning 'work' three times in his opening sentence, and as the text "JIMMY CARTER on the issue of Jobs" is shown concurrently. The following section where Carter lists the issues mentioned above works to create *interest* about the subject, but there is no true progression in the rhetoric to a *desire* phase. Near the end of the ad the text "JIMMY CARTER: A leader, for a change" (a spinoff of his campaign slogan "Leadership for a Change") is shown, which could be seen as attempting to create a *desire* for something new but it lacks a certain energy that has been seen before. However, the ad does conclude with an explicit call for *action*.

6.4.3 Comparison

While the candidates focus on different topics on the subject of American workers, tax rate and unemployment, they both do so by relying on statistics and figures (*logos*) to present their cases. Carter could be said to aim a bit more at the emotions of the viewer by questioning whether they will *ever* fix their economic issues without change, and how millions of people have "given up hope". In regards to structure, both advertisements feel deficient when it comes to the rhetoric of creating a *desire*.

6.5 1984, Ronald Reagan vs. Walter Mondale

In 1984, incumbent Republican President Ronald Reagan (with George H. W. Bush) sought re-election against a former vice president in Democrat Walter Mondale (with Geraldine Ferraro). The economy was once again a popular topic, with both candidates producing multiple ads on the subject. In the half-minute long Reagan advertisement chosen for this analysis, a narrator explains how inflation will be seen in the supermarkets should Mondale be elected president. Mondale's half-minute ad takes a look at the poor economic situation during Reagan's first term in office.

6.5.1 Ronald Reagan: "Supermarket"

The entire ad takes place in a supermarket, with a narrator guiding the viewer to certain items in the store and reflecting about "what prices would be if inflation was still out of control", referencing the inflation that took place during the Carter/Mondale administration: an ordinary loaf of bread would be twenty-six cents more expensive; milk would cost an additional thirty-four cents; the price of a pound of bacon would be $1,28 higher; and finally, gas would now be $2,27 a gallon. The visuals also display each item as the narrator mentions

them, and the final imagery cleverly shows a meter at a gas station rising rapidly. "President Reagan. He's brought inflation down", the narrator concludes.

Reagan's ad, which does not feature Reagan himself beyond a still photo in the conclusion, is essentially 30 seconds of *logos* arguments about why Mondale is not the answer for the inflation problem but more so the cause, referencing back to Mondale's time in office as the vice president under President Carter 1977-1981. The figures are supported with a source, the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, which is provided as the first figure is stated which backs up all these claims being made, making them more legitimate. The ad is short but straight to the point, and relies entirely on calculated numbers to sell the message.

The structure of Reagan's is another one in which the *desire* phase feels wanting. Initially, *attention* is caught by the proposition to, before the vote, go to the supermarket and think about what the prices would be with past inflation. The figures keep *interest* up, and it could be said that it builds up to a *desire*. "If that doesn't convince you to vote for President Reagan, stop off at the gas station and imagine paying two twenty-seven a gallon", the narrator says, a scenario that would be seen as undesirable at the time, but that being a true *desire* phase is hard to argue in favour of. Moreover, this is also as close to a call for *action* that can be found in this ad.

6.5.2 Walter Mondale: "Rollercoaster"

Mondale makes cunning use of imagery in his ad, as he combines the ups and downs in the economy with visuals of a roller coaster in action. First, Mondale credits 'Reaganomics' for causing the deep recession and vast unemployment in the early 80s, figures that were the worst in a fifty-year period. And now, they are in deep debt and are seeing "record Reagan deficits". There is also a claim that Reagan has borrowed more money than every previous president combined, which will lead to higher interest rates and slow down the economy. The narrator ultimately asks what the viewer think will happen in 1985 should Reagan be re-elected in '84, and in the background the roller coaster can be seen climbing over a hill and come rushing down.

