

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE 1998 UNITED STATES  
SENATE CANDIDATES' PRE-ELECTION DEBATES

by

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## ABSTRACT

### A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE 1998 UNITED STATES SENATE CANDIDATES' PRE-ELECTION DEBATES

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Every two years, candidates for national-level public office participate in pre-election debates as part of their campaign. In debates, candidates attempt to distinguish themselves from their opponents and persuade the electorate to vote for them. Many researchers claim that debates are simple candidate performances orchestrated by the media, and discount the candidates' discourse as rehearsed sound bites and the candidates' interactions are simply "politics as usual." The sense of being normal is what invites us to study the discourse that occurs in an situation imbued with the presentation of legitimated political power between individuals who seek legislative power.

The present study examines the discourse of twenty senatorial candidates who participated in televised pre-election debates during the 1998 elections. Ten debates were selected, and transcribed, and each intonation unit produced by Democratic and Republican candidates was coded. The data were analyzed using tools of discourse and quantitative analysis for the purpose of ascertaining if certain discourse features systematically appear

in candidates' discourse which distinguished incumbents from challengers, Democrats from Republicans, or female candidates from male candidates.

The results of the analysis indicate that candidates have similar amounts of clause types, levels of embedding, and use most verb types in similar amounts and in similar ways. Five factors were found to correlate with winning candidates and several trends were identified in which discourse features correlate with the candidate's political party or gender. All candidates grammatically demote their opponents, place information about the issues in less prominent positions in their clauses, and attribute most of the action to themselves through direct action and mental cognition verbs.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 The Problem

The abundance of political debates in recent years suggests that candidates and their campaign managers, as well as the media and debate organizers, believe that these debates are an important part of the American electoral process. Richard Berke (2000: np), political analyst for the New York Times, claims that candidates have become even more important than campaign commercials and “have set the dialogue and the discourse much more than we’ve seen in the 30 second commercials.” The closer the race, and the higher the office, the more debates the candidates will have before the election. Even though voters may complain that candidate debates are boring, or fake, or media hype (Carlin et al. 1991), they still watch them. Moreover, although scholars claim that debates have little or no effect on the election outcome, candidates—incumbents and challengers, well-funded and poorly funded alike—still debate. Even though incumbent candidates risk making a blunder which could shake, or even destroy, their advantage, they still participate in debates. And even though all of the candidates know that questions will be set up to trap, trip, or trick them, they still accept invitations to debate. In short, candidates for political office accede to the conventional wisdom that voters want and deserve to see the candidates debate each other.

With all of the media hoopla on the one side, and all of the scholarly criticism on the other, we might wonder what it is that keeps candidates participating in debates and voters watching them. The obvious answer is that the candidates want to win the electorate’s vote and the voters want to know about the candidates and their positions on the current issues. However, if the candidates want to persuade people to vote for them, they have to distinguish



themselves from their opponents. How do candidates set themselves apart from their opponents?

Debates are set up to reduce or eliminate advantages for particular candidates. In fact, most of the activities that take place during a debate are decided in advance. Both candidates usually agree, in advance, to the topics that will be raised, to the physical format, and to the amount of time each candidate will have to speak. Who speaks first and last is usually decided by a coin-toss. How, then, do candidates differentiate themselves? They talk, and through their discourse—what they say, and how they say it—they distinguish themselves from their opponents. The aim of this dissertation is to examine the ways in which candidates for U.S. Senate seats construct their discourse and the extent to which this varies according to political party, type of race—contested or open, incumbency, and candidate gender.

### 1.1 Key Issues in the Analysis of Political Discourse

The analysis of political discourse, and debate discourse in particular, is problematic because even though the participants interact through speech, their discourse cannot be evaluated in the same way as informal, face-to-face conversation. Debate discourse lacks many of the features which are associated with conversation, such as interruption and overlap, or variable turn length. Moreover, the candidates' speaking turns are ostensibly limited to answering questions about current events and political issues. Unlike interlocutors in face-to-face conversation who usually talk about "everyday human affairs" (Givón 1995:31), the candidates talk about topics initiated by others. The candidates' discourse is neither informal nor spontaneous.

Much that candidates say during debates is scripted in advance. Candidates usually anticipate and prepare answers for particular questions on the basis of the immediacy of the issues. In the 1998 senatorial debates, for example, candidates could anticipate a question concerning the impeachment hearings for President Clinton because it was a daily headline

during the weeks before the 1998 election. In addition, candidates can prepare responses for issues of enduring interest, such as social security and taxes. Candidates also prepare and rehearse their opening and closing remarks. Furthermore, most candidates have spent a great deal of time talking about the particular set of issues or topics which are part of their campaign agenda, and as a consequence, have well-rehearsed "sound bites" to include in their remarks.

Despite the considerable amount of material that candidates can prepare in advance, their debate discourse is not wholly scripted either. The candidates do not know exactly what questions will be asked. If citizens ask the questions, they may not ask the questions the candidates have prepared, and if members of a press panel ask questions, they may try to redirect the focus of the expected question. In addition, candidates cannot precisely predict what their opponents will say to them or about them which will require a response. Moreover, most debates are televised "live," and unexpected events can occur—the Teleprompter fails to work, or the moderator skips a candidate's turn. Candidates have to respond spontaneously to events they may not have anticipated.

Whether or not the candidates have any "spontaneity" in their discourse may not be as problematic as it seems. Ordinary interactions, including face-to-face, informal conversation can also be considered "performances," shaped by the environment and the audience as much as televisual candidate debates. Informal conversants' goal is to provide others with "impressions that are consonant with the roles they have assumed" (Goffman 1959:17). Political candidates have assumed that role, and the debates are part of that role. The candidates' debates mirror Goffman's "team" group dynamics; a group of individuals "co-operate" in the performance to achieve the group's goals. The candidates are team members, joined by the moderator, hosts, questioners, and even the audience. Each participant assumes a different, but fixed role, or "front," which "define[s] the situation for those who observe the performance" (22), and enhances the groups' performance (146).

A number of researchers have conducted detailed studies of other types of performances by political candidates, such as the candidates' campaign advertisements (e.g., Johnson-Cartee 1991; Johnson-Cartee and Copeland 1997; Kahn 1993, 1994) and speeches at party conventions (e.g. Nimmo 1970, 1978). Some researchers who have examined presidential candidates' debates focus on the candidates rhetorical organization and style (e.g., Jamieson 1988; Conrad 1993) or a single feature such as blunders (Morello 1991a; Kavanaugh 1995) or "warmth" (Carmichael and Cronkhite (1965). Senate candidates' debates discourse, however, has received little scholarly attention. One reason debate discourse is rarely studied is because it involves prepared text, and researchers and voters alike tend to classify debates as simply an example of "politics as usual." However, to disregard candidate debates for this reason ignores the fact that these debates may be an exemplar of political discourse. The candidates' discourse may be a way to see the social norms, political performance rules and candidate's values hidden from our view because we see the discourse as "performance" or "usual."

## 1.2 The Research Question

Because debate discourse is a combination of prepared text and impromptu text, it provides a unique opportunity to examine which of the features in the candidates' discourse are similar to the other candidates' discourse and which features differ among candidates. We might expect the candidates' discourse to be similar, since most candidates are experienced politicians and have acquired a practical sense of the demands in the field of politics, what Bourdieu (1991) calls the candidates' "habitus." The similarity in the candidates' discourse may contribute to the voters' and viewers' sense that little of importance occurs in most candidates' debates. As Bourdieu (1991) aptly points out, candidates must compete with their opponents, and they must gain the approval and support of those outside the field of politics,

specifically voters and financial supporters. Indeed, the goal of candidates is to navigate successfully the two constraints on their discourse without error.

Candidates might differ as well. Democrats and Republicans profess different ideologies which position Democratic and Republican candidates with conflicting agendas. Gender differences in language usage has been shown in numerous studies, so female and male candidates may use language differently. Finally, candidates claim to differ in experience and ability.

This investigation is motivated by the following basic question: How do candidates present and differentiate themselves from their opponents, and are these behaviors conditioned by gender, party, and/or incumbency? During the debate, do candidates present an ethos that distinguishes them from their opponents, and if they do, how do they accomplish this? What actions do candidates claim for themselves and what actions do they assign to others? What information do they emphasize, or put in the foreground, and what do they background? In a confrontational environment such as a debate, how do candidates demonstrate their verbal agility to criticize and attack their opponent while also presenting an amiable, polite persona?

### 1.3 An Approach to the Problem

This research is an analysis of spoken discourse produced during pre-election debates of candidates for the United States Senate. The research builds on a theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis (CDA), formerly called critical linguistics (Fowler and Kress 1979), has its roots in sociology and has been used to analyze political discourse by researchers such as Fowler (1987) and Wilson (1990). CDA refers to an ensemble of techniques for studying written and spoken language as social and cultural practices (Fairclough 1989;1992). A CDA approach builds on three broad theoretical orientations. First, it assumes that discourse operates laterally across institutional sites and that texts have a constructive function of forming and shaping people's identities and actions. For

example, politicians' discourse is recognizable as such because politicians engage in discourse that is constituted by the previous discourse produced by past and current politicians and other members of legislative institutions, and each discourse event produced by individual politicians constitutes the legislative institution. Second, it draws from Bourdieu's sociology the assumption that actual textual practices and interactions with texts become forms of "cultural capital" which have an exchange value in particular social arenas. Third, CDA assumes that discourse is used within political economies, and thereby produces and reproduces broad ideological interests in particular social fields. In short, CDA examines the relationship between language, communication, and power.

CDA researchers point out that power is ideological, as well as structural and economic. The production of everyday beliefs and practices, often accomplished by language, is a mechanism of power—a power that shapes people's perceptions and acceptance of the existing system because people view the system as natural and unchangeable. Gramsci (1971) defines this mechanism of power as hegemony; the cultural values and particular practices shape peoples' world view. As these cultural values and practices become internalized, people no longer notice them. What is said and done becomes normalized and seems like a common sense way to say and do things. In many situations, the ideological underpinnings are difficult to discern precisely because the situations seem so normal (Foucault 1980). The political debate, however, is a situation in which some of the process of ideological struggle may be articulated. Gramsci also stresses that if people understand and master the language, they intensify their ability to articulate their position and challenge hegemonic power. When he argues for mastery of the language, he implies that it is through language that the external structures, such as the political, economic, and social systems, are articulated and accessible. Discourse is the site for accessing the symbolic aspects of power.

Analysts who use CDA consider how speakers and writers have, on the one hand, "a range of options for talking about particular situations," and, on the other hand, constraints to

use language in particular contexts in socially prescribed ways (Lee 1992: 45). Studies of speakers' and writers' language reveal how the language options influence the language users' behavior and how the users of the language influence others. I take CDA's assumption of speaker choice at the level of language without question. It is just such choices that are potentially ideologically revealing.

The practical techniques used in CDA research come from various disciplinary fields including pragmatics, narratology, speech act theory, and systemic functional linguistics. In the present research, the principal analytic tool comes from Halliday's (1994) functional grammar. This approach provides researchers, and particularly CDA researchers, with a practical technique for describing the discourse, from general features to features as specific as the researcher chooses. More importantly, CDA researchers examine how linguistic forms can be systematically related to social and ideological functions. CDA used in conjunction with functional linguistics can help the researcher address questions about larger, systemic relations. In this research, CDA will be used to examine and describe how knowledge and identity are constructed in the institutional "site" of political debates. Such a description contributes to our understanding of "how, and why, the text means what it does" (Halliday 1994: xv).

In this study, the principal unit for analysis is the text produced by political candidates in their pre-election debates. This research assumes that these debates are social actions, and meaningful and coherent instances of spoken language use. Moreover, this specific type of text serves the social function of a campaign ritual or event and a conventional means for candidates to present and differentiate themselves from each other and, consequently, persuade voters to vote for them. The candidates' pre-election debates are historically and culturally specific social actions which are, on the one hand, dynamic and continually subject to innovation and re-invention, and on the other, highly conventional. As conventionalized discourse, candidate debates can be analyzed in terms of their structures, with each of the parts

of the structure operating together as expressions of taken-for-granted assumptions about historical and human agency, and social and natural causality.

#### 1.4 Addressing Criticisms of CDA

Critical discourse analysis has been criticized on three fronts, each of them deserving attention. On one front, some mainstream linguists fault CDA as overly subjective, arguing that CDA has a politically biased agenda that precludes “objective” research. At first glance, this criticism seems reasonable, since CDA does have an agenda of providing emancipatory possibilities by questioning the claims, assumptions, contradictions, omissions and value judgments, and presupposes that value judgments are built into language and society. In contrast, research which employs empirically-based research methods tends to depend on an assumption that a hypothesis-experiment model is “objective” and should not reflect or include the researcher’s values or bias. The data and analysis should be abstracted away from individuals, including the researcher.

Although this researcher has chosen a hypothesis-experiment model for analysis, she is present, with personal knowledge and opinions about some aspects of the current political environment. This personal knowledge influences what this researcher “hears” as she transcribes the debates, “sees” in the texts during the coding and analysis, and “chooses” as examples in this paper. The social character of the language, in the debates and in this research, constrain and enable the meanings accessible to this researcher. Arguably, this is the case in all “objective” research—hence objectivity is a bit of an illusion. However, this researcher, following other CDA researchers, adopts a standpoint as objective as possible and is committed to conducting the analysis with the rigor and responsibility expected of empirical and CDA research.

On another front, socio-political critics claim that CDA overvalues the importance of words because the analysis often focuses narrowly on the micro-linguistic features of the

discourse rather than on the social and political context. This criticism seems legitimate in as much as a great deal of linguistic research gives only a brief mention of the context of the discourse and devotes most of its attention to the linguistic features. Undoubtedly, researchers learn a great deal by studying language and the way people use language, the words, the grammatical structures and the organizational formats they choose. Such research is strengthened when researchers also include a detailed consideration of the context in which the text is produced. CDA does both. CDA provides a way to acknowledge the bidirectional influence of language and the socio-political context in which the language occurs. CDA approaches discourse from both the micro (linguistic) and macro (social) levels of meaning.

The third criticism of CDA has come from feminist researchers who claim that CDA fails to incorporate gender as a major political category. Much CDA research has considered the interaction of language and social constructions, particularly in the production and reproduction of class structures. Some sociolinguistic research (e.g., Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992, 1999; Kramarae and Treichler 1992; Spender 1980) has shown that language reinforces the status quo's perceptions and expectations of gender, but focuses more heavily on the language aspect. Theorists of cultural practice (e.g., Bourdieu 1977; Elshtain 1981) tend to focus more heavily on the social construction of class and gender with less focus on the language. However, a few researchers (e.g., Herring 1994) have shown that doing both is not only possible but productive. CDA research can be used to explain how speakers create cultural ideologies that would account for how notions of gender are produced and practiced through talk.

### 1.5 Data and Methodology

The data for this research are the discourse produced by twenty U.S. Senate candidates in ten pre-election debates during the 1998 elections. The data are analyzed following a CDA approach and uses Halliday's (1994) systemic-functional grammar for coding categories. CDA



and systemic-functional grammar provide a means for determining the linguistic methods and political goals of the candidates. The following chapters lay out the application of these approaches and their use in identifying the conventionalized aspects of debate discourse, and the variations which candidates employ to differentiate themselves from their opponents.

## 1.6 Organization of the Dissertation

Consistent with the CDA approach, the present research documents both the linguistic and social components of the discourse. This research presents an overview of the historical and social context in which the discourse was produced. Chapter 2 is a summary of the historical role of United States Senators, political parties, the media, and female candidates—each piece of this history influences what we, today, consider “usual” or “normal” components of candidate debates. Chapter 2 also outlines some of the current events which are particular to the 1998 election. Chapter 3 summarizes previous research. Most of the empirically-based material depends heavily on the linguistic analysis, which is described in chapter 4. The social component and the empirical component are brought together in chapters 5 and 6.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT: A BRIEF BACKGROUND

#### 2.0 Introduction

Understanding modern American campaign debates between senatorial candidates depends on us knowing some of the historical events and current developments in the American political environment. This study of United States Senators and their election campaigns begins at the constitutional convention in 1787. The decisions made at the convention set in motion the conditions for and complex interactions of the U.S. Senate, the senators' role in the national government and their relationship with their states, and the issues which senators address. In addition, the training and selection of senatorial candidates, the funding of their campaigns, and the myriad influences on candidates as they conduct their campaigns which are evident in modern elections have their roots in a limited number of historical events. The 1998 debates between candidates for the U.S. Senate are an amalgamation and modification of past candidate debates.

This chapter gives an overview of the role of Senators as it is presented in the United States Constitution, and some of the factors which contributed to the present structure of senatorial campaigns. Section 2.1 gives a summary of the issue of representation at the constitutional convention and the resulting role of senators as defined in the Constitution. Section 2.2 outlines the shift from a party-controlled campaign to a candidate-media-party partnership which shapes the campaign. Section 2.3 recounts the participation of women in senatorial campaigns. Section 2.4 presents a sketch of the candidates and issues of the 1998

senatorial elections. This chapter concludes with a synopsis of how each of these factors influences the form and content of the 1998 senatorial debates.

## 2.1 The Constitutional Convention and the Constitutional Role of Senators

Most accounts of American politics begin with the arrival of the first settlers in New England. They recount how the settlers established local councils and assemblies and developed a tradition of self-government. This early experience at self-government was an essential precursor of the type of government developed through the Articles of Confederation, and later in the Constitution (cf., Blum et al. 1989). However, before the Constitutional Convention, the specific kind of representation which we associate with Senators did not exist. The idea of having Senators as well as congressional representatives developed as a solution to the problem of how to balance the power between a central government and the state governments.

Most of the participants at the Federal Convention in 1787 agreed that the government must come from the "consent of the governed," meaning the citizens gave their consent through their votes for representatives, and take a republican form, meaning a "representative government without a hereditary executive" in which all states are equally represented (Ketcham 1986: 6). However, the men who came together in Philadelphia to form a new government did not agree about how the governing powers should be distributed. One group, led by Alexander Hamilton, sought to establish a national democratic government, with centralized and extensive powers. Others, notably James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, sought to establish a federal government in which the individual states maintained the power to govern themselves and joined together only to the extent established in a contract. The compromise between these two groups came from Oliver Ellsworth, who, during the debate about how to assure state equality in the legislature (June 28-July 2, 1787), proposed that the

new government have “proportional representation” in the House of Representatives, which “was conformable to the national principle,” and also have equal representation of each state in the Senate, which “was conformable to the federal principle” (Ketcham 1986:99). The compromise resulted in a bicameral legislature in which the number of representatives in the House for each state would depend on its population, so that populous states had more representative than less populous states, but the number of representatives in the Senate would be equal for each state regardless of the state’s size.

As a result of this compromise, members of the United States Senate would have the dual responsibility of assuring that their states retained sovereignty over certain governmental tasks and, at the same time, of carrying out their assigned duties of the central government. As Madison points out in Federalist Paper number 62 (Hamilton et al. 1961: 378, 379), the Senate is “an instrument for preserving [the states’] residuary sovereignty,” and the Senators’ are responsible for controlling any impulsive or “intemperate and pernicious resolutions.” In other words, Senators are meant to be a check on the House of Representatives and on the other states and provide a stable body within the national government able to deal with issues that require long-term attention. Consequently, the legislative responsibilities of Senators are those which have long-term effects and require on-going attention. These legislative responsibilities, enumerated in Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution, deal with money, such as taxing and the federal budget, commerce, both interstate and international, public service, such as a national post office, patents and copyrights, and courts, and the military services. Three of these areas—money, commerce and public service—are also concerns of the states. The Constitution does not define the states’ role in these areas, with the exception of a very few limits. The states cannot make treaties or coin money and only with the consent of Congress, nor can they lay import or export duties, or enter into a contract with another state (Article I, Section 10). Within this broad framework, each Senator has the task of defining authority boundaries when

the state and nation have overlapping concerns, and working with other Senators to resolve clashes between the state and national government (Diamond 1981:132).

The challenge for senators has been to represent a diverse constituency who disagree over the scope of authority of the national government. During the past two centuries, those who have sought senate seats have had to articulate their definitions of state and national authority in their election campaigns.

## 2.2 The Election Process of Senators

Elections provide a means for the electorate to select individuals who will represent the voters' mandate. In general, elections are held to keep legislators accountable to the electorate. Legislators who have to face an election are expected to restate or revise their goals or vision of the future, and explain their unaccomplished goals and policies. Originally, when senators were selected by their state's legislature, their accountability was only to that body. However, after the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment to the Constitution, in 1913, senators were elected directly by the people of the state and faced an election every six years. Since then, popular election means that senators are called upon to account for the representation they have provided and the legislation they have made. Senators who meet their constituents' expectations are rewarded with enough votes to be reelected. Those who have too many failed policies or give an inadequate account of their actions can be replaced.

The rate at which senators have actually been replaced through an election has dropped during the past three decades, and the majority of new senators are elected when the previous legislator retires or resigns. The low turnover of senators suggests that incumbent candidates are relatively secure in their position during an election. Nonetheless, incumbents' actions during the election indicate that they generally abide by the requirement of giving an account to their constituents. During the campaign and debates, incumbent candidates defend their record, point to their legislative successes, and explain or justify their failures. Challenging

candidates tend to draw voters' attention to the incumbent's shortcomings, point to the incumbent's inability to meet the voters' needs, and/or offer voters a new set of goals.

### 2.2.1 The Role of Political Parties

Political parties existed even before the United States government was formed. Groups of people who had similar views joined together and used the electoral system to achieve their agreed-upon purposes. Political parties, what the colonists and framers of the Constitution called factions, were considered a hindrance to the operation of the election process. Madison, in Federalist Paper #10 (Hamilton et al. 1961:77-84), argues that even though factions are an inevitable development in democratic and republican governments, they can be dangerous. He notes that majority factions can hinder the government's operation, subvert the separation of powers, and trample the rights of minority factions.

Even though Madison wrote against political parties, he and Jefferson became associated with the faction called the Democratic-Republicans; the other major political party was the Federalists led by Hamilton and Adams. These two groups set a precedent for a two party system. These two parties were short-lived, however. The Federalists were unable to sustain support and ceased to have any significant influence in elections, and the unity among members of the Democratic-Republican splintered. By 1820, a new, two-party structure had developed in many parts of the country, and the new parties were less willing to let the control of public affairs rest in the hands of the gentlemen of old and distinguished families. The Democratic party, and their candidate for president, Andrew Jackson, presented an appeal to the ideals and aspirations of the common man, and accused John Quincy Adams, and the National Republicans, later to be called Whigs, of being aristocrats and wasters of public funds. By 1828, the two political parties, enmeshed in a campaign of "mudslinging and character assassinations, exchanged charges of pandering, adultery, and murder" (Blum et al. 1989:209).

The Whig party soon splintered into several smaller groups: Free Soilers, Political Abolitionists, Northern Conscious Whigs, and Northern Democrats. As the issue of slavery gained precedence, a third party, the Republicans, presented a message of patriotism, humanitarianism and, most important, preserving the union. The Republicans pulled many members from the subgroups of the Whigs and some from the Democrats. The Republicans branded the Democratic party as a group of apologists for slavery. The Democrats claimed the Republicans had only one issue, preventing slavery in the territories. The Republican and Democratic parties grappled with the issue of slavery throughout the Civil War and Reconstruction.

In the post-Reconstruction era, the two major parties continued to dominate politics. Both parties were extremely regional, and party loyalty within regions was solid. As James Bryce commented in 1888, an American “usually votes with his party, right or wrong and the fact that there is little distinction of view between the parties makes it easier to stick to your old friends” (Blum et al. 1989: 457). Party identification was usually based on local and state issues such as prohibition and education. Democrats wanted these issues, as well as many economic issues, dealt with at the local level. Republicans, on the other hand, wanted public intervention in these private issues and in the economy. Both parties were controlled by United States Senators who were the party bosses, and the victors in elections rewarded the loyal party members with appointments to public office. In Johnson-Cartee and Copeland’s words, the early 1900s was “the organizational politics era” (1997: 7). Many of the facets of the election process—recruiting candidates, defining policies, and mobilizing voters—were handled exclusively by the political parties.

Several historical events worked together to reduce the power of political parties. First, several states set up a direct primary, in which the voters rather than the political party nominated the candidates for office. Second, states passed campaign finance reform which

reduced patronage, a major tool of large party machines in the urban areas. The depression era and FDR's New Deal also contributed to a reduction in power for political parties. As more and more voters relied on the government for solutions to their economic problems, they turned less often to the political parties for help. As a result, political parties became mostly money raisers and financial contributors to individual campaigns (Hansen 1997).

In the 1960s, the mass media, especially television presentation, changed the norms of American politics and further eroded the political parties' power. The majority of citizens no longer participated in politics through their local elected officials and local political organization. Rather than going to hear a campaign stump speech of "fiery rhetoric" (Jamieson 1988:56) or lodging complaints about the government's policies and services with the local political leaders, citizens turned to the media for their information. Today, the majority of voters participate vicariously with political candidates who are brought into their homes through television, and they express their views about the government's operation in polls. Although political parties no longer hold as much power as they did in earlier times, they still influence the election process by providing candidates with training and funds. In addition, political parties offer the electorate a platform of ideals, so many voters who share values similar to those advanced by a party vote along party lines.

### 2.2.2 Political Training

Most individuals who are nominated to run for the Senate have previous political experience. The demographics of the United States Senate provides insight into the earliest aspect of their training—their profession before they began their political career. Nearly half of the senators were lawyers, a quarter were in business or banking before they began their political careers, and the rest were educators, or worked in agriculture or public service (Ornstein, et al. 1994). Many of the professions from which the pool of candidates are drawn are those which allow individuals to develop their communication skills, establish networks



of support and connection with other political participants, develop name recognition, and acquire the skills necessary for raising funds (Hershey 1984).

Although it is crucial for candidates to have personal skills and some financial resources before they begin their political careers, they must also have experience in other elective offices before they are considered viable candidates. This is true even for Senators who present themselves as outsiders. For example, Senator Russ Feingold (WI, D) ran as a newcomer, but he had spent ten years as a Wisconsin state senator. Similarly, Patty Murray (WA, D) ran as a "mom in tennis shoes" rather than as a candidate with four years experience as a state senator. In fact, the majority of Senators have served in the United States House of Representatives, or have held high political offices within the state, usually as either a governor or a state legislator. Those who have not held state or federal elective offices have been party officials, political aides, or presidential appointees.

The political parties often play a role in helping candidates build the credentials they need prior to their bid for a Senate seat. Candidates are recruited for local elective or appointed offices, such as city councils or school boards, which, in turn, give them the credentials to run for county or state offices. According to Duerst-Lahti (1998:15), it is crucial for candidates to be in this "pipeline" so that candidates gain political expertise in organizing a campaign, working with the press, and acquiring the money and people needed to launch a bid for office. Political parties often mentor candidates, and in recent years have responded to criticism that the "good old boys" kept women and minorities out by recruiting and mentoring more women and minorities for entry-level positions in the pipeline. In addition, numerous training programs, such as the National Women's Political Caucus and EMILY's list, a political action committee (PAC) which supports pro-choice Democratic women, have been established for women who want training.

### 2.2.3 Funding

A political campaign is an expensive undertaking. In a 1931 syndicated newspaper article, Will Rogers commented, "Politics has got so expensive that it takes lots of money to even get beat with" (Bartlett 1964:317). The same applies to more recent campaigns. The expenses for a campaign include physical items, such as the cost of a headquarters, telephones, and office equipment, and personnel, such as paid staff, consultants, pollsters, lawyers, accountants, and press secretaries. The campaign costs also include the candidate's travel expenses, and communication such as mailings, web sites, and advertisements. The resources to meet these expenses come from either people who donate their time and energy, or contributions from supporters. The principal means for gaining resources is through solicitation. Mass mailings, phone solicitations, personal appearances, fundraising events and meetings consume a great deal of the candidate's time.

The 1974 Federal Elections Campaign Act restricts the tools and techniques of party fund raising and limits the amount of money political parties can contribute to candidates to fund their campaigns. One of the major loopholes in this legislation is soft money, funds which are not spent to promote a candidate for federal office but are spent on election-related activities such as party building, voter registration drives, and generic advertising. This money is also used to cover the administration costs of the campaign (Morris and Gamache 1994) and consequently does not need to come out of the candidates' coffers.

An important development resulting from the 1974 Act is that groups formed by corporations and unions and special interest groups, commonly referred to as PACs (Political Action Committees) gained as much influence in the candidates' campaigns as the political parties because PAC contributions can contribute the same amount to the candidates as the political parties. PACs influence campaigns in two ways. First, they tend to favor incumbents, because incumbents' voting records, and consequently their positions on particular issues, are

known. Second, candidates may be motivated to modify their campaign message to garner favor with particular PACs.

In recent years, House and Senate committees have been considering the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Reform Bill and a variety of other proposals which would limit soft money spending by political parties and contributions from PACs. Such limitations might mitigate some of the advantage that incumbents now have in raising funds. Herrnson (1995:222) reports that "spending by incumbents is positively related to the number of votes they receive," particularly in the amount of money that they spend on campaign communication. If incumbents have less money, or if the challengers have more, the number of votes cast may be affected.

#### 2.2.4 The Political Campaign

The purpose of a political campaign is to present a candidate to the voters with the hope and expectation that the voters will elect the candidate to office. However, in any given election, the campaign is shaped by a variety of factors. One major factor is who comprises the audience of the campaign. The most obvious audience is the voter. However, others, as shown in figure 1, make up a secondary audience for all aspects of the campaign (Sweeney 1995: 21). The campaign message is shaped by, as well as presented to, this secondary audience. The audience most immediate to the candidate consists of the candidate's political party and the candidate's own campaign team of friends, consultants, fundraisers, and pollsters. These people serve as both the audience for whom the campaign message is made, and the major informants of the content and tone of the campaign message. Another audience is the persuadable organizations and contributors who give the candidate sufficient funds and support to conduct the campaign. According to MacDougall (1977), this part of the audience may provide enough financial and electoral support that the candidate can win the election. Another secondary audience is made up of the media and opinion leaders who transmit the candidate's

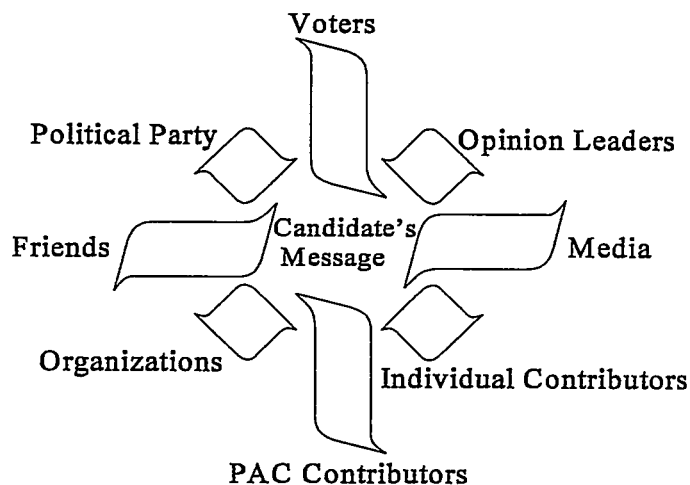


Figure 1. A candidate's audience.

message to the voters, but also interpret the message and compare it with the candidate's opponent's message. When the candidate successfully meets the demands and expectations of all of the members of the secondary audience, the candidate has significant resources. Conversely, when the candidate cannot successfully establish an interactive dialogue with one or more segments of the secondary audience, the candidate has a "management issue" (Sweeney 1995:22).

Another factor which shapes the political campaign is who else and what else is on the ballot during the election. When U.S. Senators are running for election at the same time there is a presidential or gubernatorial election, voters are more likely to pay attention to the election. However, voters and the media may devote more attention to presidential or gubernatorial candidates than to senatorial candidates and their messages. A similar situation occurs when high-profile initiatives, constitutional amendments, or tax measures are on the ballot.

A third component of the political campaign is the political situation. If the candidate is an incumbent, if the voters have been satisfied with the candidate, and if the political party is



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al campaign is built on a solid base. A strong issue which divides the political party causes a more defensive campaign. However, even in an unfavorable political environment, they do not have. One advantage is their franking legislative information and at the same time pending campaign funds. These mailings are, representative successes, and the current are able to claim credit for federal programs incumbents sponsored those programs. A redistricting which allows them to create a ...). Incumbents also have two additional funds from the previous campaign to begin ... have political power which they can use ... tch of Utah received more than \$430,000 ... ber of the Senate Finance Committee and ... on 1995:152). Furthermore, during the ... la coverage because incumbents are able ... their legislative duties.

... of the 20 women who have been United States Senators were in office. Barbara Mikulsky (D-MD) was first elected to the Senate in 1986. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL), and Patty Murray (D-WA) were first elected in 1992, the "Year of the Woman." In 1993, Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) was first elected to fill an unexpired term. In 1994, Olympia Snowe (R-ME) was elected, and Feinstein

SOURCE: ILLIAD CITY OF SIU

and Hutchison were reelected for a full term. Two years later, Susan Collins (R-ME) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA) were elected (Center for American Women and Politics 1997).

The predecessors of these candidates were women who sought to change the popular perception that national Representatives and Senators had to be men. The earliest bids for high-elective office took place before women were granted national suffrage. In 1866, Elizabeth Cady Stanton ran for Congress, and three years before the 1920 Amendment, Jeannette Rankin of Montana served a two year term in Congress from 1917 to 1919 and a second term from 1941 to 1942.

The first two women to serve in the United States Senate were appointed to the position rather than being elected. In 1922, Rebecca Latimer Felton of Georgia was appointed to the senate when the incumbent senator died while the Senate was in recess (Georgia:np). President Harding refused to call a special session, and Senator Walker F. George agreed to delay presenting his credentials for a day so that Felton could be sworn in. Felton, eighty seven at the time, served for one day. The next day, George, presented his credentials and was sworn in. The second woman to serve in the Senate was Hattie W. Caraway of Arkansas. She, too, was appointed to the seat upon the death of the incumbent. In 1932, Caraway was reelected and served a six year term.

More than forty years later, a woman entered the Senate by election rather than by appointment; in 1978, Nancy Landon Kassebaum of Kansas was the first woman from the Republican Party to be elected for a Senate term. Nine years later, Barbara Mikulski of Maryland became the woman from the Democratic Party elected to the Senate. In 1992, Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois became the first African-American woman elected to the Senate.

At the time of this study, the nine women who hold senate seats comprise 9% of the members of the Senate. Kanter's (1977) study showed that when the number of women in corporations was lower than 15 percent, the dominant institutional norms prevailed and the

women were often assigned a “token” status which constrained their behavior. Similarly, Carroll (1994) found that in the political environment, women in a minority status were more successful when they adopted male politicians’ norms, but if these women focused on issues which are traditionally ascribed to women, they gained little support from their male colleagues. However, as more women enter politics and are elected, the situation changes. Women “have potential allies among each other, can form coalitions, and can affect the culture of the group” as their numbers reach between 15 and 30 percent of the group (Kanter 1977:209). Moreover, as the number of women in politics increases, priority is given to issues of women, children, and families, not because the legislators are women, but because legislators “need to deal with neglected business” (Schrodel and Mazumdar 1998: 211).

#### 2.4 The 1998 Elections

In the 1998 elections, thirty-four states held an election for a senate seat. Six of these races were for open seats. One focus of the election was that the Republicans hoped to make a five-seat gain which would give them a majority of 60 senators, enough to prevent any filibuster and enough to override a presidential veto. Historical patterns favored the Republicans. Traditionally during a mid-term election, the president’s party loses about 27 House of Representative seats, and at least a few senate seats. Moreover, President Clinton faced the possibility of impeachment, which many believed would hurt the Democrats’ chances for election to the Senate. Another historical consideration was the probability of low voter turn out, as is usual in mid-term elections. In fact, voter turnout during the election was expected to be about 2.5 million lower than it was in 1994, and projections were that about 36 percent of the eligible voters would participate (Elowitz 1998). The actual turnout was about 37 percent, and the result of their votes thwarted conventional wisdom that low voter turnout usually benefits Republican candidates (Berke 1998b). Part of the reason why Democrats fared better than expected was that Democrats focused their “get out and vote” efforts toward key

components of their support, specifically women, minorities and labor union members (Lee and Puente 1998: 2A). In addition, the disproportionate amount of media coverage of Clinton's impeachment hearings may have not only "disgusted voters" but contributed to a decrease in the amount of coverage of the elections (Berke 1998b:A18). Together, these factors may have contributed to a different set of voters turning out for the election.

The 1998 elections were typical in reseating incumbents. Of the 29 United States Senate incumbents who were up for reelection, 26 remained in office. In general, incumbents were well-funded and faced under-funded challengers. According to Larry Makinson (1999), Director of The Center for Responsive Politics, 94 percent of the senates races were won by those who spent the most money (see Drinkard 1998; Wayne 1998 for similar findings). One of the highest funded races was the California race between Barbara Boxer (D) and Matt Fong (R) which totaled more than \$25 million. Boxer, the incumbent, raised \$5 million more than Fong. In general, incumbents had more money. In the Florida Senate Race, incumbent Bob Graham(D) had \$4 million more than challenger Charlie Crist (R). A more common range of funding disparity between incumbents and challengers is evident in Iowa's senate race. Iowa's incumbent senator, Charles Grassley (R), had more than \$3.5 million, and his challenger opponent, David Osterberg (D), had less that \$200,000. Similarly, Byron Dorgan (D), North Dakota incumbent senator, had nearly \$2 million to challenger Donna Nalewaja's (R) \$150,000.

Even though incumbents usually had more money, and won the election, two major races, in New York and in Illinois, were high-profile and highly-funded, and the challenger won. In New York, challenger Charles Schumer (D) spent \$15 million and incumbent Alfonse D'Amato (R) spent more than \$27 million. In Illinois, Peter Fitzgerald (R) spent \$20 million dollars to defeat incumbent Carol Moseley-Braun (D) who spent \$9 million (Center for Responsive Politics 1999).



The open-seat races followed the same pattern of the more monied candidate winning the election. The high-funded races were in Arkansas and Ohio (see appendix A). Blanche Lincoln (D) had more than \$3 million whereas Fay Boozman had about \$1 million. George Voinovich had nearly \$8 million and Mary Boyle had a little more than \$2 million. In both cases, the candidate with more money won. The lower-funded races were mostly lower because the losing candidate had significantly less money. The winning candidate in the open-seat race in Idaho, Mike Crapo (R), had more than \$2 million compared to Bill Mauk's \$250,000. In Indiana, Evan Bayh (D) spent \$5 million and won, while his opponent, Paul Helmke, only spent about \$650,000.

A notable exception to the pattern that the candidate with the most money wins is the Wisconsin race. Incumbent Russ Feingold (D), who had been a major sponsor of campaign finance reform which banned unlimited "soft money" expenditures, voluntarily restricted the "soft money" and PAC money in his own campaign. Despite these limits on his funds, Feingold still raised and spent more than \$3 million, and he defeated his opponent, Mark Neuman who raised more than \$4 million.

#### 2.4.1 The Issues

During the 1998 elections, candidates' campaigns reflected "a patchwork of issues rather than a national theme" (Kellman 1998). The national issues which most often appeared in party-sponsored advertisements, headlined newscasts and were brought up in polls were abortion rights, social security, health care, education, and the impeachment hearings of President Clinton.

The issue of late-term abortion was on the voting floor of the House and Senate prior to the 1998 elections, and was one issue on which some candidates took firm positions. Candidates tended to follow their party platform. Many Republican candidates held a position close to the pro-life side advanced by their party. Strongly held positions on abortion did not

help Republican senate challengers Matt Fong (CA), Mark Neuman (WI) and incumbent Launch Fairclough (NC). They lost to their more moderate opponents. As Elowitz (1998:np) points out, "voters tended to reward pragmatic rather than ideological conservatism."