Mondale mainly focuses on *logos* arguments by the way of statistics. First he blames 'Reaganomics' for the troubles in the 80s when the unemployment numbers reached a fifty-year low. Then he turns Reagan's own words against him – yes, the economy is moving up, but it is "up on a mountain of debt". While the increase in debt is a *logos* argument, the way it is framed questions the *ethos* of Reagan as being deceitful. The proposed issues with Reagan having borrowed more money "than all the other presidents in history combined" is another *logos* argument. The final imagery with the roller coaster going on a steep downhill could be

seen as a *pathos* appeal in that the intention is arguably to scare the viewer into thinking that a vote for Reagan is a vote for another crash in the economy.

Again, the *desire* phase is not as clearly identified in the structure of this roller coaster ad. The beginning of the ad is sure to grab *attention*, as it features typical roller coaster screams in the background of the narrator bringing up the unwanted figures about recession and unemployment. Then, the *interest* and *desire* phases are seemed to be intertwined, with the facts that keep *interest* again debatably building to a *desire*, which is hammered home by the narrator saying that it "will drive interest rates up, slow the economy down, and then…" with the ellipsis allowing the viewer to fill in the blank, attempting to create a *desire* to instead change course. However, there is no call for *action* in the sense that the viewer should vote for Mondale. In fact, Mondale's name is not mentioned at all besides in the required "paid for by" statement. The ad only urges the viewer to think about what a vote for Reagan would lead to, which does of course insinuate that a vote for the Monroe is preferable, but it is not explicit.

6.5.3 Comparison

It is another instance where both candidates apply very similar strategies from a rhetorical standpoint. Being an economic issue, both rely on *logos* arguments by the way of facts and figures. However, when it comes to structure, neither ad truly outright follow the AIDA-model as the *desire* phase is quite hard to identify, although the various stages of the model can be wrested from them both. With that said, advertisements from previous elections have shown a clearer progression between the phases.

6.6 1992, George H. W. Bush vs. Bill Clinton

Republican George H. W. Bush, coming off his first term as president which followed two terms as vice president, was hoping for a second term in office (with Dan Quayle) as he was challenged by Democrat Bill Clinton (with Al Gore). One of the highly-debated topics was a welfare reform, with both candidates announcing the urge for a change in the system. In these two half-minute ads, Bush and Clinton discusses their viewpoints on the subject.

6.6.1 George H. W. Bush: "Favor Rev. 1"

In this ad, the incumbent president stares into the camera and speaks directly to his constituents. He speaks of a need to reform the welfare system, and he notes that the victims of the current system are the recipients, and that he does not oppose welfare but that the existing system "strips every recipient of his dignity". Instead, Bush wants to give these people a chance to work and pursue the American Dream.

George H. W. Bush's welfare ad is a wholly *pathos*-driven ad. He refers to the citizens currently on welfare as victims who are deprived of their dignity, and does not blame them but rather the system. Now, Bush wants "to restore that dignity by giving them a chance to work, giving them a chance to give them a shot at the American dream", a very emotionally loaded message as what can be deemed more patriotic in the US than the opportunity for all Americans to chase the American dream? Furthermore, it is an opportunity they are currently being denied.

The structure of the ad is up to par as far as progression through the phases goes. While lacking an explicit call for action, the ad first does an adequate job to introduce the topic and obtain *attention*. The notion of a welfare reform is communicated both in the initial spoken dialogue by Bush as well as through text on the screen. Then, Bush attempts to create *interest* in the subject by speaking of the true 'victims' of the system, before moving on to truly try to convince why the reform is needed. He wants to promote the *desire* for everyone to have a chance to make a living by themselves, and thereby being able to pursue their dreams. It is a very short message with no more than a couple of sentences being communicated, but the progression from creating *awareness* of the subject, to creating *interest* in it and ultimately a *desire* for the reform is still very clear.

6.6.2 Bill Clinton: "Second Chance"

In "Second Chance", Bill Clinton looks into the camera and speaks directly to the viewer. He states that the "government has failed us", with welfare being "one of its worst", but that he has a plan to "break the cycle of welfare dependency". This plan includes providing education, training, and child care, but the ones who are then able to work must then go to work, be it in the private or the public sector. He then references the success he has had in his home state where 17,000 people went "from welfare rolls to payrolls", and ultimately states that welfare should be "a second chance, not a way of life".