Social Security was an issue for most of the candidates and "Saving Social Security" was a slogan and well-worn phrase for most of the candidates. Although many candidates, especially challengers, pointed out that the entire surplus in the general fund comes from the money in Social Security and was the money used to balance the budget in the first place, the balanced budget and a federal surplus provided both parties with the money to fund their proposals for saving social security. Many Republican candidates advanced proposals for putting 90% of the surplus back into Social Security and using 10% as tax cuts, especially to end the so-called "marriage penalty." Democratic candidates generally argued that all of the surplus needed to go toward Social Security. Another proposal for reforming Social Security which candidates advanced paralleled comments President Clinton made in his State of the Union address and at a public forum on Social Security in April; Clinton advanced the possibility of reforming the Social Security system to allow people to invest some of their FICA taxes into private investment funds.

Another issue, and one which some pundits claimed was the most important of the election, was education. The Democrats proposed smaller class sizes, refurbishing older schools, improving the technological resources of schools, and hiring 100,000 new teachers, and funding some of these changes with lotteries. The Republicans proposed tuition tax credits and vouchers to improve education.

The impeachment hearing was not as influential in the senate campaign as many pundits claimed it would be. The media speculated that because candidates were unwilling to risk disfavor with voters weary of the topic, they avoided discussion of the impeachment in their campaign pronouncements. If candidates were asked about the impeachment, they advanced

cautious or hedged positions (Martinez 1998). Most candidates' approach paralleled that of Nixon and Humphrey in the 1968 campaign, when both candidates avoided discussion or offered ambiguous comments about the Vietnam war (Page and Brody 1972). Even though the candidates avoided the issue, their political parties kept the issue in the foreground of the campaigns through several party-sponsored advertisements. Republicans ran numerous advertisements which asserted that Clinton lied to the American people and should be punished for it. One Republican advertisement said, "In every election, there is a big question to think about. This year, the question is, should we reward Bill Clinton?" Such ads suggested that voters could punish Clinton by putting Republican candidates into the House and Senate. Democrats responded with advertisements which claimed they wanted to talk about the important issues of education, social security and health care rather than the impeachment of the president. One Democrat advertisement asked, "will 1999 be a year of investigations or a year of progress?" The advertising battle between political parties seemed to have little effect on voters (Berke 1998a). In a Gallup poll a few days before the election, only 23% of the voters reported that they would send a message of their opinion of the impeachment hearings through their vote for their Representative or Senator (Gallup 1998). Despite the Republican Party's efforts to nationalize the issues of the campaign, they failed. As a result, the importance of local issues increased. In individual elections in some states such as Colorado, the local issues were more important than the national issues.

#### 2.4.2 The 1998 Candidate Debates

Pre-election debates are often a high-profile presentation of the candidate to the voters, and perhaps the only time when voters see the two or three major candidates at the same time. Voters have come to expect candidates to debate—polls usually report that more than 70% of the voters watch campaign debates (National Election Guide 1998:np). Consequently, candidates are often compelled to participate in at least one pre-election debate. Even though

many scholarly studies have argued that debates are mostly media events or orchestrated candidate advertisements (see chapter 3), debates can be a risky situation for some candidates. According to David Lanoue (1998:1), a political science professor at Texas Tech University, debates pose a risk to front-runner candidates because "the candidates aren't in control of their message." However, candidates who do not debate receive negative press, and more than 90 percent of all senate candidates agree to a debate (Herrnson 1995:194). Lanoue (1998:1) notes that candidates who might see candidate debates as a disadvantage often debate "in the early months, when no one is paying attention, and that way you can tell the voters that you were there, that you stood up." Because debates may hurt as well as help candidates' campaigns, they must control, as much as possible, the environment and content of debates.

One area candidates can influence, or even control is the debate format. All of the candidates who will participate in the debate, along with the candidates' advisors and the media specialists from their respective political parties, negotiate the debate format with the media and citizen organizations who are sponsoring the debate. The candidates may stand at lecterns, sit around a table, or sit in an informal "talk show" style setting. Many debates have a single moderator, but some have two, or none. Questions may come from a panel of journalists, members of the audience, citizens who have been videotaped, from the candidates or any combination of these. Most debates include the candidates from the two major political parties and exclude other legally qualified candidates, because only the major party candidates have "a realistic chance of winning" (National Election Guide 1998:np). The participating candidates strive to have a format which supports their style of presentation.

## 2.5 Summary

During the past 200 years, the way Senators are selected, trained, and funded has changed, as this chapter has shown. Political parties have been a significant force in the political landscape by selecting, training, and funding their candidates, yet in recent years

candidates' campaigns are less controlled by the political parties, and have become a partnership between the candidate, the media and the political parties. Another change in the political landscape has been the increase in the number of women who enter senatorial races and win elections, though at present less than ten percent of the Senators are female. As has been true for several years, incumbent candidates have an advantage over their challengers; they have access to the media and have more funds. In the five open races, the higher-funded candidates won. During the 1998 election, late-term abortion, foreign policy, the balanced budget, taxes, and the impeachment of President Clinton were issues that most of the candidates addressed in their campaign and were asked about during the pre-election debates. It is necessary to understand the historical and social context in which the debates occur, if we are to understand the content of the candidates' discourse during their pre-elections debates.

## CHAPTER 3

### A REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

#### 3.0 Introduction

Since the 1960s, televised candidate debates have become a well-recognized and expected feature of American political campaigns. During the three months prior to election day, the major candidates for high-elected offices, for the United States presidency, senate and state governorship, are invited to debate. In recent years, non-partisan groups, such as the League of Women Voters, a university, or a major broadcast station, have organized and hosted these debates.

Sponsors and advocates of candidate debates assert that a debate is one of the few situations where voters can see both of the major party candidates at the same time and in the same setting. The debate is an ideal time for voters to find out the candidates' positions on the issues, consider each candidate's solutions to whatever problems the nation or state is facing, and analyze this information. If the candidates are asked relevant questions, and they give thoughtful answers, in short, when the interchange is informative, what the candidates say during the debate is important.

However, not everyone believes that candidate debates provide voters with new or useful information or help people make a voting decision. Critics claim that candidate debates are, at their best, glorified press conferences, with panelists asking prepared questions and candidates giving prepared answers. At their worst, debates are artificial or scripted conflicts between candidates. Instead of providing voters with information, the debates provide voters with a sixty minute compilation of each candidates' best sound bites or a verbal dual. If the candidates face a contentious panel or candidates exchange attacks and counter-attacks with

their opponents, that is, when the media event is presented as entertainment, what the candidates say during the debate is interesting.

Although both of these positions are amply studied and argued by scholars from several disciplines, few have dealt with the candidates' use of language, and even fewer have studied the candidates' language during their pre-election debates. This chapter summarizes the research which contributes to our understanding of the myriad factors which influence candidate debates and, in particular, the candidates' discourse.

Section 3.1 outlines research concerned with some of the factors of campaigns and debates. Some studies consider the effect that candidate debates have, or do not have, on voters and on the result of the election. Some researchers argue that debates do help voters make a rational or tactical choice. Other researchers ascribe greater importance to the political environment than to either the candidates or the debates. Section 3.2 presents some of the research which focuses on the effects of the media on voters' perceptions of the candidates, and on the ways in which candidates use televisual communication to manage their image, and address the issues. Section 3.3 outlines research related to gender and language use in the public sphere, and focuses on some of the challenges that female candidates face. Section 3.4 summarizes research on the features of linguistic style and points to the concepts which inform the present research.

### 3.1 Factors of Campaigns and Elections

Because many factors are at play in candidate debates, the study of debates has interdisciplinary appeal. The studies covered here employ approaches consistent with their discipline and focus on aspects of the debates germane to that discipline. Since each section in this chapter addresses a particular aspect of debates, most of the studies in each section come from the same discipline. When all of these studies are brought together, the result is a fairly comprehensive picture of past research and what remains to be studied.

### 3.1.1 The Effectiveness of Candidate Debates

One line of research which investigates candidate debates draws on the tradition that campaigns, debates, and voting are facets of a rational-choice model of political activity. Following this model, Auer (1977: 146) identifies five essential attributes of candidate debates; he argues that debates must involve "(1) a confrontation, (2) in equal and adequate time, (3) of matched contestants, (4) on a stated proposition, (5) in order to gain an audience decision." Debate organizers strive to achieve each component by inviting the two major candidates, assigning equal time to each candidate, and having the same or similar questions asked of each candidate. Debate organizers and the proponents of candidate debates believe that in these conditions the candidates will rationally discuss the issues and, in turn, voters will have enough information to make a rational choice. Kelly (1960:16-25), for example, claims that voters need to hear both sides of the argument. During the election season, voters are bombarded by information and misinformation from a variety of sources. However, during the debates, voters can hear what the candidates have to say, without the "distortions and false statements" that might be made by their opponents and pundits. The voters weigh the evidence and reasons candidates give to support their positions and make a rational choice.

A more recent rational-choice model, initially advanced in psychology journals and borrowed by political scientists, defines the voter as a "tactician" (Fiske and Neuberg 1990; Fiske 1993). Tactical voters form an impression of the candidates in a manner similar to the one they use to appraise the other people they encounter in their daily life. These initial impressions are based on people's general observations of the candidate's age, gender, social class, physical appearance, and political affiliation (Riggle et al. 1992) and operate as the voters' "default option" (Franklin 1991: 21). As voters gather more information about the candidates, through campaign advertisements, editorials, or the evening news, they categorize and add the new information to their existing framework. If the information is inconsistent



with their initial impression, then voters recategorize and modify their impression. Throughout the campaign, voters do an ongoing mental calculus until they decide which candidate is the best one.

Lucaites (1989) evaluated the 1988 presidential debates by applying another variation of the rational choice model. He began with the conviction that debates provide "rhetorical legitimacy for the electoral process" (232) and that voters rely on the debates to evaluate which candidate will be the executor of the public trust. He found that voters expect the candidates to play the role they will play if they are elected, and if the candidates do so, they inspire the public's confidence. The debate format provides all voters vicarious participation in the candidates' examination, with the press panel serving as the electorate's proxy. When the candidates answer the panelists' questions, they are answering the citizens' questions, especially when candidates respond directly to the camera and seem to speak to the members of the viewing audience. What the candidates say is not very important, because most viewers know the candidates' positions before the debate and do not need more information about the candidates' positions. Instead, the voters are interested in learning whether or not the candidate can play the role of the office. If the candidates refuse or are unable to play the role during the debate, they fail to gain the public's trust and fail to win the election.

### 3.1.2 The Political Environment

Many scholars view candidate debates as a small, relatively unimportant part of a campaign when compared with the political environment. They ask these kinds of questions: What is the candidate's political party? Could the partisan distribution in the House and Senate change because of this election? Is this an open seat race? Are people satisfied with the president's performance? Is the economy prospering? Each of these questions points to a factor of the political environment which some scholars believe has a greater influence on the

outcome of an election than anything that the candidate says or does during the campaign or during the pre-election debates (Keith et al. 1992; Ezra and Nelson 1995).

First, the political parties provide candidates with an established partisan voter base and an established set of issues around which they can (or must) construct their campaign (Petrocik 1995; Fenno 1978). In addition, the political parties do a great deal of work on behalf of their candidates. They conduct polls to gauge public opinion, do opposition research, compile information packets and fact sheets, provide technical support, and organize registration and get-out-the vote drives (Herrnson 1995: 87-89). In some states, specifically those where the majority of the voters consistently vote with one party and that party endorses the candidate, the favored candidate does not need to do very much to win the election (Baer 1995). Conversely, the candidate from the minority party has little chance to win. In this situation, what either candidate says or does is of little consequence.

Congressional seat shifts have become more common in recent years, and when the party distribution in the House or Senate is close enough that either party could shift the leadership in their favor, the political parties become more actively involved. Two responses are usual. First, the minority party advances a strong candidate and provides that candidate with additional resources and support. The majority party, as we might expect, aggressively defends their vulnerable candidate (Anderson and Thorson 1984). Second, the parties try to win or keep voters. Although most voters claim affiliation with a particular party, most voters' party loyalty is tenuous. Modern voters tend to be more independent and split their voting ticket or cross party-lines for a candidate or a cause (Davis 1998). Consequently, political parties remodel their platform and their advertisements to accommodate particular interest groups. For example, many of the party-sponsored materials are "generic or doughnut" material, which can be customized for particular audiences (Herrnson 1995:91). Small changes are made in the advertisement to appeal to regional, local or special interest voters. A consequence of the

parties' on-going remodeling is a coalition of dissimilar members, and party messages that are inconsistent, or diluted. Nonetheless, the two major parties each try to build a coalition which will help the party, and the candidate win the election.

Another factor of the political environment is the president's popularity. Some research on congressional elections has found that the voters' attitudes about the president are an important indicator of how people will vote. Several studies which compare public opinion poll results and congressional election results conclude that the president's party gains or loses congressional seats in relation to people's opinion of the president's performance (Oppenheimer et al. 1986; Waterman et al. 1991). If the president is unpopular, the president's party will lose seats in the election. Flemming (1995) claims that voters are, in effect, casting no-confidence votes and give personal rebukes to the president and presidential policies through their vote for the other party's candidates. On the other hand, voters who approve of the president's performance tend to favor candidates from the president's party (Campbell 1997). Several researchers explain this phenomenon as the candidates' "ride on the coattails" of a popular president, which helps these candidates win the election (Mondak 1993; Peterson 1994; Flemming, 1995).

Other researchers, such as Gaddie (1997), claim that the president's popularity is an indicator of all elections, but argue that the president's popularity, more than any other election factor, is an effective predictor of which party will win in an open race. Gaddie (1997) points out that open seats usually occur because the incumbent retires. In his analysis of incumbent retirements, he found that many incumbent retirements are strategic decisions based on a variety of indicators that suggest that the incumbent might be defeated. One of the strongest indicators is the president's popularity.

Other scholars look at how the president's popularity often depends on voters' perceptions of the state of the economy. These researchers usually look at records of economic

trends, consumer confidence reports, voting patterns, and opinion polls and compare them with the election results. Their findings indicate that when the economy is prosperous, revenue in the federal coffers increases without the government raising taxes. In addition, new federal programs are funded without raising taxes, and funds for established federal programs continue. Also, when the deficit is under control, and people have a high confidence in their current and future economic situation, they tend to favor the president's party. Conversely, if voters have a low level of consumer confidence, are dissatisfied with the government's programs and services, and are uncertain about their employment, voters tend to choose candidates from the other political party (Lewis-Beck and Rice 1992; Abramson et al. 1995; Petrocik 1995).

In sum, several researchers believe that the political environment influences voters more than anything the candidate might do during the campaign. The candidate whose party affiliation matches the constituency's party affiliation is more likely to win. The candidate whose political party invests a great deal of money and effort in the election has a better chance to win. The candidate who is from the same party as a favored president, and runs in an election during good economic times, usually wins.

### 3.1.3 Incumbency

Many authors argue that the candidate's party affiliation is less important than the candidate's status as an incumbent or a challenger (Erickson 1971; Cover 1977; Nelson 1978). A brief review of election results for the past thirty years shows that over 90 percent of incumbent representatives and senators are re-elected. This result is surprising, since opinion polls consistently report that currently seated politicians are less credible than used car dealers (Shea and Brooks 1995:20). However, incumbents do win, and researchers have explored why incumbency gives a candidate such an advantage. According to Jacobson (1992), incumbents have a greater ability to raise campaign funds. He found that the 29 Senate incumbents who

ran for re-election in 1990 received more than \$37 million from political action committees, whereas their challengers received \$3.8 million. The incumbents had about a ten to one advantage. Moreover, as campaigns become more and more expensive, the candidates need more financial resources. The incumbents have those resources and can meet the higher expenses. Challengers cannot. During each election cycle, the challengers have a larger "financial hurdle" (Stone 1998: 2680).

Incumbents not only receive more money, they have greater name recognition (Abramowitz 1975) and receive more media coverage (Abramson et al. 1995). Comparing the results of name-recognition polls and respondents reports of the kind and amount of information they receive from candidates, these authors conclude that incumbents have a strong advantage over challengers. They point out that incumbents can send their constituency progress and voting reports and issue oriented questionnaires. They can accept speaking invitations, and arrange town-hall meetings or other events to meet with the electorate they represent. Challengers can also attend meetings, but they have less insider information to impart and tend to draw smaller audiences than incumbents.

Perhaps the most visible incumbent advantage is that they have access to the media. Pfetsch (1998), who counted the number of time candidates received news coverage during an election season, reports that media bias is toward the incumbent government, which gives the currently seated president, senators and representatives greater opportunity to receive media attention. The most favored medium is television coverage, and incumbents compete for a spot on the evening news. Graber's (1997: 270-272) research points to why the competition is so fierce. She found that the evening network news in 1994-1995 devoted roughly 24 news stories each month to covering Congress. Because all 435 Representatives and 100 Senators want free media coverage, they constantly vie with each other to have the most newsworthy information and participate in the most newsworthy activities. Challengers can acquire funding, pollsters,

and advisors, and they can organize and attend meetings, but "they do not have access to the same amount of official public information resources" as incumbents do (Pfetsch 1998: 77). Consequently, in the competition for media attention, challengers have few chances to win any media coverage away from sitting legislators.

Another advantage that incumbents have over their challengers is the experience they have gained while in office. Funk (1997) examined peoples' perceptions of candidates' traits and found that the participants named experience in a position as their reason for assigning a high level of expertise to incumbent candidates. Funk (1997) claims that incumbents are perceived as having greater expertise, even if the challengers are politically experienced; incumbents can claim that they have more experience and are more competent to do the job than their opponents are. For example, many people recognize "I won't take advantage of my opponent's youth and inexperience" as Reagan's witty remark against Mondale in one of the 1984 presidential candidate debates. Even though Mondale had ample political experience, Reagan could, and did, claim to have more experience as president than his opponent.

Challenger candidates, those who run against incumbents, have a poor chance to win the election. Occasionally a challenger has experience, popular appeal, and a great deal of party support, and can win against an incumbent<sup>1</sup> (Hinckley 1980; Jacobson 1990; Mann and Wolfinger 1980). However, even in years when many challengers win against incumbents, they do so only about 17 percent of the time (Epstein and Zemsky 1995: 296). In most contested races, challengers are politically weak, inexperienced, poorly funded, and win less than 4 percent of their races. One reason why challenger candidates are inexperienced is that no experienced candidates may choose to run. A common practice for experienced candidates is

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<sup>1</sup>Two races for Senate seats were won by challenger candidates in the 1998 election. In the New York race, Charles Schumer (D) beat incumbent Alphonse D'Amato (R). In the Illinois race, Peter Fitzgerald (R) won against incumbent Carol Mosley Braun (D).

to delay running for office until the incumbent retires or the political situation changes so that the incumbent is vulnerable. Challenger candidates generally have little financial support from their political party unless the party considers the race important and/or the incumbent is weak enough to be defeated. Weak challengers can usually win their party's primary or caucus because they have no opposition, but they are ill-equipped to compete with the incumbent in the general election. From the party's point of view, these candidates can be sacrificed when there is little chance to win against an incumbent no matter who the challenger is. The party saves its stronger candidates for races they can win. A related phenomenon is that a candidate may enter a race against an incumbent to gain experience rather than to be elected. These candidates, according to Banks and Kiewiet (1989), are the "token opposition" commonly seen in primary races.

From these studies we learn that incumbents have a number of advantages that help them win elections. Incumbents have more money to conduct a competitive and high cost campaign. They also have greater name recognition because they can use the resources of their office to contact their constituency. Incumbents receive more media attention, and more free television coverage than their challengers. Finally, incumbents often compete against challengers who are politically weak, and may simply be sacrificial candidates or token competitors.

The one situation when incumbency does not have an advantage is in open races. Since the incumbent candidate has retired or has decided not to run, both of the candidates are newcomers to the position. Even though a candidate from the incumbent's party may have a slight advantage if she or he receives an endorsement from a popular, well-liked incumbent, the candidate from the other party usually receive a great deal of financial and media support from the party. Both political parties invest their resources in open race candidates since an open race provides them with a chance to gain a seat in the Senate. In addition, open race candidates have some advantages that incumbent candidates do not. Open race candidates do not have a

voting record to defend, so they do not have to run a defensive campaign. They can claim outsider status, thereby distancing themselves from both unpopular legislation and legislative gridlock. They can propose more dramatic changes than incumbents may be willing or able to propose. Both candidates can claim experience and emphasize local issues, and they usually have some name recognition in the state because they have served in the state legislature or senate or as the governor, and suggest that they can accomplish similar things at the federal level.