Bill Clinton's ad is a *pathos* appeal, but he makes use of *logos* arguments as well. First, the *pathos* appeal begins with how the masses have been let down by the government and made citizens dependent on welfare – a bleak thought lacking much hope. His solution is made up of *logos* appeals, as he outlines what his plan is: to "provide education, job training, and childcare", and that people then take responsibility and work when they are able. Furthermore, he references his past successes and provides a solid figure (17,000 people) to support his plan. His final *pathos* appeal is similar to the American dream sentiment, in that "it's time to make welfare what it should be, a second chance, not a way of life". In other words, it should be a parachute for those who fall so that they can get back up again and live their lives, not a net in which they are caught.

Moreover, the ad is structured in line with the AIDA-model, but again omitting an explicit call for action. "The Clinton Plan: Welfare to Work" is flashed on the screen as Clinton starts talking about the government's failures surrounding welfare, creating both *attention* and *awareness* of the subject at hand. He creates *interest* by not only stating that he has a plan but furthermore how that plan will come to fruition. Clinton then moves to injecting the *desire* to have everyone able to work actually work, and that no one will willingly or unwillingly be dependent on the welfare system, but that the system should instead be giving citizens in need "a second chance".

6.6.3 Comparison

Both ads manage to aptly convey clear messages in a short amount of time, and they both appeal to *pathos* primarily by jabbing at the pride of American citizens, of being independent and free to pursue what they wish without relying on the government. Both ads are likewise structured very analogously and have a clear progression through the phases of the AIDA-model, except for the lack of a plain call for action. This omission, and others like it, will be returned to in the discussion.

6.7 2000, George W. Bush vs. Al Gore

In the 2000 election, Democrat Al Gore, the incumbent vice president, looked to become president (with Joe Lieberman) but faced opposition in the form of Republican George W. Bush (with Dick Cheney). Domestic issues such as education were of importance in the 2000 election, with both candidates producing half-minute long advertisements to highlight how they are to fix the failing school system and turn the tide.

6.7.1 George W. Bush: "Education Recession"

George W. Bush refers to the current educational situation in 2000 as an "education recession that's hurting our children", and more specifically a "Clinton/Gore education recession" that is "failing our kids". In this ad, which consists of a narrator speaking with background imagery of students of various ages, Bush first presents various unfavourable student statistics from the Clinton/Gore era and then contrasts those statistics with what Bush has accomplished in his home state of Texas, where the state now "leads the nation in academic improvement". Finally, he introduces the "Bush Blueprint for accountability, high standards, and local control".

George W. Bush makes heavy use of *logos* arguments throughout his ad, where he first uses them to show how poorly students have been performing under Clinton/Gore, and then how successful they have been in his home state where he has had influence. The two unfavourable figures he provides, that "our students rank last in the world in math and

physics" and that "most fourth graders in our cities can't read" are both supported with references (in text format). The *logos* appeal continues when he shifts focus to Texas, where he provides another statistic to support his agenda. Additionally, he presents his plan and what the most important aspects are: accountability, high standards, and local control. Furthermore, all throughout the ad Bush uses music and imagery of children in a school environment, from young grade-schoolers when speaking of the failing numbers to graduates when it is about Bush's success in Texas. This imagery could serve as a *pathos* appeal in the background of the logos arguments being presented. Likewise, the ad begins with a *pathos* appeal when he speaks of the "educational recession that's hurting our children", and then how "it's failing our kids".

The structure, again, follows the model without including an outright call for *action*, just as seen in the two clips from 1992. Within five seconds, the narrator has already told the viewer that America is having an educational recession that is hurting their children, thus effectively making the viewer acutely *aware* of what the ad is about. The ad then immediately discloses the unsatisfactory figures about elementary school in the US, keeping the viewer *interested* while making them more informed. Following, the theme of the ad switches from failure to success with Bush's educational accomplishment in Texas being centre stage and acting as a representative of what he wants to do with the entire nation, which is something every citizen should reasonably agree with, thus creating the *desire*. The viewer is then asked to learn more about the plan, Bush's 'blueprint', to fuel the *desire* of it going into effect. The background imaging of celebrating graduates adds to this thought.

6.7.2 Al Gore: "Accountability"

In "Accountability", there is a mix between Al Gore speaking on a podium and a narrator speaking over background imagery of students in school environments. Al Gore starts by stating that he agrees with Bush on accountability, and that his plan begins with accountability. He then continues to outline his plan, which includes smaller classes and 100,000 more teachers, which combined will "increase discipline and learning". Furthermore, he states that he wants to make college tuition more affordable for middle-class families "by making it tax deductible" up to $10,000 every year. Finally, Gore positions education as "a number one priority"

Concerning his rhetoric, Gore uses *logos* arguments to convey his thoughts. However, instead of using figures about a failing system, Gore uses figures connected to his proposed solution and does not bring up anything regarding the current low rankings. He brings forward a logical solution to his intent to increase discipline and learning, by employing 100,000 more teachers and lower class sizes. Then, the tax break is another logical solution to make college

tuition more affordable. Additionally, imagery of children and older students in classrooms are shown throughout the ad, which could function as a *pathos* appeal.

The structural trend seen in the last three analysed videos continue here. The subject is clearly announced immediately, bringing both *attention* and *awareness* to the topic. Moving on, Gore attempts to create and maintain *interest* by saying that he agrees with Bush before he announces his own plan. Then, he tries to create a *desire* for his plan, as he states that "we need" smaller classes and more and better-trained teachers, and that "we need" to help middle-class families financially. And finally, that education is "a number one priority". The text "Al Gore for President" is shown on the screen as Gore makes his last statement which could be seen as a call for *action*.

6.7.3 Comparison

Both candidates rely on the same strategy, an appeal to *logos* through statistics and logical proposals. Furthermore, both ads seem to use very similar methods in structuring how to announce their proposals and why they are beneficial, as one can make connections to the AIDA-model without any issues.

6.8 2008, John McCain vs. Barack Obama

Following eight years of President George W. Bush, Republican John McCain (with Sarah Palin) and Democrat Barack Obama (with Joseph Biden) sought the presidency in the 2008 election. In the exceptionally expensive campaign war between John McCain and Barack Obama (compared to previous elections), both candidates regularly attacked each other on issues and character, but one thing that both candidates pushed was the idea of change. In their half-minute ad, McCain and Palin refer to themselves as the "original mavericks", while Obama's half-minute ad tries to inspire the nation.

6.8.1 John McCain: "Original Mavericks"

"The original mavericks" they call themselves, John McCain and running-mate Sarah Palin. In this ad, a narrator outlines some of the things McCain and Palin have done previously in their political careers while various pictures of the candidates and news extracts are shown. McCain is presented as someone who "fights pork barrel spending" (a metaphor about government spending), as someone who "took on the drug industry", and that he "battled Republicans and reformed Washington". Palin, then, is said to have "stopped the bridge to nowhere" (a proposed bridge in Alaska), to have taken on "big oil", and to have "battled Republicans and reformed Alaska". And now, the narrator concludes, they will make history and change Washington.

The ad is essentially a half-minute long *ethos* appeal, as the previous political accomplishments by McCain and Paling are used to strengthen their characters and cast them as "mavericks". The claims mentioned above are also supported by text boxes with outside references in the form of extracts from various news outlets, which then work as *logos* arguments. For instance, McCain fighting "pork barrel spending" is supported by a reference to McCain having has previously faulted Bush about this issue, and Palin taking on "big oil" is supported with a reference saying that "Palin takes on oil industry, Republicans". All these statements try to portray McCain and Palin as being different from the norm and not afraid of change, or, as they call themselves, mavericks.