In sum, much of the political environment in which an election takes place has an effect on the election. The way candidates conduct their campaigns depends on whether the race is contested or open one, whether or not the president is in favor, and whether or not the economy is good. Each of these situations may have as much of an influence on the outcome of the race as how the candidate conducts the campaign.

### 3.2 Televisual Communication and Political Campaigns

In recent years, candidates depend on televisual communication to reach a large segment of the population at one time. During an election year, political advertisements laud the positive qualities of candidates for every position from judge to president or point out the negative qualities of opponents. The expense of producing the advertisement and buying air time can drain a candidate's coffers, but well-designed advertisements can also fill them if the advertisements resonate with donating voters and businesses. Advertisements, however, are only one of the televisual resources candidates can draw upon. In recent years, some candidates, such as Ross Perot, have bought enough air time to produce half-hour infomercials, or have arranged an appearance on a talk show. In addition, candidates, especially high-office and key-race candidates, can get free press coverage—televised press conferences and interviews and photo-opportunities used on the evening news. Most candidates also have an



opportunity to participate in televised pre-election debates. All of these are ways candidates can use television to bring their image and their message to the voters.

### 3.2.1 A New Tool for Candidates

Is television important for candidates? Most people say yes. A short history of the earliest interactions between the candidates and television journalists offers some insight into why candidates heavily rely on televisual communication. Walter Cronkite (1998) recalls that television began to cover politics at the 1948 party conventions. Four years later, at the 1952 Republican convention, television began showing the public the issues, "the big ones and the little ones debated in the platform committee" and taking the viewers "to the keyholes of the smoke-filled rooms where decisions were being made" (1998:58). By the next major election, in 1956, the parties realized that people were responding to what they had seen on television, and began to orchestrate and plan who would talk, and the content of the talk. And the candidates began to use television to gain a larger audience.

Since the end of the 1950s, candidates have sought opportunities to maximize their visibility through television. They arrange photo opportunities for the evening news broadcasts, prepare commercial spot announcements, make talk-show appearances, and participate in televised debates. This effort and the amount of the campaign budget devoted to televisual communication suggest that candidates and campaign managers believe that media coverage has a direct effect on how the electorate evaluates the candidates, and ultimately, who receives their vote.

### 3.2.2 Television's Influence on Voters

Scholarly research conducted in the 1970s generally agrees that televisual presentations, particularly candidate advertisements and campaign debates, have the effect of increasing the voter's information about the candidates and bringing particular issues to the forefront.

However, these studies also conclude that the candidates' televisual presentations have had a limited direct effect on voters' decisions (Robinson 1972; Clark and Kline 1974; Miller and MacKuen 1979).

Recent studies which have considered the effect that televised candidate debates have on voters support the belief that television does change people's perception of the candidates. For example, Patterson et al. (1992) investigated people's perceptions of candidates based on an audio or video version of the 1984 debate between Reagan and Mondale. Respondents who viewed the video version assessed Reagan more favorably, especially in the categories of expressiveness and attractiveness. In a similar study, McKinnon et al. (1993) examined the effects of three channels of information on undecided voters. One group heard the radio presentation of the third 1992 debate between Clinton, Bush and Perot. The second group watched the debate on television. The third (radio) and fourth (television) groups heard the debate and an after-the-debate commentary. The researchers found that those who watched television rated Clinton slightly more favorably than Bush and Perot, but those who received the commentary rated Clinton much less favorably than the other two candidates. The respondents' evaluations of Bush and Perot did not change in any of the four groups. The authors suggest that some candidates may project more effectively on television than others (114). The more interesting finding is that the newscasters' commentary after the debate had the most influence on people's opinion of the candidates.

The post-debate commentary by analysts and reporters usually begins with an analysis of who has "won" by pointing out the gaffes, analyzing the catchy phrases, and identifying any "knock out punch" or verbal "home run" which allegedly gave one of the candidates the victory (Gordon 1992:31). In other words, the media provide the viewers with an immediate evaluation of the candidates' performance and announce the relative advantages the candidates have gained. Some researchers explain that the media's evaluations are influential because the

debates do not provide audiences with enough information about the candidates to produce a change in behavior. The voters rely on the mass media's interpretation of the debate (Bishop, Meadow and Jackson-Beeck 1979: 198-99; Berquest and Golden 1981: 125).

A more recent study by Leshner and McKean (1997) also looks at the effect of television news on people's perceptions of candidates. Their detailed, empirical study found a positive association between respondents' knowledge about candidates and the amount of political and government information they gathered from televised news. However, they conclude that news reports and commentary alone did not have as much influence on voters as the amount of political interest voters have; voters who were very interested in politics relied on a variety of sources of information, knew a great deal about the candidates, and were less swayed by television's commentary.

These studies suggest that media commentary influences less-informed voters as much, or even more than, the debates. However, these studies imply that the debates may have more influence on voters when the debates receive less media attention. In general, debates between candidates for the United States Senate and House of Representatives receive less media attention than presidential debates.

### 3.2.3 Debates as Press Conferences

Recent scholarship has explored the soundness of claims that debates provide the electorate with the information they need to make a rational decision. One of the common conclusions is that candidate debates are merely highly publicized press conferences and rarely reveal substantive information about the candidates. They usually point to the debate format itself as the problem: the questions come from a press panel or a high-profile interviewer/moderator. The journalists on the panel are those who are considered to be more familiar with the particular issues and their associated policies than the voters or moderator. However, the questions that journalists ask "may or may not (usually not) represent questions

of concern to the voters for whose benefit the debates are purportedly held" (Jackson-Beeck and Meadow 1979:179). Moreover, journalists are often seen as pursuing "a negative, cynical, and superficial agenda" (Hogan 1989:221); their questions are preceded by speeches which frame each situation as an insolvable crisis, or the questions put candidates in no-win situations which belittle or embarrass them. For example, in the 1984 vice presidential debate, journalists challenged Dukakis' view on the death penalty by asking him what he would do if his wife were raped. Dukakis could recant his death penalty position, or seem insensitive to rape victims—a no-win situation. These types of questions rarely elicit the candidates' beliefs, proposals or policy positions.

Contemporary journalists' attitudes and approaches to politics, including their approach during candidate debates, reflect a historical journalism style from descriptive, fact-centered reporting to an interpretive style of reporting. Investigative reporting, in which the reporter "pursues the apparent causes, effects, or correlates to some action or event" contributes to the current trend of journalists' "anti-politics" bias, and their adversarial attitude toward politicians (Manheim 1998:94). Many believe that this trend has had negative results on the political process (Entman 1989; Sabato 1991) and reduces people's trust in politicians and in the government (Ranney 1983; Putnam 1995). One result is that today's politicians must work within an environment of mistrust. Patterson and Donsbach (1996:103) write:

[Journalists] constantly question politicians' motives, methods, and effectiveness. This type of reporting looks like watch dog journalism but is not. It is ideological in its premise: politicians are assumed to act out of self-interest rather than...from political conviction. Journalists routinely claim that politicians make promises they do not intend to keep or could not keep even if they tried.

In an anti-politics environment, candidates are compelled to prepare themselves and shape a message "that meets the journalists' needs and benefits their own positions" (Manheim 1998:103). Faucheux (1994: 42) warns candidates that they "don't win debates, [they] only

lose them” through self-inflicted injuries. In a training brochure for candidates, he suggests that they not only prepare and rehearse their issue and policy positions, but also must prepare and rehearse “memorable and politically pertinent one-liners”(Faucheux 1994:43) in self-defense against tough questions and attacks. Moreover, if candidates are asked a surprise question, they should “use wit” rather than “look like a deer caught in headlights” (43); journalists cover both, but only wit gains the candidate positive coverage.

#### 3.2.4 Debates as Political Advertisements

Researchers who conclude that campaign debates are long political advertisements often look at the content of candidate responses to questions. In general, these scholars argue that when candidates are asked issue-based questions which provide them with an opportunity to address the issue substantively, they rarely do. Instead, they evade the question and give indirect or irrelevant responses (Obeng 1997). Candidates raise a different topic that is consonant with their campaign agenda, rehash topics which were brought up earlier in the debate, or repeat rehearsed phrases from their ads and campaign literature (Johnson 1996). As mentioned earlier, candidates have to provide material that will earn them positive comments during the post-debate analysis and coverage in news reports. These factors tend to support a general perception that a candidate debate is a media event rather than an informative, suasive forum.

Although some scholars claim that bringing together politicians in a popular medium creates and enhances people’s sense of community (Gurevitch and Kavoori 1992: 419), others believe that the dark side of merging politics and television is that political events end up being “television first and ‘debates’ second” (Conrad 1993:67). Television depends on drama, conflict, and movement. Information laden debates may have little drama, conflict or movement. If the candidates, journalists or other participants do not incorporate entertaining narratives and exchanges, debates become nothing more than lengthy advertisements (Primeau

1979), something that in the 1990s might have been called an infomercial. This infomercial's products are the candidates, themselves.

A more humorous, though equally unfavorable criticism of candidate debates is found in Drucker and Hunold's (1987) comparison of candidate debates with televised game shows. They find that both genres use a celebrity panel to ask the questions, have an emcee-style moderator adept at maintaining a fast-paced program, have an audience coached to respond appropriately, and have prepared-in-advance contestants. In addition, at-home viewers cheer for their favorite contestant, and at the end of the program, the contestant who most skillfully played the game wins. In other words, televised debates have a "show-biz" quality (Gurevitch and Kavoori 1992: 206).

Many other studies begin with the assumption that candidate debates are a television performance (Goffman 1959), and proceed from there to look at how candidates manage their performance. The two major components of performance management are image management and message management.

### 3.2.5 The Candidates' Image Management

Two assumptions underlie image management research. First, candidates must meet the demands of television if they want to win the debate. Second, debates do make a difference in voters' perceptions of the candidates, and ultimately, the voters' decisions. In general terms, image management includes the things candidates have to do, or should do, to present a positive televisual image. The candidates must know and meet "the demands of the debate format" (Owen 1995:148), pay attention to their physical appearance (Helweg 1979; Glass 1985), and appear competent (Geis 1987; Funk 1997).

Although the press-conference style is the most familiar debate format, several other formats have been used as a way to mitigate criticism that has been leveled against the press panel format. In recent years, the candidates have had town-hall debates and talk-show style

debates. They have been questioned by members of the studio audience and citizens on the street. Each of these modifications presents different image management demands on the candidates. As previously mentioned, the press-conference style debate format requires candidates to be prepared for adversarial questions from the members of the press panel. The town-hall format requires candidates to interact with the audience in a personable, friendly manner. If candidates can do so, as Clinton did in the second of the 1992 debates, they are considered responsive and in-touch with voters (McKinnon et al. 1993).

Candidates also have to plan how to present information about their ability and reveal their personality in short, memorable segments, because they have very little speaking time. Most debate formats have strict time limitations, usually between 30 seconds and two minutes, in which candidates define themselves and answer questions. The candidates must "capsulize" information about themselves (Jamieson 1988:10). Jamieson (1988:12) argues that Reagan's popularity as a communicator came from his ability to encapsulate his image through short, self-disclosing stories and visual associations.

Another component of image management is the candidates' physical appearance. Since the Kennedy-Nixon debate in the 1960s, when voters could see the candidates "live" on television, the candidates' physical appearance has been important. Many reporters said Nixon lost the debate, and the election, because he refused to wear makeup and looked old and tired. Kennedy wore makeup, and looked young and energetic (Helwig 1979). Mount (1998) claims the same phenomenon was demonstrated in the 1996 debate between Clinton and Dole; Dole appeared old and less attractive than Clinton.

In response to claims that physical appearance was only important to those who were less educated, Glass (1985) compared respondents' criteria for evaluating candidates with their educational background. He found that voters who are highly educated, as well as those who are less educated, not only ascribe importance to substantive attributes such as "experience,

leadership, and performance capabilities” but also to the “irrelevant characteristics” such as religion, marital status and “looks” (520). The voters may also be prompted to notice the candidates’ appearance by the newscasters’ advance and post-debate comments. When newscasters talk about appearance in the same commentary that they talk about the candidates’ competence, performance, and personality (Miller and MacKuen 1979; Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1991), voters may weigh each equally.

A successful candidate image is built on three components: “competence, trustworthiness and warmth” (Funk 1997: 676). In televised debates, candidates have two ways to communicate their image, the non-verbal dimension communicated through their actions (e.g., gestures, posture, and facial expressions) and the verbal dimension communicated through their words. One strategy that works, according to Carmichael and Cronkhite (1965), is choosing ordinary words. In their research, they found that the candidates who talked about themselves and their ideas in familiar ways were more persuasive than candidates who used unfamiliar or obscure words. Another strategy is to be aggressive. Several media and campaign studies have found that aggressive candidates and those who take advantage of their opponent’s shortcomings and blunders are seen as more competent (Morello 1991; Kavenaugh 1995). Winkler and Black (1993:85) for example, looked at viewers’ evaluations after watching candidates debate. They found that candidates who have and use an “attack strategy” which puts their opponents on the defensive increase the viewers’ perception that they are aggressive and powerful leaders. The third strategy candidates use to establish their competence is to have and present a clear vision of the future. Candidates who are judged most competent are those who present their vision in lofty, abstract terms which cannot be criticized (Wendt and Fairhurst 1995). The ability to develop and sustain a vision and agenda that is part of “a coherent characterization of themselves” is the essence of a competent leader (Conrad 1993). Candidates generally draw on all three strategies throughout their campaign.



### 3.2.6 The Candidates' Issue Management

Many researchers contend that the way a candidate addresses the issues in the debate is the key factor affecting their chances of winning the election. However, scholars disagree about how winning candidates actually address the issues. A few writers, such as Rowland (1986), concur with popular sentiment that a successful candidate answers all of the important aspects of each question asked during the debate, substantiates claims with evidence, and skillfully refutes the opponents' arguments. In an early study on the kind of information candidates provide during debates, Ellsworth (1965) found that candidates gave more position statements and presented more evidence during the debate than they did in other speeches during the campaign. However, he also found that reasoned arguments made up the content of less than 15 percent of any debate, and most of the evidence given consisted of "the reciting of facts" (798). The facts suggest that the speaker has knowledge, but does not necessarily evidence to support an argument.

Conversely, numerous authors argue that a successful candidate gives superficial answers, makes inaccurate statements, and presents ambiguous solutions to problems (Mausser 1989; Riker 1989). Candidates avoid specific policy statements and limit their evaluative or analytical statements on issues because these statements carry a high risk. For example, when candidates offer a detailed position on issues, both the media and voters may give the candidates negative reviews (Morello 1991a, 1991b). Another risk is that strong policy stands that appeal to liberal or conservative voters will almost always alienate the opposing group of voters. Moreover, if the candidate chooses a median, position both liberals and conservatives are alienated (Carmines and Copoian 1981). Consequently, to avoid estranging anyone, candidates tend to devote themselves to "matters of consensus" such as progress, prosperity, and peace (Page 1976: 743) and avoid taking strong policy stands.

Incumbents and challengers have different matters of consensus. DePoe (1991:218) found that incumbents often stress continuity between present and future, while challengers emphasize that a bright future is possible only through changes involving "making new what is old" or "returning to the hallowed principles of the past." Either approach allows the candidate to present a vision of the future without naming any specific actions by which these goals could be achieved. Their themes emphasize the future, and are safe, non-alienating, and for the most part meaningless.

Candidates have several compelling reasons for responding to questions with superficial or ambiguous statements. One reason is that candidates risk an immediate rebuttal or challenge from their opponents. It is to the candidates' advantage to appear to address the issues competently, while skillfully avoiding candid statements that their opponents can attack (Obeng 1997). Another reason is that the candidate cannot explain the issue in the limited time, and to say the issue is too complicated to explain might suggest to voters that the candidate is uninformed, or worse, incompetent (Jamieson 1992). Most of the time, when candidates want to maintain a consistent theme throughout the debate, as Wendt and Fairhurst (1995) claim is true, and they know that they cannot accomplish it through well-developed arguments, they opt for issue-related "buzz words" which resonate with the public (Shah et al. 1997). Furthermore, candidates may need to redefine issues posed by questioners or coopt their opponents' issues if they want the issues to match their agenda (Nimmo 1970; Jamieson 1992). In other words, the "performative elements of the debate" take precedence over substantive argument about the issues (Winkler and Black 1993:86).

Even in studies which stress that debates are an important information source for voters and that the information helps them make reasoned judgments and choices between candidates, the authors often add that voters process the information about the issues which is presented in the campaign and debate through the lens of their everyday lives, and conclude that "vulgar"

campaigns and debates, made up of grandstanding, pseudo-attacks, and emotion-laden phrases, result in greater participation and elicit more voter evaluation of the candidates (Bartels 1986; Carmines and Stimson 1989; Popkin 1991). Candidates learn to present their message in these terms so they can win.

### 3.2.7 The Public Sphere

Much of the research presented thus far suggests that most, if not all, of the things candidates say and do during the debates are base, manipulative or opportunistic. Most people, however, are unwilling to forego campaigns or candidate debates. Most people are willing to accept the existing social and political structures (Habermas 1973: 651), whether or not these events provide complete, truthful information or promote rational decision making. Candidates' campaigns and debates represent to American voters what modern political theorists such as Locke, Toqueville, and Mill name as an important component of democracy, free and open public discussion. The important requirement is that the discussion occur in a public setting: the classroom, the workplace, the evening news, and televised candidate debates.

Public discussion presupposes that the interlocutors' will have an audience, and the content of the discussion concerns the audience as well as the interlocutors. In other words, public discourse differs from private discourse. Robin Lakoff (1995:26) makes the distinction thus:

Unlike private discourse it [public discourse] is consequential—that is, it is expected to have effects beyond that of mere socialization—and it uses some version of formal style or elaborated code, with the consequent absence of any assumption of mutual trust.

Candidate debates fit this definition. The presumed effect or consequences are that the electorate will learn something about the candidates and then vote for one of the candidates,

for example as their representative in the United States Senate. Moreover, the style of the debate interactions is recognizably a formal setting of opposition between the candidates rather than interactions in a private setting where mutual trust or cooperation prevails.

The debates also have an elaborated code; the participants discourse is oriented to the common values of a group and the social world. Debates also have elements of teleological action oriented toward realizing specific goals), and dramaturgical action, which for Habermas (1984) means that the speakers express their subjective state and attitudes. What debates lack is communicative action, a category of public discourse action that Habermas defines as an "ideal speech situation" of interaction among people which provides them with ways to understand their shared situation and their respective plans of action so that they can come to an agreement on how to coordinate these behaviors.

Much of the research mentioned above focuses on the teleological and dramaturgical action of candidates, but skims over how the language use is normative—the norms of open communication are inherent in the language (Habermas 1984). In addition, CDA researchers claim that when speakers use language, they present and reflect the norms, values, issues, behavior, and language style expected of members of particular group in particular situations. Assuming that this is true, the candidates' debate discourse presents the norms of language use expected of political candidates and also reflects their own values and views, and of other members of the group of political candidates and American legislators.

One significant factor which has yet to be discussed is that participating in the public sphere is gendered. That is, the public sphere is normally associated with the male gender. Two factors, according to McElhinny (1995:221), contribute to the perception of a gendered environment: the "presence or even predominance" of one gender, and "cultural norms and interpretations of gender that dictate who is best suited for different sorts of employment" such as participation in a public discussion of political issue or serving as a legislator. As mentioned

above, until recent years, few women have been political candidates and even fewer have served as United States Senators.