The ad's opening, "The original mavericks" while showing a picture of McCain and Palin, could certainly be described as *attention*-grabbing. No time is then wasted before their various past accomplishments are presented in order to create *interest* in this couple of mavericks. The final statement, "they'll make history. They'll change Washington. McCain/Palin. Real change", attempts to motivate the viewer and get them on board, thus creating a *desire*. This transition occurs late as it does not happen until the very end of the ad, but it is there. An explicit call for action is once again lacking.

6.8.2 Barack Obama: "Something"

Barack Obama's ad is about people uniting all over America, with background imagery of Obama at various public events. No matter where they are from, people are "uniting in common purpose", and a narrator presents Obama as "a leader who'll bring us together" and who is endorsed by Warren Buffett and Colin Powell. The ad then shifts to an extract from a speech by Obama, where he urges the people to choose "hope over fear" and "unity over division", with "the promise of change over the power of the status quo". Then, they will "emerge from this crisis stronger and more prosperous as one nation, and as one people".

Barack Obama's ad speaks of his *ethos*, but there is a larger overall *pathos* feel throughout as well. The ad begins with slow-moving images of pleased and happy citizens, as the narrator proclaims how "something's happening in America". The narrator then pronounces that Obama is "endorsed by Warren Buffet and Colin Powell", using outside references to strengthen Obama's *ethos*. As this is said, Obama is shown standing at a podium with a sign saying "change we need". The remainder of the ad returns to the *pathos* appeal, with the extracts above speaking of hope instead of fear, and a united nation that will undergo changes to rid the status quo. The *pathos* appeal is backed up with the *ethos* endorsement about his character to give his words more oomph.

The ad's structure follow suite with the last ads analysed here, but with an arguably bigger emphasis on the *desire* phase. The initial imaging and calm narrating attempts to get

attention with a bit of ambiguity, although it is clear it is a political ad as Obama is visible. The following clarifications try to arouse *interest* and lands at Obama, being endorsed by two other recognisable names, being the leader to unite them all. It then progresses to *desire* – a *desire* to choose "hope over fear", "unity over division", and believe in "change over the power of the status quo". That is how they will prosper as one united collective. There is even an explicit call for *action* in textual form, which urges the viewer to "vote November 4". This ad could be seen as a clear demonstration of the AIDA-model at work.

6.8.3 Comparison

The styles are certainly different, and so are the rhetorical approaches. McCain/Palin focuses whole-heartedly on *ethos* by showing how their past deeds make them mavericks who will bring change to Washington. Obama instead goes for a more emotional *pathos* approach with an injection of *ethos* appeal. While Obama's ad may be the most definite example of the AIDA-model yet, the McCain ad is not far behind.

6.9 2016, Donald J. Trump vs. Hillary Clinton

After Barack Obama had served two terms as president, the 2016 campaign came to be rather abnormal with Republican nominee Donald J. Trump (with Mike Pence) leading a very aggressive and so-called "politically incorrect" campaign. The response by the Democrat challenger Hillary Clinton (with Tim Kaine) was to, in large parts, run attack ads against Trump, and focus less on specific issues. As a result, there were only a few pure issue ads produced. One issue that both candidates did produce about half-minute long advertisements about was the economy.

6.9.1 Donald J. Trump: "Two Americas: Economy"

As the title of this 30-second ad suggests, Donald Trump attempts to show the viewer how the economy in America will look like if Hillary Clinton is elected president, compared to if he is elected president (and Trump ran an almost identically structured ad on immigration). The message is delivered by a narrator while pictures are shown of citizens that would be impacted by each hypothetical situation. With Clinton, "the middle class gets crushed. Spending goes up. Taxes go up. Hundreds of thousands of jobs disappear". It is said to be "more of the same, but worse". In Trump's America, however, "working families get tax relief. Millions of new jobs created. Wages go up. Small businesses thrive". The American dream is said to be achievable, and it is "change that makes America great again".