The preponderance of dichotomous categories used thus far to describe American politics—highly funded and poorly funded candidates, incumbent candidates and challenger candidates, male candidates and female candidates, and even public discourse and private discourse—parallels a view of the world described by Derrida (1987) that concepts in human thought have traditionally been defined in terms of their opposites. An examination of the ancient philosophies of Plato<sup>2</sup> and Aristotle<sup>3</sup> and through to the modern philosophies of Kant, Locke, and Hobbes, the philosophies that have influenced many of the beliefs of Western civilization, often describe their conception of the world in such binary opposites. From the perspective that the world is bisected, concepts, governments, people and their characteristics are classified as positive or negative, public and private, rational or emotional, active or passive, male or female, and so on. This structure is hierarchical as well as dichotomous, and places the first term in each pair as the desirable and valued concept (Derrida describes the first term as the privileged one), and the second as less desirable, and of lesser or no value. Moreover, this structure demands that all of the first terms belong together, and all of the second terms belong together. Therefore the public sphere, rationality, and maleness are correlated terms. This line of reasoning, according to Hekman (1990), has influenced American politics in the past, and continues to influence the political environment of the present, particularly in relation to the women's participation in politics. Hekman (1990:35) writes, "since women are not rational, they cannot be allowed to participate in the realm that is the

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<sup>2</sup>Although there are more than 25 of Plato's dialogues which inform Western philosophy; the three which clearly outline political philosophy are *The Republic*, the *Statesman*, and the *Laws*.

<sup>3</sup>The Aristotilian works most relevant in this context are *On Politics*, *The Nichomachean Ethics* and *On Rhetoric*.

highest expression of man's rationality: politics." One might argue that a Derrida constructs an oversimplified explanation of social inequality. His explanation does, however, serve as a caution for those who study language. Researchers can consciously consider what they and the society privilege, what norms are in place to maintain traditional assumptions, and what an analysis of language might reveal about both.

### 3.3 Gender

For much of America's history, the male sphere, the public sphere, and the political sphere were interrelated. In the past few decades, some women have entered the political sphere. They, like all who challenge the society's norms, have encountered difficulties. As more women enter races for high-elective offices, more women participate in nationally televised pre-election debates and face the same expectations for demonstrating their mastery of public, political discourse as their male opponents. But female candidates may face additional challenges their male opponents do not.

#### 3.3.1 Political Parties and Female Candidates

The same factors which influence the electability of male candidates also influence female candidates. However, each factor presents additional, gender-related challenges for women candidates. Numerous scholars have studied a variety of barriers which obstruct women who aspire to high offices ( Burrell 1988; Boneparth 1977; Carroll 1994; Duerst-Lahti and Kely 1995; Jaquette 1974). One of the first barriers women encounter is the political party. Political parties often do not recruit women for high offices (Herrick 1995), and sometimes the party's philosophy does not easily accommodate women (Melich 1998; Welsh 1978). Even though they stress equal treatment for everyone, and point to the nearly equal distribution of men and women party members as evidence of gender equality, most of the people doing the education, consciousness-raising, grass-roots advocacy, and doing other volunteer work are

women (Bookman and Morgan 1988; Fowlkes 1992). The work which is carried out by both women and men, such as contacting voters, distributing literature, and serving as precinct delegates and on county committees, is rarely considered "influential." On the other hand, giving speeches, managing campaigns, and holding higher party offices such as the chair of the county committee or serving as members of state central committees—"key campaign activities"—are mostly performed by men (Jennings and Thomas 1968). These more visible positions provide the individuals with the experience and recognition they can use for later electoral contests. Consequently, the hierarchy within the parties provides opportunities for its male members to advance more easily than it does for its female members.

Although both parties agree that women are an important part of the electorate, both tend to focus more on wooing women voters than they do modifying their platforms or providing high-profile positions to women. A common strategy for both parties is to use the candidates' wives as a way to signal that women are important to them. For example, in 1992, the Republican National Convention profiled Marilyn Quayle, Barbara Bush and Nancy Reagan, women who were political wives, not candidates or officeholders. An indication that the situation might be changing is that at the 1996 convention, two prominent political women were speakers—Elizabeth Dole and Susan Molinari (Freeman 1997).

The political parties have also provided less support for women candidates. When a woman does run for office, she often has difficulty gaining sufficient funds to run a high-office campaign (Hedlund et al. 1979). The principal reason women receive less financial support is that many times the party and constituents do not consider her a viable candidate, even if they agree with her position on the issues (Kelly et al. 1991; Leeper 1991). Women are often the candidates who the party runs against a popular incumbent or in a district or state which strongly favors the other party (Thomas and Wilcox 1998); in effect, they are the candidates who are sacrificed.

### 3.3.2 Stereotypes and Female Candidates

Gender stereotyping has been considered an advantage and a disadvantage for female candidates. One often-mentioned assumption is that voters consider female candidates kind, gentle, considerate and compassionate, and male candidates as aggressive, confrontational, strong, and tough (Best and Williams 1990; Darcy and Schramm 1977). In addition, Americans tend to have an expectation of roles which is stereotypical. Numerous researchers have looked at the social framework and how peoples' behavior is shaped by their belief that males have a more highly valued status (Bostrum and Kemp 1969, Costantini 1990; Gordon 1997).

The stereotypical feminine characteristics are associated with one of the four dimensions of an ideal political leader—empathy. According to some studies, however, empathy is the least important dimension for voters (Cantor and Bernay 1992; Miller et al. 1986). The most important dimension, leadership, is typically associated with the stereotypical masculine characteristics (Butterfield and Powell 1981). Research from two decades ago found that voters prefer candidates who are dynamic and have strong leadership skills for high-level offices, and candidates who are empathetic for local offices such as town councils (Adams 1975), but more recent research finds that even though respondents relied on stereotypical characteristics to some degree, the respondents were equally likely to prefer female candidates for governor (Leeper 1991). Leeper's study suggests that voters' perceptions about what characteristics are important for leaders may be changing. Huddy and Terkildsen (1993: 504) offer an alternative explanation for the why voters' responses have changed; they claim that female politicians have developed a campaign message to "convince voters that, unlike women in general, they possess desirable masculine political strengths."

Previous research has found that voters perceive female candidates as proficient in issues concerning social welfare, education, racial problems and health care, and male candidates as proficient in issues concerning the economy, crime, foreign affairs, and the military (Huddy



1994; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Matland 1994; Mueller 1986). Huddy and Terkildsen (1993:511) conclude that male Senate candidates have an electoral advantage because "security issues" are more salient issues for high-level offices than "compassion issues." Kahn's (1994:163) research assigns an advantage to male Senate candidates because of voters' perceptions that male candidates are "stronger leaders and more knowledgeable." The media tend to follow the same pattern as voters. Kahn (1994) reports that the media often give female candidates more coverage if the issues are about education, the environment, or health care (i.e., the social issues) but less coverage if the issues are about the economy or foreign policy. Since U.S. Senators deal with foreign policy and national security issues, female senate candidates often receive less coverage than the male candidates.

Recent research, however, finds that social issues were more important to women voters as a criterion for evaluating both male and female Senate candidates. Koch (1999:93), for example, concludes that "a candidate able to manage social issues is likely to gain electoral support from women but not lose support at a proportionate rate from men." Relatedly, a candidate whose major asset is his or her capacity to deal with security issues but is seen as weak in dealing with social issues risks "losing support from women and cannot compensate for this loss by gaining support from male voters."

One advantage of stereotypes that is mentioned in press reports is that female candidates are perceived as more moral. As Smolowe (1992:35) writes in an article in *Time*, "Public-opinion surveys indicate that when women politicians are compared with their male colleagues, they are perceived to be more honest, caring, and moral; and more likely to engage citizens in the political process." Smolowe's comment echoes Gilligan's (1982) "care perspective" of women's moral orientation (as opposed to men's "justice" perspective), and Mill's late 19th century argument that women are more moral than men. Female candidates can take a stronger moral position and challenge their male opponents because voters expect them to be moral.

The media tends to reinforce stereotypical perceptions of female candidates. Media coverage often focuses on women candidates' appearance, domestic skills, or marital status, rather than their stand on the issues (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Sigleman et al. 1987). Participants at a round table organized by the IPU in 1997 identified several areas of media bias—women politicians receive less coverage, are interviewed less often, and are presented in ways that perpetuate gender stereotypes. Therefore, women politicians who want to interact more successfully with the media “have to be more assertive in presenting their ideas and achievements” by learning how to conduct press conferences, prepare press kits, and making speeches.

### 3.3.3 Campaigns and Female Candidates

In recent years, more women have run for office than at any time in the past. Female candidates not only must manage their image and issues, but also deal with gender stereotypes. In their campaigns, women have to deal with stereotypical prejudices disguised as questions: Are you too soft to deal with hard issues like crime or war? Can we trust you with the national checkbook? Will your family responsibilities keep you from giving your attention to the job? The same stereotypes often appear in subtle, and some not-so-subtle, campaign ads and sound bites crafted by male opponents (Witt et al. 1994). For example, in 1990, Dianne Feinstein (D) ran against Pete Wilson (R) for the office of California governor and lost. Wilson's ads suggested that Feinstein was a Pacific Heights matron who was not decisive enough to be governor. Similarly, in 1992, Lynn Yeakel (D) ran against incumbent Senator Arlen Specter (R). Yeakel's paid advertisements criticized Specter for his role in the Thomas/Hill hearings. Yeakel's standings in the polls rose dramatically, but fell again when Specter's ads presented Yeakel as a dependent woman who would dutifully vote as her father did against civil rights legislation, obediently follow her minister who had made negative remarks against Israel, and listen to her husband. Specter surrounded Yeakel with the traditional situation of coverture,

(i.e., women are legally subordinate or "covered" by their father, brother, husband or other responsible male) and won the election.

Although Specter's campaign of stereotyping his opponent was successful, he had another strong advantage; he was the incumbent candidate. Perhaps the greatest challenge female candidates face is a race against an incumbent. All challengers, female and male, tend to lose. However, most incumbents are male. For example, in the 1998 United States Senate, 91 of the 100 seats were held by men, and the majority of them sought or will seek re-election. Women's chances to win in contested races are slim. Their chances to win are better in open races. Thomas (1998) found that in open races in the past decade, female and male candidates won nearly equally. Anderson and Thorson's (1984) early study of lower office races found that female candidates tended to have a better chance to win in open seat races because they are not running against an incumbent

An EMILY's List report makes clear some of the challenges and advantages that female candidates have during their campaign that are specifically gender related. Women have fewer "strategic options," their mistakes are more visible, and their messages are filtered through the lens of gender stereotypes. One strategic option female candidates must employ carefully is attack ads. Even though both men and women candidates can attack their opponents, men are rated positively, and women are rated negatively when they do so (Kolb 1997). Another strategic option women do not usually have available is to point to their military record as evidence of their "toughness" (Witt et al. 1994). Some female candidates have redefined "toughness" through personal adversity stories. Ann Richards, for example, redefined toughness as overcoming alcoholism, and Patty Murray established her toughness with a story of nursing her elderly parents. Some indication that this strategy is effective is found in Blankenship and Robson's (1995) study which shows that this "feminine style" of storytelling has been also successfully used by male candidates as well, notably Reagan and Clinton.

Another strategy that female candidates employ is to claim to be like the average voter. The advantage is that if the candidate is average, she is not a millionaire or one of the back room good-old-boy members, but someone who is like the voters. The disadvantage is that many people do not want an "average" representative, so the candidates also point out their extraordinary qualities (Witt et al. 1997). Each of these strategies, even when effective, takes time and money away from the candidates developing their agenda and their stand on the issues. Moreover, if the candidates make any mistakes, they are highly visible because they are doing something different (Kanter 1977).

#### 3.3.4 Debates and Female Candidates

Another challenge is the debate itself. Miller et al. (1986) claim that debate organizers tend to set up and promote debates as agonistic contests in which the candidates are expected to try to win at the other's expense, and the candidates are evaluated based on their competitive performance. The female candidate begins with a perceived, if not actual, disadvantage. Sidanius et al. (1994:998) found that people assume that "men have higher social dominance" than women, regardless of the cultural, demographic or situational factors that could be measured. This finding parallels Leet-Pellegrini's (1980) study of perceptions of conversational dominance in which male experts were perceived as more dominant than female experts. This study suggests that when candidates claim expertise and knowledge, and a male and female make similar claims, the male candidate's claim will be perceived as more true.

Politics, as well as business, law enforcement, the media, and academics are a few of the professions which afford their members a place within the broader power structure of American society. However, being a member, according to Bourdieu (1991) and Fairclough (1989), means the individuals know how to use language to achieve their "personal and social goals" (Fairclough 1989: ix). In short, leaders establish and maintain their power through language. In a candidate debate, the candidates use language to emphasize the ways in which

they differ from their opponent and draw attention to their own strengths and their opponent's weaknesses. The tenor of the debate can be extremely contentious.

Female candidates may find the debate tenor uncomfortable or hard to do. Some researchers find that women tend to favor a cooperative and collaborative style rather than a dominant style; that is, women tend to favor language and behavior that has traditionally been considered feminine (Kahn 1992; Kathlene 1989; Tannen 1994). If a female candidate favors a cooperative style, she may find that an adversarial debate puts her at a disadvantage (Nelson 1998). Moreover, women who are socialized by traditional feminine gender-role norms to be considerate of other people's feelings may find political conflict unpleasant (Belenky et al. 1986; Bennett and Bennet 1989). In addition, women who have been taught to "cajole and please" may make promises which are hard to keep or may "fail to take a hard line" when the situation warrants such an approach (Cook 1997:6). Agreeable behavior in an adversarial environment, such as a candidate debate in which an opponent is combative, would be considered a dispreferred response (Pomerantz 1984).

On the other hand, giving the preferred response, arguing or disagreeing with an opponent, is not necessarily advantageous for female candidates. At first glance, several studies suggest that verbal attacks are, in the voters' opinion, a crucial part of debates. These studies show that contrary to popular claims that voters disapprove of candidates attacking one another, voters tend to choose candidates who are aggressive and attack their opponents (Ansolabehar and Iyengar 1991; Pfau and Kang 1991). However, in these studies, all of the candidates are male. A study which considers verbal attack and also considers the gender of the candidate found that if a woman chooses to attack her opponent, she alienates voters (Hicheon & Chang 1995), and is evaluated negatively. Moreover, women candidates who are working within the status quo are often criticized for being "accommodationist" by other women (Condit 1993:220) and lose those voters' support as well.

When female candidates are in a debate, they also have to consider how to answer the questions asked. Speakers have facts, statistics, abstract ideals, and personal examples to draw upon to answer. In a study of work-related evaluations, the researchers found that males tend to give more "ideational" evaluations which suggest that the speaker is an expert, whereas females give "interpersonal" evaluations which connect people and establish a sense of equality (Johnson and Roen 1992). As pointed out earlier, ideational or abstract answers provide the candidates with a defense against attack questions, and the added benefit of seeming to be an expert might further argue that ideational responses are better. However, at least one study suggests that the interpersonal style may give an advantage to female candidates. Winston (1999:49) argues that candidates "who can make the case for or against a particular policy proposal in the way that best resonates with most people's personal values" is more successful than those who make the case from an ideological perspective.

This research suggests that the linguistic demands throughout the campaign and in the debate may be contradictory for women candidates; women candidates must talk with authority while also talking like a woman (Mumby & Stohl 1998). Lakoff (1975) calls this contradiction a double bind (cf., Jamieson 1995). If a woman chooses stylistic features consistent with the traditional social expectations of female speakers, she is not taken seriously, but if she chooses language features which are associated with male speakers, thereby gaining the authority and competence associated with male speech features, she is considered unfeminine. As Lakoff (1975:61) puts it, "a woman is damned if she does and damned if she doesn't." In sum, the social norms for politicians in general and those specifically for candidates often contradict the norms for women, yet women candidates have had to meet the demands of both sets of norms.

#### 3.4 Communication Style and Gender

Much of the research about communication styles can be traced to the early studies of language variation by Labov (1966) and Trudgill (1972). Both studies indicated that females

used a more standard style of English than the males of the same age, race, and socioeconomic level. The early questions that came out of these studies, and to some extent continue today, have led researchers to look to people's nature, their socialization and the social situation for answers.

Much of the early research sought explanation in terms of people's nature. The differences between men's and women's language usage were claimed to be part of the nature of being women or men, and their natures are essentially, (i.e., biologically) different. In addition, this concept maintains the dichotomous and hierarchial world view common in Western societies, and classifies maleness, and male language as the norm, and femaleness and female language as different, meaning different from male. According to Coates (1998:413), these assumptions fomented a negative or "deficit" portrayal of women's language; men's language was the norm and women's the deviant, and therefore "weak, unassertive, [and] tentative." and women were seen as victims.

Alternatively, a number of studies have understood the differences between female and male styles of communicating as a product of the speakers' socialization. Although criticized as anecdotal, and often cited as a foil for current research, Lakoff's 1975 book is the first which considers what is happening in the language that signals difference between men's and women's language. She observes, as do others, that girls are taught, encouraged, and rewarded for "elegant" or standard language use (Goodwin 1980; Cameron 1992). They are rewarded for "talking like a lady," and penalized when they do not (Lakoff 1975). Conversely, boys are, if not directly taught, at least permitted to talk "rough," (Lakoff 1975:6). Women's language features, according to Lakoff, include lexical choices for making fine color distinctions, such as using "mauve" or "lavender" (9), for expressing emotion with "weaker" expletives, such as "oh dear," (10), and for describing items with "empty" adjectives such as "terrific" or "cute" (13). In addition, Lakoff identifies language features which indicate uncertainty such as using

tag questions, question intonation for declaratives, and hedges such as "kinda"(53) as women's language features.

A number of subsequent studies have looked at some of the features Lakoff mentioned and found differences between male and female language styles. Fishman (1978) looked at the number of questions asked by women in married couples during the couples' interactions and found that the questions were part of a pattern that the women used to maintain social interactions and facilitate the flow of conversation. Zimmerman and West (1975) looked at the numbers of interruptions and overlaps that occurred in mixed sex conversations, and found men interrupted women. They concluded that men had the "right" to interrupt because of the difference in power between men and women.

However, Maltz and Borker (1983:420) argue that explanations which focus on gender differences in power, such as those given by Fishman (1978) and Zimmerman and West (1975), "do not provide a means for explaining why these specific features appear as opposed to any number of others...[and they] do not really tell us why and how these specific interactional phenomena are linked to the general fact that men dominate within our social system." Maltz and Borker conclude that men and women have different conversational rules which they are socialized in childhood to follow. Recent work has hypothesized that miscommunication occurs because men and women see the world differently (Tannen 1990, 1998). However, Coates (1998:415) points out that this difference model oversimplifies the situation and ignores the fact that "men's ways of talking have high status in society while women's talk is denigrated."

Although people's socialization accounts for some observed differences, it does not fully explain the differences in language styles either. Another perspective is that the power structure within the society is reflected in speakers' language features, and stylistic differences are associated with institutional power or lack thereof. In her recent study, Diamond (1996) defines



power within particular social networks as belonging to the individuals who not only have the “ability to coerce someone or to get them to do something against their will, but...[also have] the ability to interpret events and reality, and have this interpretation accepted by others” (13). Gal (1995) offers a similar argument when she says that “the strongest form of power may well be the ability to define social reality, to impose vision to the world. And such visions are inscribed in language” (178). The visions are enacted through the speaker’s interactions with others.

Numerous studies have explored the relationship between power and language. One group of studies has considered this relationship and business leadership. Buzzanell (1996) reports that business leadership is more than handling crisis situations well. Successful leaders are those who have the ability to create “meaning in a world in which there are few ‘facts’ and in which ‘leadership’ is realized in the everyday and routine aspects of the job (xiii).” Buzzanell (1996) observes a similar connection between business leadership and managers’ style of communication with others. She claims that “leaders create visions through consistent, effective and efficient communication” (245). In most situations, regardless of the setting and the participants, conflicting visions of the future or definitions of reality are resolved in favor of the most powerful, whose definition of “what is possible, what is right, and what is real” (Fishman 1983: 89) prevails.

Among all the factors which contribute to the identification of who in a society has power, one often-studied and well-documented factor is gender. Eagly (1994:518) points out that women’s social roles and behavior are often constrained by the “social context” and by “men’s more dominant social position.” Lott (1997:280) makes the same claim, though she reverses the order and assigns the cause of gender identification to an unequal power distribution between women and men; she writes, “gender is identified, first, by differential power and second, is associated with prescribed roles.”

Early research identified this differential of power between women and men in situational contexts ranging from the private sphere, such as domestic settings, (Fishman 1983) and informal conversations (Zimmerman and West 1975), to the public sphere, such as faculty meetings (Eakins and Eakins 1978) and the courtroom (O'Barr and Atkins 1980). O'Barr and Atkins (1980) looked at the style of speech of courtroom witnesses and noted that the features which were associated with a feminine style of speaking were used by those without power, and those features associated with a masculine style of speaking were used by those who had power. The amount of politeness (Brown 1980) and the amount and kind of hedges and justifiers (Bradac and Mulac 1984) speakers used depended on the power each of the interlocutors brought to the interaction. In each study, these researchers noted gender differences in discourse style which could be attributed to the amount of power the interlocutors had.

More recent studies, which are equally diverse in the situational contexts examined, provide further refinements in research methods and definitions and come to similar conclusions as the earlier studies. For example, Wagner and Berger (1997:23) examined groups working on particular tasks and found that women who were in "task leadership positions often [had] difficulty wielding directive power over others in the groups they [led], despite the high rank they [had] achieved." Similarly, West (1998a) found that among physicians, men and women exercise their authority differently, with men issuing directives and women offering suggestions to their patients. Moreover, the gender of the patients influenced how much respect the physician was accorded. In her study of patients' interruptions of physicians, West (1998b) noted female physicians were interrupted more often than male physicians, and the patients who were interrupting were males. West notes that women did not receive the automatic authority associated with their position. She suggests that "gender can have primacy over status where women physicians are concerned" (409). We can

infer from these studies that female politicians may encounter some of the same difficulties that female physicians have.

### 3.4.1 Features of Linguistic Style

In addition to studies which consider gender differences in language use, numerous studies have looked at and attempted to explain stylistic variations. Language differences among speakers have been shown to be associated with the speakers' age, social class, socio-economic group, and ethnicity.

Two research projects which have looked at the ways in which speakers modify their language in different situations are Giles (1977) and Johnson and Bean (1997). Giles (1977) noted that most speakers choose to match their language style to their interlocutors' style if the speakers belong to the same group. In other words, the linguistic styles converged. Conversely, speakers choose to emphasize the difference in their discourse when speaking with people from another group, especially if they want to disassociate themselves from that group, so the linguistic styles diverged. Giles' explanation is called Accommodation Theory. Bilous and Krauss (1988) look at domination and accommodation in same and mixed-sex dyads, and find that speakers converge and diverge based on the amount of authority each participant had and the gender of the participants. Another study, Johnson and Bean (1997), also adopts Giles' Accommodation Theory to explore how people's language choices are used not only to express their identification with or rejection of particular social groups, but also to express their individuality. They analyze the linguistic style of Barbara Jordon (D), Representative from Texas 1973-1978, and Molly Ivins, a journalist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. They find that Ivins uses "a standard eloquent style that draws attention to itself," and she both exaggerates the traditional female Southern speech style and mixes it with speech features "associated with Western and male ways of talking" (235). Jordon draws on characteristics of African-American public speech, but rejects adapting to her audience's language style. The

authors claim that speech addressed to a wider audience than family and friends, that is, public, or performance speech, provides “evidence about the full range of a speaker’s linguistic competence” (241). Their research suggests that a study of politicians’ public performances and speeches might reveal ways in which the speakers’ linguistic styles converge with some politicians and diverge from other politicians, depending on their ideological bases, party affiliation, or gender.

Speakers make other choices during their interactions with others. One of these choices is the amount of politeness that they include in their discourse. Brown (1980) and Brown and Levinson (1987) develop a formal model of politeness informed by Durkheim’s (1915) concept of examining the function of the parts of a society (for Durkheim, the central societal function is the integration of the parts), and in particular his concept of positive and negative rites, and Goffman’s (1967) notion of the face needs of individuals. Brown (1980) defines politeness as rational, strategic, face-oriented behavior. She asserts that people are more polite to those socially superior to themselves, to those not known to them, and to those they impose upon. In short, the politeness strategies “are tied to relationships” (117). When speakers are polite, they are addressing their own and their interlocutor’s face needs: positive face, which is the need to be liked and respected, and negative face, which is the need to be free from imposition. A variety of linguistic features have been associated with politeness, or the lack of politeness, including interruptions (Beattie 1982; Zimmerman and West 1975), hedges and intensifiers (Bradac and Mulac 1984; Holmes 1990; O’Barr and Atkins 1980;), compliments (Johnson and Roen 1992; Wolfson 1983), and apologies (Holmes 1995). Although the most common relationship studied in much of this research is gender-based, the same concepts can be examined in many other interactional relationships such as between speakers of different ages, speakers within or across different socio-economic groups, or participants in political debates.

Candidates not only have alignment and politeness issues as they relate to their opponents, the questioners and the moderator, they also have the studio audience and even the viewing audience to consider. Hutchby (1997) examines how candidates manage their talk and build relationships. He finds that “linguistic resources are used to mediate, and at the same time construct, the relationship between co-present panel members and the studio audience” (163). The principal language feature of Hutchby’s study is the speakers’ use of recompletion, repeating or paraphrasing previous comments which were well-received by the audience, to build alignment with the audience.

Another feature of discourse which has been studied is the ways in which speakers develop, follow, or change topics during the course of an interaction. According to Maltz and Borker (1983), men’s and women’s approach to topic flow and shift differ. Women develop topics progressively and shift topics gradually. Men define the topic narrowly and shift topics abruptly. When speakers shift topics, they may employ a strategy which Diamond (1997) studied—repackaging. Diamond (1996:73) claims that a speaker who has power “‘packages’ the new topic...as the old one” so that the initiator of the topic is compelled to agree. A few of the strategies for topic repackaging include using humor, storytelling, attributing the idea to someone else even though it is the speaker’s own idea, and using second person pronouns, for example, “You can see the course we need to take.” In their debates, candidates are given a topic to discuss, but may prefer to talk about only a part of the topic, or another topic all together. Repackaging a topic is a strategy which allows them shift to their own topic without seeming to do so.

Candidates also exploit linguistic strategies at the sentence level to achieve their communicative goals. Leon (1993) claims that “comprehensibility, human interest, specificity, and powerful language are linked to receivers’ impressions of credibility” (89). She measured comprehensibility by looking at sentence complexity, on the assumption that less complex

sentences were more comprehensible to listeners. She also considered that a high frequency of familiar words would increase speakers' credibility. In addition, she looked at intensifiers, hedges, and hesitations for each speaker, and concluded that speakers with fewer of these features had a more powerful language style, and consequently a more credible style. Student evaluators who participated in her study assigned higher credibility to speakers who provided concrete, descriptions, and included frequent temporal and spatial cues had higher credibility.

The smaller units Leon (1993) looks at are the word choices that speakers make. She finds that, for example, intensifiers, such as "really" or "truly," are commonly present in political persuasion (also see Brown 1983) and are used to suggest the speaker's certainty. Conversely, hedges, such as "possibly" or "maybe," are used to suggest the speaker's uncertainty (e.g., Holmes 1990). Other types of word choices also provide listeners with insight into the speakers' self definition. For example, Warshay (1972) claims that direct action verbs, verbs of doing something, particularly when these verbs are accompanied by a first person pronoun (i.e., *I*), suggests that the speaker has mastery over the environment. Fiedler (1993) argues that speakers' word choices, such as adjectives which assign generalized attributes, allow speakers to make evaluative comments, and even level insults without providing evidence.

### 3.5 CDA Research

CDA research has most often been used to examine social issues such as racism (Essed 1997 Hodson 1998, van Dijk 1997) stereotyping (Karim 1997), and inequality (Wodak 1997). Furthermore, CDA researchers have examined numerous features, such as the use of pronouns and nominalized verbs, as found in the spoken and written texts. The settings for such research include analyses of conversation in educational settings (Cristie 1991), texts used in junior high school (Martin 1991), and corporate communication (Steuten 1997). Cristie (1991) examines the activity sequences that serve institutional purposes, and considers the tenor of student-

teacher interactions in terms of the asymmetrical power relationship. Cristie (1991) finds that shifts in transitivity indicate a shift in the speaker's perspective. For example, she found that teachers' signaled their intention to move from one task to another through their verb types. Teachers signaled "task orientation" (the teacher provides students with direction and instruction) by using behavioral process verbs, and signaled a shift to "task specification" in which the teacher gives directions to students as they work on a task with material process verbs. Martin's (1991) research on educational texts considers how nominalizations are used in science and history texts. He finds that nominalizations in these texts function "to accumulate meanings by subsuming processes as technical terms, or to bury reasoning" (332). Steuten (1997) finds that using a functional grammar is useful for distinguishing the elements which are important in business communication, but because interactions are not single sentences or clauses, an integrated model of functional grammar and speech acts (Searle 1969) is necessary for higher functional level as well as grammatical structure analysis.

A large body of CDA research is also found in media studies. Research of media discourse usually examines reports of actions and events, and analyzes the involvement of actors, specifically their perspective and responsibility as it is presented in the discourse. Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew (1979) look at media accounts of "riots." Their research is based on an analysis of the transitivity of verbs. They find that some reporters de-emphasize the role and responsibility of the police by using passive constructions and nominalizations which allow the writer to omit the agent. Conversely, reporters represent people other than the police, government or authority figures, as the agents of violence and destruction and the ones responsible for negative actions.

Research on the media sometimes relies on terms and concepts developed by Labov (1972) in his investigation of Black English vernacular. Labov interviewed adolescent boys about fights they had had and then analyzed their narratives. Labov concluded that narratives

have six stages; the most interesting stage, from the point of view of analysis, is the evaluation stage, in which the speaker offers a judgment of the worth or value of the story. Researchers of media discourse often examine the evaluation stage of news reports because it contains explicit political information. Another feature often examined in media analysis is vagueness. Van Dijk (1988a; 1988b), for example, shows that vagueness, (meaning that the writer provides insufficient information for the reader), is a way for reporters to covertly denigrate minorities or imply that dire consequences will result from a particular action. He also finds that writers' lexical choices create vagueness and reflect the political position of the writer. For example, various news articles described one individual variously as "*an ally of Israel*" or "*a spy*" or as being "*identified with Israel*" (van Dijk 1988a:109). Each of these descriptions reflects a different political position. The word, *spy* carries a more pejorative connotation than the other two descriptions and suggests a more critical position. Subsequent studies of media reports (Fowler 1987; Hodge and Kress 1993; van Dijk 1991) have had similar findings.

Other research which uses a critical discourse approach is Wodak (1991, 1996; 1997; Wodak et al. 1990), who analyzes anti-Semitic instances in numerous genres, including talk-shows, political discourse, press reports and gender representations. These studies focus on the various functions of *we* in discourse, and find that speakers use *we* when justifying their own actions, blaming victims, trivializing others, making allusions of wrong-doing, and constructing others as enemies.

Studies of political discourse have often looked at single words (such as Ronald Reagan's use of mythic themes (Edelman 1977)), words associated with concepts that are used by political leaders, (such as the security metaphors in the nuclear arms race (Shapiro 1984; Connolly 1983)), or political rhetoric used by presidential candidates (Nimmo and Sanders 1981). Several other studies have looked closely at metaphors that politicians use. Chilton 1988 look at the metaphors used during the cold war, such as metaphors used to indicate



security and home. Other researcher who have looked at metaphors includes Chilton and Lakoff 1995 and their study of war metaphors used in foreign policy, and Schäffner and Wenden 1995 findings of war metaphors in political conflict.

CDA based research is also found in studies of political language and media language. For example, Geis's (1987) research concerns the language used in presidential press conferences and by the press. He studies how the candidates' speeches are reported and how reporters' word choices indicate the bias of news reports. Wilson (1990) examines the ways in which politicians use questions, evade answers to question, and use shifting referents with the pronoun *we* so that some groups are included and others are excluded.

Individual speakers are examined in Chilton and Schäffner's (1997) exploration of some of the linguistic resources speakers employ when giving political addresses. Their principal text is a speech by British Prime Minister John Major; they examine Major's use of pronouns, responses to criticism, and the speaker's mechanisms for positioning himself in relation to his audience.

### 3.6 Summary

This chapter has summarized previous research related to political debates, incumbency, political parties, gender, and language features which are relevant to political candidates' discourse. What little research has been done on political discourse has focused on a single discourse feature, and most often the individuals studied are presidential candidates. To date, no research has looked at candidate's discourse in their pre-election debates.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA AND METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

Candidates produce a vast amount of discourse during an election season which could be useful data for answering the research questions. Even when a small sample is chosen, such as a sample of the candidate debates, the data must be selected, arranged, and marked in a way that provides the researcher with a way to look at particular details and analyze them. This chapter presents the methods I employed to select, code, and analyze the data.

This chapter comprises four major sections which describe the selection of the data for this study and the methods used to analyze the data. Section 4.1 sets forth the criteria for selecting 10 debates from the 23 televised senatorial candidate debates held during the 1998 elections. This section also presents an explanation for selecting the individuals whose discourse is studied. Section 4.2 outlines method by which the discourse features are identified, coded, and analyzed. Section 4.3 lays out how the discourse analysis was conducted and outlines the major statistical methods used.

#### 4.1 Data Selection

As noted in chapter 3, much of the research on American political debate focuses on candidates for the highest-level elected offices, notably the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. These high-profile candidates offer scholars a rich resource for examining the various discourse strategies candidates employ to establish or confirm their leadership abilities. However, the number of people who achieve these high-level positions is limited. A more populous body of candidates who offer an equally rich resource for studying American political

discourse are the candidates for the national legislature, the House of Representatives and the United States Senate. Of these two bodies, the Senate has the higher prestige because senators hold their office for six years, a longer term than for either representatives or presidents. In addition, although representatives and senators, at least at present, have no term limits, senators tend to be in the public eye for longer, generally gain greater national recognition, and may have an enduring influence on the government. For many voters, senators are as important as the president, because senators are the ones who actually legislate, assure that the state gets a fair share of federal money, and protect the state from national infringement. In short, United States Senators represent a population of high-profile, high-prestige individuals. Their public discourse is the principal medium by which their power is defined; their public discourse establishes and maintains social and political norms (Foucault 1980). Consequently, the discourse of candidates who seek seats on the United States Senate warrants attention.

#### 4.1.1 The 1998 Elections

The data for this study are 10 senatorial debates which took place during the 1998 election. The data selection involved multiple steps. The first consideration was which discourse situation, among the many components of senatorial campaigns, would provide a sufficiently similar data set for comparison of the candidates' discourse. I chose the candidates' pre-election debates because in this venue candidates share the same time constraints, the presence of an audience, and a set of questions. This venue meets the criterion of a "level playing field" for candidates to present what Habermas (1973:112) would call their "normative" descriptions of reality and the country's future, and they have a similar goal of persuading voters that their description is legitimate. However, these descriptions are often time-specific; the views advanced by candidates in one year's election may differ significantly from another year's election. Therefore, a meaningful comparison of candidates' discourse

would require that the sample come from the same election year. The most recent past election for which data are available is the 1998 election.

Two additional criteria were used to select the initial data sample: the debates had to be televised, and they had to occur in the three weeks prior to the election. An assumption which influenced my sample selection is that political discourse, and specifically the candidates' debate discourse, is limited and shaped by established norms (Bourdieu 1991), and one of the factors which limits and shapes candidate debates is the medium in which the debate is presented. Therefore, I chose to include only those debates which were televised, so that all of the candidates were equally constrained by the demands and expectations of a televised performance. During the 1998 elections, 34 of the 100 senate seats were up for election, but only 23 of these races had nationally televised debates.<sup>4</sup> In states where candidates debated more than once, I selected the debate which occurred nearest to election day.

#### 4.1.2 Criteria for Debate and Candidate Selection

Several steps were taken to select the sample. First, by examining previous research on elections, I identified three variables which political scientists have defined as most influential in political campaigns: political party, incumbency, and gender. These three variables are the independent variables in my study. I designed a stratified grid with these variables and placed each of the candidates of the 23 televised senatorial debates in one of the cells of the grid (see appendix B). This process produced a table in which each debate filled two cells, one cell for each major party candidate in the debate.

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<sup>4</sup>The Vermont Senate debate between Fred Tuttle (R) and Patrick Leahy was originally scheduled as a radio broadcast. The debate was recorded on video tape and then aired on television. However, the debate format and the candidates' clothing and behavior and the format of the debate suggest that all of the participants considered the event a radio broadcast. Therefore, this debate was excluded from the study.

This study's data is restricted to include major party candidates and to exclude third-party candidates. In general, third-party candidates acquire fewer funds, commonly have difficulty establishing wide-spread public support, and gain less recognition and media attention. Debate organizers rarely invite or include third-party candidates,<sup>5</sup> justifying their decision by claiming that the purpose of the debate is to provide the electorate an opportunity to hear "the individuals likely to win the election, and not to 'introduce' the minor candidates" (Report 1995). In contested races, even though several candidates ran for each Senate seat in 1998, only the incumbent and the challenger from the opposing party participated in the televised debate. However, in the open races, three of the five had one of the third-party candidates participating. Each third-party candidate who participated in the televised debates represented a different political party (table 1).

Table 1. Third Party Candidates in the 1998 Open Races Sample

State	3rd Party Candidate	Political Party
Arkansas	Charlie Heffley	Reform Party
Idaho	George Mansfield	Natural Law Party
Indiana	Rebecca Sink-Burris	Libertarian Party

Since the sample was drawn from the population of televised debates, the majority of the participants in contested races were major party candidates. Moreover, even though third-party candidates participated in open-race debates, no two had the same political affiliation. Consequently, comparisons of language features which might be associated with political party would have had to be made from a sample of one, a sample too small to permit any conclusions to be drawn.

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<sup>5</sup>The senate debates which had third party candidates participants were Alaska, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, and Kansas.

The next classification step was to separate the contested and the open races. A contested race is one between a current officeholder, that is, an incumbent, and a challenger, and an open race is one in which the current officeholder is not running for re-election. In an open race, all of the candidates are classified as challengers. Open and contested races were separated, because incumbents in contested races for high-elected offices tend to win, but each challenger in an open seat race has nearly an equal chance to win.<sup>6</sup>

The sample of four open-seat debates comes from the five held in the 1998 Senate elections. Since the candidates in two debates,<sup>7</sup> those in Kentucky and Idaho, filled the same cells of a winning male Republican and a losing male Democrat, one debate was selected for the sample. One winning and one losing female candidate filled the cells for Democrats, but because no Republican females were candidates in open seat races, these cells are empty. The sample includes four Democrat and four Republican candidates, four winning and four losing candidates, and two female and six male candidates. Comparisons of the language features, that is, the dependent variables (outlined in this chapter, section 4.3), are thus possible between female and male Democrats, and between male Democrats and male Republicans. Table 2 shows the state and names of the major-party candidates in the four open seat races who were selected for this study.

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<sup>6</sup>Two important considerations are omitted from the claim that open seat challengers have an equal chance to win. First, if the senator who is leaving office is favored, the candidate from the same party has an advantage. Second, states are often classified by their overall political party affiliations, usually based on the dominate political affiliation of the state house and senate. This tendency of states to lean toward a particular party also implies an advantage to the candidate from that party.

<sup>7</sup>Kentucky's candidates are Bunning (R) and Baesler (D). Idaho's candidates are Crapo (R) and Mauk (D).

Table 2. Open-Seat Senate Candidates in the 1998 Senate Election

		State	Democrat	State	Republican
Female	win	AZ	Blanche Lincoln	...	.....
	lose	OH	Mary Boyle	...	.....
Male	win	IN	Evan Bayh	OH	George Voinovich
				ID	Mike Crapo
	lose	ID	Bill Mauk	AZ	Fay Boozman <sup>8</sup>
				IN	Paul Helmke

The second set of data consists of six debates selected from the 18 contested races which had debates. To have a sample in which the independent variables were taken into account, only candidates from the major parties, Democrats and Republicans, were included, and only debates in which the incumbent candidate won the election were included.<sup>9</sup> The remaining variable, the gender of the incumbents and challengers, was the final selection criterion. (see appendix B). Each cell of participants was subdivided, based on the gender of the participants. When a cell had more than one candidate, each race in the cell was numbered and the selection made by using the random number table. No Republican female incumbents were up for election in 1998, and no challenger female Democrats ran, so these cells are empty. Table 3 shows the selected candidates and their status. For example, Barbara Boxer is an incumbent, Democrat, and female whose opponent, Matt Fong, is a challenger, Republican and male.