Overall, the ad could be said to be a mix of a *pathos* and *logos* appeal. The two different Americas Trump presents contain emotionally loaded scenarios. For instance, while Clinton will "crush" the middle class, a scary thought for anyone who identifies as being a middle-

class citizen, Trump will give them tax relief. While hundreds of thousands of jobs will disappear under Clinton, Trump will create millions. The imagery plays a part as well, as concerned citizens are shown when Clinton is spoken about while everyone is happy when it is about Trump. Moreover, Trump appeals to the possibility of achieving the American dream with all the emotional connotations that are attached. The hypothetical parallel between the two candidates clearly paints Clinton as being destructive for the American dream. Additionally, all these statements, both about Clinton and about Trump, are supported by various outside references (in text form) to make them stronger *logos* appeals as well.

The structural progression of Trump's ad follows his rhetoric. The strong introduction gets *attention*, and *interest* is built up as this 'crushing' process is described. Then, as focus shifts to Trump, focus also shifts to creating a *desire* for 'Trump's America' where the economy soars and the American dream is a reality. Moreover, after this presentation of a prosperous America, the line "Donald Trump for president" finishes off the ad which is as close to a call for *action* found in Trump's ad.

6.9.2 Hillary Clinton: "How To"

Hillary Clinton's ad focuses solely on what she will do for America, and does not mention Trump even once. A narrator asks the rhetorical question of "how do we make the economy work for everyone?" followed by Clinton's plan to make it so. First, "big corporations and those at the top" will "finally pay their fair share in taxes", and companies that relocate overseas are to be charged "an exit tax". These new tax initiatives are said to bring in enough money "to make the largest investment in creating good paying jobs since World War II" by funding the creation of "millions of jobs". The viewer is then encouraged to read the plan. The visuals consist of American scenery with graphics displaying the effects of her proposals.

Rhetorically, it is an easy argument to follow. The wealthiest are implied not to currently be paying their fair share in taxes, which needs to be changed. And when companies move overseas, the US economy is impacted negatively. When these two issues are taken care of through stricter and new tax regulations, it brings in large sums of money that can be reinvested into the labour market. It is a short, straight to the point *logos* appeal.

Just as the argumentation, the structure is easy to follow as well. The rhetorical question to start grabs *attention*, and the viewer is then immediately introduced to Clinton's plan which is there to generate *interest*. Then, it goes from how money will be collected to how it will be used to benefit the viewer, which hopes to create a *desire* for this plan. Lastly, the viewer is guided to where they can read the full plan on her campaign website. There is again no clear call for *action*, but the way that final message is constructed, "you can read the plan here", could be interpreted as a prompt.

6.9.3 Comparison

The final set of advertisements in this analysis follow the trend that has been set in the later elections. The structure is clear with a logical progression that follows the AIDA-model, with the common exclusion of an unambiguous call for *action*. Rhetorically, they both feature *logos* arguments, but Trump plays a bit more heavily on the emotional aspect and finishes with a strong *pathos* appeal.

7. Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate how the advertising model AIDA, in relation to rhetoric, can be seen in political television advertisements from presidential elections in the United States. The advertisements, the representations, attempt to deliver meaningful and persuading messages through applying various rhetorical strategies and structures, and the analysis has brought forward a few points that are worthy of discussion.

To begin with, it should come as no surprise that characteristics of the AIDA-model can clearly be found even in the oldest material, as the first American election that contained television advertising occurred during the early days of the modern phase in the professionalisation of political communication, as outlined by Norris (2004). Before moving on, it is worth noting that this study did not measure intent, nor did the aim include a background check into who the responsible actors were in the creation and modelling of the advertisements (be it professional, volunteers, etc.), as that would require a different methodology. It was the end product that was of interest no matter if it was intentional or unintentional from the creator's point of view, as that could be considered a moot point either way. Even an unintentional progression to a clearer AIDA-like structure in political advertisements could be seen as a natural development due to what the end goal of the AIDA-model is, which is to sell the product, and the increasing use of professionals within the campaigns.