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<sup>8</sup>Although the candidate's first name is Fay, the candidate is male.

<sup>9</sup>Two debates were excluded, the New York Senate debate between incumbent Alfonse D'Amato (R), and challenger Charles Schumer (D) and the Illinois Senate debate between Carole Mosley-Braun(D) and Peter Fitzgerald (R). The challenger candidate won the election in these races.

Table 3. Contested-Race Senate Candidates  
(including gender of opponent)

		Democrat	Candidate	Republican	Candidate
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Incumbent	male opponent	Graham	Boxer	Grassley	.....
	female opponent	Dorgan	Murray	Campbell	.....
Challenger	male opponent	Osterberg	Lamm	Crist	Nalewaja
	female opponent	.....	.....	Fong	Smith

This classification and selection process resulted in a data set of six debates with an equal number of Democrat and Republican candidates, an equal number of winning incumbents and losing challenger candidates, and five female and seven male candidates. A summary of these six debates and the candidates for each state is presented in table 4.

Table 4. Sample of 1998 Contested Senate Races

State	Incumbent	Challenger
CA	Barbara Boxer (D)	Matt Fong (R)
CO	Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R)	Dottie Lamm (D)
FL	Bob Graham (D)	Charlie Crist (R)
IA	Charles Grassley (R)	David Osterberg (D)
ND	Byron Dorgan (D)	Donna Naleweja (R)
WA	Patty Murray (D)	Linda Smith (R)

This selection process resulted in a data set of four open races (eight candidates) and the six contested races (twelve candidates), which, when combined, produced a data set of ten debates involving twenty candidates.



### 4.1.3 Collection and Transcription

Each of the selected debates was recorded on audio cassette from "Real Video" archives publicly available at the CSPAN Internet site.<sup>10</sup> Each recording was transcribed into a text file. The entire debate was transcribed, including the speech of the other participants, such as the moderator, panelists, third-party candidates, and audience questioners. Although the candidate's discourse is the focus of this study, the discourse contributed by the other participants is an essential part of the candidates' context; the other participants name the topics and make comments to which candidates respond. Because in some debates speakers were not identified and occasionally speakers overlapped, the preliminary transcript was compared to the video version, and edited as necessary. The transcription scheme used in this study is an attempt to reflect the original spoken text as accurately as possible while also producing a text that is easy to read, and follows a shortened set of conventions (appendix C), following DuBois et al. (1993). Although transcribing speech into writing edits away a lot of features which are part of spoken communication, a suggestion of the speaker's style was maintained by reproducing words using a spelling which suggested the way the words were pronounced rather than through their conventional spelling. To maintain readability, however, individual words are separated by spaces, terminal pitch drop is indicated by a single dot, and the first word following a terminal pitch is capitalized; these conventions parallel writing conventions. Most of the symbols used in the transcription indicate speech management phenomena such as pauses, hesitations, interruptions, false starts, and the like, and interaction information such as sighs and laughter.

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<sup>10</sup>Most of the debates were archived on more than one site. The PBS and Washington Post sites carried most, but not all of the debates used in this study. To control for various producer and director editorial decisions which might affect the transcription or analysis, the source for all of the debates was the CSPAN site.

The transcript for each debate was placed in an Excel spreadsheet file, a format which maintains the integrity of the context and allows multiple codes to be applied to segments of the text. In the spreadsheet, each intonation unit of a debate was numbered, and coded for race type—that is, open or contested race—and information associated with the speaker of the clause, such as gender, political party, and the speaker's role in the debate. All of the clauses in the debate were also assigned a clause number, question number and an issue code. Each clause produced by the candidates in each debate was coded for each of the dependent variables (discussed in section 4.3.2).

#### 4.2 Description of the Data

A necessary precursor to a discussion of the features under examination in this study is an overview of the debates and conditions which affected the amount of talk each candidate contributed. The first consideration is the general format of candidate debates. The format is a manifestation of the norms of the institution of political debates; in the broadest terms, a televised debate format is one in which two or more candidates appear together to answer questions put to them by others. However, the specific details of each debate vary, depending on what the media and the sponsors want, and what the candidates agree to. Some of these factors include the length of the debate, the time allotments for candidate's remarks, the number and kind of participants other than the candidates, the physical layout, and the number of questions each candidate will be asked.

The amount of time that speakers hold the floor and the number of turns that speakers have has been associated with the amount of power that the speakers have (e.g., Edelsky 1981; McLaughlin 1984). Debate organizers implicitly acknowledge that one speaker may gain an advantage, and power, because they control the candidate's speaking time. As table 5 shows, the total length of debates ranged from about 26 minutes to 58 minutes. Although the debates were advertised as half-hour or one-hour programs, most were several minutes shorter because

of advertising, station identification, and so on. We might assume that in a two-candidate debate, the candidates have, on average, about half of the debate time to talk; however, candidates also share the debate floor with the moderator and the questioners. These additional participants often speak for as long as 30 seconds each time they have the floor. When we subtract the time these participants talk, (and in debates with third party candidates, the third party candidate's speaking time are also subtracted), we find that the major-party candidates spoke for less than 30 minutes each; for the longest debate, Florida, this amount was 27 minutes each. In the shorter debates, specifically the Iowa and North Dakota debates, the candidates only spoke for about 10 minutes each.

Table 5. Speaking time for candidates and other participants  
(in minutes and seconds)

State	AR	CA	CO	FL	IA	ID	IN	ND	OH	WA
Candidates	33.55	50.58	40.48	52.49	22.46	38.30	48.09	19.06	51.57	44.56
Others <sup>11</sup>	20.03	06.40	06.30	06.36	03.45	19.30	09.25	06.45	05.45	06.40
Total length	53.58	57.38	47.18	59.25	26.31	58.00	57.34	25.51	57.42	51.36

The total amount of speaking time for each candidate was distributed over several turns. The amount of time per turn was frequently a predetermined length. Table 6 shows the time allotted to each candidate to give opening and closing remarks, answers to questions, and rebuttals. The majority of candidate debates begin with the candidates giving an opening statement. The length of opening comments ranged from 45 seconds

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<sup>11</sup>The longer times for the other participants in the Arkansas, Idaho, and Indiana debates are because of the amount of time the third party candidate spoke. Even though the third-party candidates were allotted the same amount of time per turn as the major party candidates, they usually spoke for considerably less time.

(North Dakota) to 3 minutes (Arkansas). In the three debates which had no formal turn allotted for opening remarks (Idaho, Iowa, and Ohio), the first question of two of them presented the candidates with an opportunity to outline their agenda. For example, the first questioner in the Iowa debate asked the candidates to present their "campaign commercial," which essentially allowed the candidates to give a one minute opening statement. In the Ohio debate, Voinovich and Boyle did not have an opportunity to give an opening statement of any kind.

At the end of each debate, all of the candidates were given some time to make their closing remarks; most of the candidates had 90 seconds or less to do so. Thus the amount of time allotted for the candidates' closing remarks tended to be significantly shorter than that for the opening remarks. In general, the opening and closing comments are prepared in advance, and in at least one debate (Ohio), these remarks were on a Teleprompter,<sup>12</sup> which indicates that the candidates were reading a prepared script.

Most of the candidates were also given a limited amount of time in which to respond to questions. The candidates in the California debate, Boxer and Fong, had the most scheduled time, two minutes and thirty seconds, to answer each question. The candidates in the Idaho debate, Crapo and Mauk, and in the North Dakota debate, Dorgan and Naleweja, did not have predetermined answer and rebuttal times; the length of their answers varied from a brief 15 seconds to as much as two minutes. The variable length of time that candidates could talk during each turn meant that the amount of talk among candidates in different debates could not be compared directly, but as a proportion of the whole debate. As table 6 shows, the time allotments among debates varies greatly.

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<sup>12</sup>In the Ohio debate, the Teleprompter malfunctioned, and the first twenty seconds of George Voinovich's closing remarks were disfluent. He mentioned that the Teleprompter was not working, and also notified the moderator when it was working again.

Table 6. Speaking-time Allotments  
(in minutes and seconds)

State	AR	CA	FL	CO	IA	ID	IN	ND	OH	WA
opening	3.00	1.00	1.30	1.00	†	*	1.00	0.45	#	1.00
closing	1.00	1.30	1.30	1.00	*	*	1.00	1.00	1.30	1.00
answer	2.00	2.30	1.30	1.00	1.00	*	1.00	*	1.30	1.00
rebuttal	1.00	1.30	0.45	0.30	#	*	1.00	*	0.30	0.30

\* no time limit

† not present in this debate

The candidates in these debates also had the opportunity to interrupt each other and challenge their opponent immediately after a comment. Most of the other debates allowed candidates to give a rebuttal, but only during a specified turn and only for a specified amount of time of 30 to 90 seconds. In sum, the way in which time was allotted influenced how much information each candidate could give in each turn.

In addition to time allotments, other components contributed to the various formats of these debates. The most common arrangement for these debates was for the candidates to stand at lecterns with the moderator between the candidates or between the panelists and the candidates. Debates with candidates standing at lecterns and having precisely defined speaking times had a formal tone. Conversely, when the candidates were seated side-by-side at a long table and had more latitude in the amount of time they could talk, as was the case in the Iowa and Idaho debates, the candidates' interactions were less formal. Although the candidates in the Washington debate also sat at a table, the tone of the debate was neither as formal as the debates with the candidates at lecterns nor as informal as those with the candidates seated at a table. One possible explanation for this semi-formal tone is that the relaxed environment of candidates sitting at a table, in this case a round rather than rectangular table, was counter-balanced by the strictly controlled

time allotments. Of the ten debates in this study, the North Dakota debate was the least formal. The debate took place in a studio that was arranged as a talk show. The candidates were seated in stuffed chairs on either side of the moderator "host," Dave Thompson, who asked a few questions about controversial issues to get the conversation started and only occasionally interrupted the candidates as they disagreed, exchanged insults, or asked each other questions.

Most of moderators directed the debate more closely than Thompson did. Most of the time, the moderator began the debate by introducing the candidates and panelists and explaining the rules and time allotments for each part of the debate. Throughout the debate, most of the moderators limited their participation to assigning speaking turns to the questioners and candidates and stopping speakers who exceeded the time limit. Although the Ohio debate had two moderators, they spoke no more than the other moderators and shared the task. Fortney assigned speaking turns to the candidates, and McHenry assigned speaking turns to the audience questioners. The most active moderator was Tim Russert, in the Florida debate. Russert, a nationally known political commentator, played the dual role of assigning speaking turns to the candidates and also asking the candidates questions. Russert also asked follow-up questions in response to comments the candidates made in the previous turn. The least active moderator was the person moderating the Washington debate; he never identified himself, and limited his role to calling on the next speaker.

All of the moderators except the moderator of the Colorado debate are television professionals and experienced with the time constraints of televised events. Table 7 shows a description of the physical arrangement, the name of the moderator, the type of questioners, and the number of questions that were asked in each debate.

Table 7. The Format Features for the 1998 Senate Debate Sample

	arrangement	moderator (s)	questioners	# of questions
AR	lecterns	Steve Barnes (KARK news anchor)	3 member panel: 1 press, 1 professor, 1 student	9
CA	lecterns	Pete Wilson (KRON news anchor)	3 member press panel; pre-recorded citizen	12
CO	lecterns	Bill Sisson (Chairman of the Board - Club 20)	3 member press panel	15
FL	lecterns	Tim Russert (NBC political analyst )	moderator & 3 audience members	21
IA	long table	Dean Borg (Iowa Public Television)	2 member press panel	18
ID	long table	Joan Cartan-Hansen (Program Producer Idaho Public Television)	2 member press panel	16
IN	lecterns	Jim Scheller (WISH-TV news)	4 member press panel	7
ND	talk show	Dave Thompson (News Director North Dakota Public Radio)	moderator & candidates	9
OH	lecterns	John Fortney (Ohio News Network Anchor) and Cheryl McHenry (WHIO news anchor)	audience	19
WA	round table	Dennis Bounds <sup>13</sup> (KING 5 Co-Anchor)	4 member press panel	17

The main feature of the debates is the questions asked and the answers given. Most of the debates had a panel of questioners who were most often members of the press. In the Arkansas debate, the panel of questioners consisted of one member of the press, a

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<sup>13</sup>The name of the moderator of the Washington Debate was provide by Senator Patty Murray's office.

university professor, and a college student. When the debate did not have a press panel, the major variation was to have a selection of voters, usually those who claimed to be undecided voters, ask questions. The questions in the Florida debate, for example, came mostly from the moderator, but three of the questions were asked by members of the audience. Similarly, in the California debate, half of the questions came from the press panel, and half came from pre-recorded interviews with citizens "on the street." The largest amount of audience participation was in the Ohio debate. All 19 of the questions came from voters in the studio audience.

The most noticeable variation among these debates is the number of questions which were asked. The number of questions ranged from as few as seven to as many as 21. In general, when the candidates were asked a few questions, both candidates answered the same questions, but when many questions were asked, each candidate was asked different questions about the same topic or asked to explain something stated earlier in the debate.

#### 4.3 Methods of Analysis

This study is a quantitative discourse analysis of the speech produced by 20 candidates in the ten selected 1998 senatorial candidates' pre-election debates. Each of the research questions in this study required a different type of analysis which addresses a specific aspect of the discourse. Consequently, the analysis draws on concepts established by a number of discourse analysts—Halliday (1985), Givón (1984), Fairclough (1990), Fowler (1987) and Brown and Levinson (1990)—and relies on the results of a statistical analysis for support.

The data for this study comprise more than 14,000 intonation units of talk (IU) which was reduced to approximately 13,000 IU by eliminating the talk produced by the participants in each debate who are not major party candidates. An IU is a tonal unit with a final boundary of a drop in pitch and a brief pause. Each IU was placed in an Excel



spread sheet and coded for numerous elements in seven categories: speaker identification factors, clause structures, levels of embedding, issues, referents, transitivity, and politeness. Each category contains a number of codes, one code for each element (see appendix F). The remainder of this section outlines the conceptual basis for each category of coding, an explanation of the codes and coding procedures, and gives examples of the coded data.

#### 4.3.1 Method of Coding

A series of identification codes were assigned to each IU. The first type of code identified the debate in which the IU occurred, the type of race (open or challenged) from which it came, and the speaker's name. In addition, each IU was labeled for the independent variables relating to the speaker's identifying characteristics, such as the speaker's gender, political affiliation, and incumbency status, and for the location of the IU within the debate (turn and line numbers). The example of the identification coding shown in table 8 comes from the Arkansas debate which is an open race (O). The speaker is Blanche Lincoln, a female (F), a Democrat (D), and, since open races have no incumbent, she is a challenger (C). Each line (97-99) corresponds to an IU which comes from Lincoln's opening remarks in her first speaking turn.

Table 8. Example of IU Identification Coding

State	O/ C	Speaker	F/ M	D/ R	C/I	Turn	Line	IU
AR	O	Lincoln	F	D	C	1	97	I'd like to thank AETM
AR	O	Lincoln	F	D	C	1	98	and the student government of UALR
AR	O	Lincoln	F	D	C	1	99	for hosting this debate tonight

#### 4.3.1.1 Coding the Clauses

Identifying the type of clauses the candidates used was the next coding task. In this study, a clause is the grammatical structure used most often to examine transitivity and the level of embedding. The shape and form of clauses is not random or arbitrary; particular clause forms attempt to accomplish particular functions (Halliday 1984). Speakers have choices for the design and structure of their clause; the choices they make “signify (and construct) social identities, social relationships, and knowledge and belief” (Fairclough 1994: 76).

A clause in English minimally consists of a subject and a verb, and presents a single proposition. These two components can take several forms. The subject can be a noun phrase (NP) consisting of one or more nouns and the determiners (*the, her*) and other modifiers accompanying the nouns, a pronoun, or an expletive subject such as *it* or *there*. Table 9 shows an example of each of the subject types that are typical in the clauses of the data. The examples are taken from Boxer’s responses to the third question in the California debate.

Table 9. Examples of Subject Types

Subject Type	Line	Example (underlined)
NP - single noun	135	.. <u>extremists</u> in Congress have really gone after a woman’s right to choose.
NP - compound noun with determiners	163	.. <u>a woman and her doctor</u> would be criminals
pronoun	172	.. <u>I</u> ’ve written a law to codify Roe
placeholder	141-143	.. <u>there</u> is one law..one law only..that protects a woman’s right to choose

The verb can stand alone if it is intransitive; transitive verbs require a complement or object. The verb structures are an important part of the analysis in this study and will be discussed in more detail in the section about transitivity (section 4.3.1.2). For descriptive purposes, a few examples of the various types of verb structures, modeled after the typology laid out by Sedley (1990:111), are presented in table 10. The examples are taken from Grassley's ( R) response to the seventh question of the Iowa debate. Each of these verb types has the characteristic that it is followed by required (i.e., transitive) or optional (i.e., intransitive) information. The middle verb is distinct from the transitive verb, according to Sedley (1990: 121), because middle verbs are followed by a noun phrase (as transitive verbs do), but "do not appear in the passive voice" (in the same way linking and intransitive verbs do not). A convention followed here is that the presence of a verb signals a clause. In the example of a complex verb, table 10, two verbs are present, *hear*, and *make*, so this example has two clauses. In addition, the examples show that each constituent of a clause may have modifiers such as adjective phrases (as *ag* is an adjective of *economist*) and adverb phrases (*down* is an adverb in *we must get trade barriers down*). (See Givón 1984, Halliday 1994, and Sedley 1990 for a more detailed discussion).

Table 10. Examples of verb types

Verb type	Line	Example (underlined)
linking	313	..he's an ag economist
intransitive	120	..I <u>work</u> hard for Iowa
transitive	353	..we <u>must get</u> trade barriers down
middle	319-320	..I've <u>got</u> corn and soybeans in the field
complex	360-361	..I <u>hear</u> him say.. we should <u>make</u> farmers do certain things
di-transitive	355	..we <u>have to give</u> the president fast-track trading authority

Source: Sedley 1990:111

Clauses are divided into six types. The first type of clause is the main clause, also called an independent clause. A main clause consists of the subject and an independent verb with their modifiers and complements, and may contain within them other clause types. Subordinate clauses have the same basic components as a main clause but have an additional function word, either a subordinating conjunction such as *if* or *because*, or an adverbial participle which replaces the finite verb and is a content word such as *driven* in *Driven by ambition, the major ran for governor*. The subordinate clause is adjoined to a main clause. The third type of clause is the embedded indicative clause, often manifest as *that* complements in the predicate of a main clause. The *that* can be deleted, as it is in the second *that*-complement in the example in table 11. Fourth, the relative clause is also embedded and modifies a noun within the main clause. Most relative clauses in English are signaled by the presence of a relative pronoun, though the relative pronoun can be deleted. Table 11 presents examples from the data of these four clause types.

Table 11. Examples of Clause Types

Clause Type	Speaker	Lines	Example (the underlined portion)
main	Lincoln	665-666	.. <u>this is the second-largest advocacy group in America</u> .. <u>for the elderly</u>
subordinate	Helmke	1079-1081	..we need to have a role.. <u>in making sure that the world's economic scene is strong</u> .. <u>because that is what will benefit Hoosier farmers</u>
<i>that</i> -complement	Campbell	738- 739	I might say.. <u>that I thought we had a good team</u> (2 <i>that</i> -complement clauses)
relative	Voinovich	458-459	..he [Malosevich] is someone <u>who doesn't understand</u> ..unless he is really faced with confrontation

The last two types of clauses, the infinitive and the nominalized verbal clauses, are often classified as phrases rather than clauses because their verbs lack tense (Halliday 1984).