Now, to attempt to answer the second research question, have things changed from the early 50s to today? Technological advancements have obviously meant that the production value has increased tremendously, but those changes can be disregarded when the focus is solely on the rhetoric and structure. Rhetorically, the analysis suggests that the two opposing candidates generally seem to rely on the same base appeal when speaking of the same (or at the very least, very similar) issues even if the supplementary appeals differ. For instance, in 1952, while the Dwight D. Eisenhower ad has instances of *pathos* and the Adlai Stevenson ad makes use of *logos* arguments, both ads' main appeal is to *ethos*. The biggest difference was seen in the advertisements from the 2008 election, with the *ethos* appeal from McCain/Palin to the *pathos* appeal of Barack Obama, but that was also the election where the chosen advertisements were about the least defined issue in this study (the idea of 'change').

Before discussing the structure and the prevalence of the AIDA-model, I want to first go back to a note about the *action* phase that was touched on during the analysis. The *action* phase has been described as an active, deliberate stage (Lee & Hoffman, 2015), and previous research has included clear calls to *action* as a part of a study (see Vliegenthart, 2012). However, as Doyle (2011: 20) states when describing the intentions of the model's originator,

St Elmo Lewis, the *action* phase "would come as a natural result of movement through the first three stages". As such, an explicit call for *action* or a lack thereof does not necessarily signify more or less adherence to the model.

Regarding the first two phases, *awareness/attention* and *interest*, there are not any real surprises. The media and advertising climate has repeatedly been described as a 'clutter' (Rotfeld, 2006; Muda et al., 2012; Pieters et al. 2002), and getting noticed is not an easy task. All reviewed advertisements contain rather clear illustrations of the *attention* (or *awareness*) and *interest* stages, and it would be hard to imagine a political ad that, somehow, omits them. After all, if an ad does not attempt to get noticed and draw in the viewer, how is it supposed to have an effect? As Torres et al. (2012) touched on, ads need to be attention-grabbing to break through the clutter. The timing may have been slightly different (John F. Kennedy was comparatively late to declare what his ad was about, for instance), but the phases were clearly there. Furthermore, no real patterns could be found in the rhetoric in these phases, which partly answers research question #1. There were instances where *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* were used both to raise *attention* and *interest*, and there were no signs of a certain rhetorical device being prominently preferred. When it comes to explicit calls for *action*, there is no pattern that suggests either an upward or downward trend in this small sample (which coincides with Vliegenthart's [2012] findings), and the outright "vote for candidate" were very few. However, regarding the first research question, when there is an explicit call for action, more often than not it seems to either be a part of or immediately follow a *pathos* appeal, such as Richard Nixon's "vote like your whole world depended on it" in 1968.

Arguably the most interesting phase in this study is the *desire* phase, which Doyle (2011) described as the most difficult phase for the content creators, as not only was it not overtly identified in all ads (and it was found to be lacking in the ads from Ford and Carter in 1976, for instance), but it was the trickiest phase to identify, too. But here is also an instance where the later elections seem to differ from the earlier ones, which ties back to research question #2. The *desire* phase seems to be more clearly distinguished without fail in the advertisements from 1992 through 2016. In these eight ads, there was never truly a question of whether a *desire* phase could be identified. The progression from *attention* to *interest* to *desire* was easy to spot, with the only small caveat being John McCain's ad in 2008 where that final transition occurs very late. While a *desire* phase could easily be found in some of the earlier advertisements as well, in some other ads it required a bit of extra mental work such as the *interest* phase building up to a *desire* in Stevenson's ad from 1952 and in Reagan's and Mondale's ads from 1984. Now, this comes down to the interpreter. An argument could be made that, when compared to the other ads with clear *desire* stages, these three ads actually do not contain a *desire* phase much like Ford's and Carter's ads from 1976.

What is interesting about this timeline, with the *desire* phase being very potent in the ads from 1992 and onward, is that it coincides with the beginning of the post-modern phase of the professionalisation of political communication, which began in 1985 (Norris, 2004). This could arguably be seen as a sign of a more consistent and thorough adherence to the AIDA-model, which in turn could suggest that political television advertisements have indeed become more professionalised over time, which would agree with the findings by Tenscher and Mykkänen (2014) where the analysed campaigns became progressively more professionalised.

Furthermore, to return to the first research question, another thing to add is that the *desire* phase seems to generally be a part of a *pathos* appeal, as *desire* is attempted to be generated by emotionally loaded messages, statements, and promises. Examples of this are George H. W. Bush in 1992 and Donald J. Trump in 2016 where both speak of their plan as being the one that makes the American dream a possibility again, or Barack Obama in 2008 promising to make the nation prosperous again and united as one people. An example that strays from this generalisation is Al Gore's *logos*-appeal from 2000, as he proclaims how they "need" more teachers and smaller classes, and how they "need" to help middle-class families financially. His rhetoric ("we need…") clearly expresses a *desire*, and he supports it with *logos* arguments. However, this could be argued to be an implicit *pathos* appeal as well, as Gore deals with sensitive situations and tries to convince the viewer that help is needed.

Moreover, no specific or constant differences could be found between ads from Republicans compared to Democrats, both as it concerns the rhetoric and the structure. If the messengers were to be made anonymous and the political opinions ignored, there would be no way to identify which party created which ad from a pure rhetorical and structural perspective. Additionally, the structure of the ads from both parties seemed to progress in parallel to each other, as they were both inconsistent with the *desire* phase in the earlier years while having it play a bigger and more distinct role the last four elections covered. A potential explanation for this trend, where the differing political opinions and messages did not seem to have an impact structurally, could be the increased reliance on outside personnel that got its start in the early 1950s and has gradually become standard, especially post-1985 (Norris, 2004). With both parties appointing external experts and specialists, it is only reasonable for the end results to be similar. This would also explain why the television advertisements from both parties are ostensibly on the same development path, as they could be said to essentially be hiring from the same pool of independent specialist.

To conclude this study, it can be said that the AIDA-model is by all means recognisable in political television advertisements about issues from presidential elections in the United

States, especially in the later decades as the *desire* phase has conceivably become more prominent. This could be attributed to the increasingly professional environment of political campaigning, where the parties employ more and more experts and specialist to handle the various areas of running a campaign which would likewise explain why the parties do not seem to diverge from each other besides on the political spectrum.

Lastly, I want to touch on the connection of this study with previous research in the field of political communication. As Kaid et al. (2011), Kaid et al. (2007), and Tedesco (2002) have shown, amongst many other studies, political advertising does by all means influence voters. Furthermore, the vast amount of studies on political rhetoric, about its intents and strategies, have displayed how politicians attempt to use language in their favour to win the crowd's acceptance. The fact that such outlandish figures are nowadays spent each election season is not for nothing. Political advertising *works*. And now, in the post-modern phase of the professionalisation of political communication, the messages that are constructed to blast through the televisions and win the hearts of citizens may very well have been signed off by a marketing specialist, with the candidates themselves just tagging along.

If tricks are used to sell a certain brand of coffee, there is nothing to be overly concerned about. If the same tricks are used to sell the next President of the United States of America or any other major political position, however, the consequences could be immeasurably greater. There is inherently nothing wrong with advertising a candidate – it is an effective way to spread a certain idea to as many constituents as possible in a very short amount of time, and to have a knowledgeable voter base should be a top priority. Yet, if smart marketing trounces the actual political stances, there is a cause for concern. Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) touched on voters being treated as consumers that need not be politically enlightened or involved in debate, but instead offered a candidate that is moulded to their needs and wants, information that is gathered through polling, surveys, and focus groups. Political communication is professionalised, and that in itself is fine. That is, as long as you as a constituent is acutely aware of how politicians[*] attempt to influence you.

7.1 Suggestions for future research

Now that the presence of the AIDA-model in political television advertising has been qualitatively established, further studies could involve more expansive and quantitative methods to research the suggestions that this smaller study has provided. An example could be an all-encompassing study of all available political television advertisements from presidential elections (1952-2016) to see if the proposed shift as the professionalisation of

[*] Or whoever got the marketing gig.

political communication entered the post-modern phase holds true on a large scale, or a comparison with non-US political campaigning to see if the trends are similar in other places in the current era of professional politics.

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