However, both forms are embedded within a main clause, and function as a noun phrase either as the subject, or direct object. The infinitive clause, as the name states, occurs when the infinitive form, the uninflected verb stem, is used. The fifth clause form is the nominalization. According to Givón (1984: 498), nominalization is “the process via which a prototypical verbal clause...is converted into a noun phrase.” Nominalizations occupy nominal positions, such as the subject or direct object position in another clause. Table 12 contains examples of these two clause types.

Table 12. Infinitive Clause and Nominalized Verb Clause Examples

Clause Type	Speaker	Lines	Example (underlined)
infinitive	Boyle	242-245	I think our first commitment is <u>to make sure ..that we preserve the surplus..and to guarantee those dollars will be available in the future</u>
nominalization	Naleweja	238-239	we have to quit <u>using food as a weapon..in foreign policy</u>

Both of the infinitive clauses also contain a clause; the clauses that complete them are *that*-complements, which were also coded. Infinitive clauses and nominalizations presuppose the truth of the information contained in the clause. For example, Boyle presupposes that a surplus exists and the role of the government is *to preserve* and *to guarantee* it. Many people do not agree with the claim that there is a surplus, but few would disagree about the general role of the government. By presupposing the “truth” of the surplus and the role of the government, Boyle increases the chance that her opponent or audience will focus on the *commitment*. Similarly, Naleweja presupposes that we, the United States, are using food as a weapon and that this action is part of the U.S. foreign policy. The audience and her opponent may not agree with these claims if she had stated them directly, but when she presupposes their “truth” the hearers are more likely to focus on whether the U.S. should quit or continue the policy.

Another clause structure present in the data are “cleft sentences” which have the structure of a relative clause without a subject, called “headless,” and are commonly associated with complement-taking verbs such as *know* or *hope* (Givón 1984:805) (1).

(1) Crist (FL, R)

line  
 242 ..I think what we have to do  
 243 ..is do what we've been able to do  
 244 ..on the floor of the Florida senate  
 245 ..a while ago  
 246 ..we had to build our prison system

This formation places a *wh*-word, representing the object of the verb in the underlined clause, before the subject of the clause. To test that *what* is the object of the clause in line 242, we can reword the clause, as in (2), adding the omitted information in parenthesis, as in (a). *Something* replaces *what*, and fills the object slot of the clause. The movement of the object, as in (b), requires the addition of *there is* to keep *something* in the object slot, but provides no additional information in the subject, or “head” of the clause.

(2)

- (a) I think we have to do something  
 (b) I think there is something we have to do

In this study, these type of clauses are coded by their function as a complement, and the code assigned to the object depended on whether or not the referent to the *wh*-word was provided elsewhere in the speaker's turn. For example, the referent for Crist's *what*, follows in the next clause (3).

(3) Crist (FL, R)

line  
 246 ..we had to build our prison system

If the speaker does not provide the referent, however, as is the case in (4), the information was coded as undefined. The programs and agencies are “doing” something, but the speaker does not provide an explanation.

(4) Crist (FL, R)

line  
 1188 ..we have a much bigger opportunity  
 1189 ..to review  
 1190 ..some of those programs  
 1191 ..and some of those agencies  
 1192 ..and what they're doing.

Instances when the *wh*-word is not defined in the next clause are relatively rare; only eleven instances occur in the entire data set.

A passive formation is one way that candidates can foreground or background information. A passive formation involves three major changes: the insertion of the verb *to be* and a change in the verb to its past participle, the movement of the object noun to the subject slot, and agent of the action, that is the erstwhile subject, is demoted to the object of a prepositional *by* phrase. A typical example of this form is shown in (5).

(5) Graham (FL, D)

line  
 36 ..those values have been strengthened by my family

Graham give *values* prominence by moving it to the subject slot, and shifting attention away from *my family* through demotion to the position of an object of the preposition *by*.

Another feature of a passive formation is that the preposition *by* plus the object (the demoted agent) may be dropped. The agent of the process is deleted. Deleted agents may be identified through inference from the context, as is illustrated in (6), or may not be recoverable at all.

## (6) Crist (FL, R)

line  
 380 ..I supported fast-track  
 381 ..it was a shame  
 382 ..that it was not approved.

In line 382 of (6); the pronoun *it* refers to fast-track legislation, which is the structural subject of the clause. In this clause, however, the passive construction allows the recipient of the action, the legislation, to fill the subject slot, and the actual agent, whoever did not approve the legislation, is omitted. In this case, common knowledge that the members of Congress are the ones who can approve or disapprove legislation allows the listener to supply the missing agent. The omitted information, Congress, receives no attention and thereby is backgrounded. The passive structure provides the speaker with a means for masking the agent. The listeners must make additional effort to supply the missing information. Although the agent in (6) is recoverable, in some cases, the deleted agent is not recoverable from the context or from common knowledge; the listeners cannot infer the missing information, as is the case in (7), when Crapo comments on supporting troops in the Balkans:

## (7) Crapo (ID, R)

line  
 1434 ..It is a big question that is debated regularly  
 1435 ..we've had a number of resolutions  
 1436 ...to the president that have been strongly supported  
 1437 ..saying pull out or provide the justification

In (7) line 1434, someone is debating about the troops in the Balkans. The agent is deleted, and it is ambiguous. Listeners might assign the debate to Congress, the media, or the voters. A similar ambiguity is present in line 1436. Who is supporting the resolutions. Since Crapo is running for the Senate, the listener might choose Congress as a first choice. The other referents are possible, however, since Crapo is not a sitting



Senator, and he is a Republican, he may mean the Republicans currently serving in Congress. Moreover, Crapo has previously mentioned the media's support on some topics, and voters' opinions on some issues, so he may also mean the media or the voters.

Passive formations are an important part of the analysis because speakers can give prominence to some information and reduce or mask the agent of action. When the agent is deleted, the ambiguity or uncertainty of agency in passive formations provides the candidates with a way to background or elide their role, or another's role. When the clause had a passive construction, and the agent could not be discerned with certainty, it was coded as undetermined.

#### 4.3.1.2 Coding the Levels of Embeddedness

As most of the examples of clauses presented in the previous section indicate, a clause may have one or more other clauses nested inside. The way in which the candidates combine information in the clauses and each clause's relationship to other clauses that make up a candidate's response to a question give us insight into their "systems of knowledge and belief and the assumptions about social relationships and social identities" (Fairclough 1994:78). The candidates, like all speakers, place information in their clauses in such a way that some of the material receives more emphasis, and other material receives less. The relationship between the types of clauses, and the clause's placement in relation to other clauses is hierarchial, with main clauses at the top of the hierarchy. The clauses which are inside, embedded, in main clauses are demoted to less important positions (McGregor 1991). Moreover, each embedded clause can have additional clauses embedded in them, and the additional clauses are further demoted. Consequently, the information in a main clause is relatively more important than information in clauses which are embedded whereas information in deeply embedded clauses is less important. Consequently, it is important to examine where candidates' place information within the

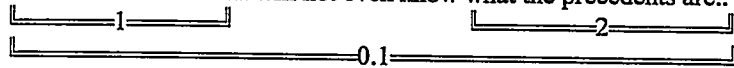
clause and also where each clause is located in relation to other clauses as an indicator of the relative importance of the information carried by that clause.

A set of codes was developed to identify each clause's relationship to and distance from the other clauses. Main clauses, those that are independent, were coded as level zero. All of the other clauses, no matter what clause type, were coded for the level at which they are nested inside other clauses. Higher numbers indicate deeper level of embedding. As the diagram in (8) shows, a main clause is not embedded, and was coded as level zero. Since this clause is part of a coordinant construction, an additional marker for its location, .1, was added. The subordinate clause, dependent on, but not embedded in the main clause, was coded as level one. The object of the verb *know* is a cleft sentence and is embedded at level 2 because it is embedded inside the main clause. The second main clause is the second part of the coordinate construction, so as a main clause, it is also coded 0, but with the addition of a sequence marker, .2, to identify its relationship to the first main clause. This diagram also shows that the numbering begins again with each main clause; the first clause has 2 levels of embedding, and the second clause has 4 levels of embedding. In the second clause, everything which follows *that obviously* is the complement of *tell you*, and has three additional embedded clauses .

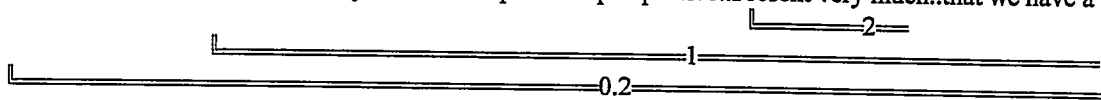
The subject of the main clause is *I* which places the candidate in the most important position in the entire set of clauses. In this example, the clause *he lied* is embedded four levels inside the second main clause, *I can tell you*, and the information about the president admitting or lying is far removed from the candidate's own position, which is presented in the subject of the first main clause; the placement of the clauses about the president's actions indicates that the material in these clauses are less important to the speaker than the material he presents in the main clause; in this case the fact of telling the listeners his position.

## (8) Grassley (IA, R) lines 147-154

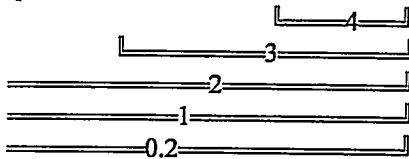
..until the house acts..I will not even know what the precedents are..



..but I can tell you..that obviously..and from a personal perspective..I resent very much..that we have a



president..who admitted that he lied.



Example (8) contains coordinate independent clauses (two main clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction). Coordination of independent clauses, or parataxis, is a fairly common phenomenon in spoken discourse because speakers chain their ideas with coordinating conjunctions. However, example (8) is more complex than simple main clauses chained together because a great deal of information is embedded within the main clauses. In fact, most of the ideas in these debates are expressed in similarly complex combinations of clauses. Candidates compound and embed clause types in intricate patterns and the candidate's beliefs about who and what is important, and who is doing what to whom is suggested by where they place the information in the clauses and the clauses in relation to each other (Simpson 1983).

Another common style of embedding is shown in table 13, presented in spreadsheet format. The speaker, Fong (CA, R), precedes the main clause with two subordinate clauses, both of which contain relative clauses. The subordinate clauses are coded as 1.1 and 1.2, since they occupy the same level of embeddedness (level 1). Within subordinate clause 1.1, the speaker has two relative clauses (lines 277 and 278), both modifying the same noun, *income*, so these also have sequence codes. Conversely, since subordinate

clause 1.2 contains only one relative clause modifying *investments*, no sequence code is added.

Table 13. Relationship Between Clauses and Level of Embeddedness

Line	IU	Clause and Relationship	Level
276	..That's the tax on a very..very little.	main clause	0
277	..And if she has any income	subordinate clause of 283	1.1
278	...earned from her investments	relative clause of <i>income</i> in 277	2.1
278	..that she has in her	relative clause #2 of <i>income</i>	2.2
280	.. uh..pension fund		
281	..if she has any outside investments	subordinate clause #2 of 283	1.2
282	..that she's socked away for her children	relative clause of <i>investments</i> in 281	2
283	..those will not be taxed again.	main clause	0

The classification of clause types and the level of embedding for each clause provide a way to count each type of clause separately and identify the degree of complexity for each speaker. In addition, these classifications, provide a means for examining where speakers place information within their clauses and in relation to other information.

#### 4.3.1.3 Coding the Issues and Referents

Although the lexical choices available to the candidates may seem limitless, the words which candidates use tend to fall within a few broad categories which the researcher has termed the issue vocabulary. The list of issues was built from the key issues of each question in each debate and from an examination of the high-frequency content words as revealed by CONC, a concordancing software package. The content words, though overlapping with everyday vocabulary, manifest the language domain of politics, and the "practices, values, and perspectives" of the candidates (Fairclough 1994: 76). The candidates' word choices, though somewhat directed by the questions they are asked, reflect how they view the world.

The broad categories of issues included in this list include social welfare, natural resources, infrastructure, the economy, foreign affairs, governmental function, legislation, candidate credentials, and abstract concepts. A list of the vocabulary associated with each category is presented in the first half of appendix D. Each question was coded for the issue that the candidate was asked to address, and that code was associated with each IU of the candidate's response.

The second set of codes in this group is the referent codes (presented in the second half of appendix D). The words in this list consist of people, such as the candidate's self-reference (e.g., *I*), reference to politicians (e.g., *Congress*), reference to groups of citizens (e.g., *parents* or *voters*) and places, such as particular cities, foreign countries, or the United States, that the candidates might place in either the subject or object position within their clauses and in some type of grammatical relationship with the issue information.

Each noun or noun clause within each IU received a code from the list of issues or the list of referents. The issue codes ranged from 10 to 900, and the referent codes were numbers higher than 1,000. This strategy provides an easy visual signal of which type of code was assigned to each noun, and also provides a coding strategy which meets the data presentation requirements for computer analysis. Moreover, these codes provide a means for comparing which items within the issue and referent lexicon the candidate draws upon to respond to the issue. For example, if the candidate is asked about her voting record, we can compare codes for the issues and referents in her response with the code for the voting record, which is 510 (the Q code). Table 14 provides a small sample of Boxer's response to a question about her voting record with the issue and referent codes assigned to each line of the text.

Table 14. Issue and Referent Codes Example

Line	Q code	IU	NP 1	code	NP2	code
395	510	Today	.....	.....	.....	....
396	510	another one of my bills passed the United States Senate	one = bill = legislation	550	Senate	120 0
397	510	the vascular research act	act = legislation	550	.....	....
398	510	which will for the first time say	which= act = legislation	550	.....	....
399	510	that yes	.....		.....	....
400	510	women do get heart attacks	women	1410	heart attacks	800
401	510	we do get strokes	we = self + women	1410	strokes	800
402	510	and why is it that	it	1000	why -	0
403	510	we're not getting the care	we	1410	the care	800
404	510	that we deserve	we	1410	.....	....

The columns labeled NP1 and NP2 contain codes for the nouns or noun phrases in the order that they occur in the line. Four additional columns are in the actual coding files to accommodate all of the possible nouns, but are omitted from this example for readability. Also omitted are the columns for labeling what slot in the clause the noun filled. For example, in line 396, *one* fills the subject slot, and *Senate* fills the object slot. To prevent ambiguity, pronouns were followed by an equal sign, the antecedent, and the referent code group. When the speaker chose a pronoun to refer to an issue or category of referent, I coded the pronoun as though it were the noun. For example, in line 396 (table 14), the speaker says *another one of my bills passed the United States Senate*. The subject is *one* which refers to *bills*, and *bills* belongs to the coding group *legislation*.

Pronouns required special attention during coding, notably *we* and *our*. When the referent was discernable from the context, as is the case in line 401 (table 14), the pronoun was coded for the group to which the speaker referred rather than to the speaker, even if the speaker included herself or himself in the group. As shown in the NP1 column of line 401, the *we* refers to *women*, and was coded as such. Although the speaker is a member of the group of women, the pronoun was not coded as self-referential. This decision was made to prevent an inflated count of self-references. The pronoun *I* was the only one counted as a self-reference. In most cases, the referent for pronouns was discernable from the context, but for those instances of *we* when the referent was unclear or could have had multiple referents, the pronoun was coded separately.

When an intonation unit does not have a noun, as is the case in line 395 (table 14), no code was assigned because both Excel and SPSS count 0 for many of the statistical calculations, but do not count blank cells. When an item was present but not defined in the coding scheme, I initially coded the item 0 so it could be identified and examined more closely. Most of the items coded 0, such as teddy bear, July, or website, were subsequently coded as unique words meaning the word was used fewer than five times in the entire data set.

#### 4.3.1.4 Coding Verb Transitivity

Transitivity, according to Simpson (1993:88) is “how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them.” In most cases, clauses have three components, the verb phrase which expresses a process, the participants involved (discussed in 4.3.1.3), the situation or circumstances of the process. The verb phrases are the starting point for identifying transitivity.

An examination of the verbs of clauses, combined with information in the subject and object, allows the researcher to investigate the ways in which speakers portray power and action. Polynon (1985: 62) explains that the site of power depends on

whether or not one is presented as doing or being done to, as causer of action/events or merely acted upon, what one is presented as acting upon, [and ]whether events are presented as occurring with or without agency.

The transitivity codes provide a means for labeling the verbs the candidates use. According to Givón (1995:76), the core aspects of “the prototypical transitive event” includes an agent who is volitional and thus is the “salient cause” of the event, a patient who is non-volitional but registers the events’ change-of-state, and thus its “salient effect,” and a verb that codes an event that is perfective (non-durative), sequential (non-perfect), and realis (non-hypothetical). The transitivity codes were applied to the verbs of the candidates’ clauses and used to identify the kinds of actions they claim for themselves and the kinds of actions they attribute to others.

The coding scheme employed here for the transitivity of verbs follows Halliday’s (1994) systematic functional grammar classifications. Halliday classifies verbs into six processes: Material, Behavioral, Verbal, Mental, Relational, and Existential. Most of these processes have subcategories to account for specific aspects of the general process and the type of participants involved in the process. Behavioral verbs were not included in the coding scheme or analysis because they are not present in the data. Behavioral verbs describe physiological and psychological processes such as laughing, grimacing, or dreaming. Halliday (1994: 139) describes the typical pattern as a clause consisting of a “Behaver” and a behavioral “Process,” such as “*He’s yawning*” or “*Don’t breathe.*” Candidates rarely describe themselves or others with Behavioral process verbs; instead, they use Material, Verbal, Mental, Relational and Existential verbs. A brief explanation



of these five categories that are used in this research and short examples for each subcategories follows. The examples were taken from the Washington debate between Murray (D) and Smith (R).

#### 4.3.1.4.1 Material Process Verbs

The first of the five processes is the process of doing something, which Halliday calls the Material processes. The participants in material processes consist of an actor, and a goal toward which the process is directed (Halliday 1994: 110). Actors can either take action which affects the goal, or take an action that creates the goal. An example of each kind of directed action is presented in (9).

#### (9) Smith (WA, R)

line		
885	..I think	
886	..we <u>clean up</u> our schools	action (clean up) which affects the goal (school)
887	..we <u>make</u> the best decisions	action (make) which creates the goal (decision)
888	..when we <u>make</u> them at the local	action (make) which creates the goal (them)
889	..district	
890	..and parent level.	

In this example, *clean up* is a material process verb, *we* is the actor, and *schools* is the goal. The schools are affected by the action of *we*, a pronoun whose antecedent is Washington state citizens. The second material process verb is *make*. Once again, the actor is *we*; the goal is *decisions*. In this clause, the decisions are created by the actor.

In addition to these two sub-types of directed material processes, there are non-directed material processes. Non-directed doing occurs with an intransitive verb (10) or when the actee's role establishes a range.

#### (10) Murray (WA, D)

line		
1197	..I <u>have worked</u> very hard	intransitive verb (worked) plus adverbial phrase
1198	..to promote our products.	

The actor, *I*, is engaged in an action, but unlike the directed action material process verbs, the action here does not have a direct effect on the goal. Instead, *work*, an intransitive verb, is modified by an adverbial phrase (*very hard*) which describes the work.

The second non-directed material process is a non-directed happening in which things happen without direct action by an actor. In (11), the grammatical subject, *violence*, is not a volitional agent, yet something has happened to violence.

(11) Murray (WA, D)

line	
777	..and fortunately
778	..in some areas of the country
779	..violence <u>has dropped</u> a little bit.

The verb *has dropped* is active, and in the present perfect. Nonetheless, we cannot identify the actor. Because the verb is in the active form, but has no identifiable actor, we can distinguish non-directed action verbs from direct action verbs which are presented in the passive form with a deleted actor (Halliday 1982: 110).

#### 4.3.1.4.2 Verbal Processes

The second major group of verbs are those which deal with communicating; these are called the verbal processes. Verbal process clauses report a “sayer” and the information the sayer conveys. Consequently, a clause containing a verbal process is accompanied by a second, embedded clause that conveys a proposition, such as *the election is next week*, in *She told me the election is next week*, or a proposal, such as *to go to the polls*, in *They promised to go to the polls*. Verbal processes report “saying” or “meaning.” Speakers report what they or others have said. The grammatical subject associated with this kind of process is a “sayer” (Halliday 1984:140). The sayer is often conscious, such as a person, but does not have to be. The sayer can be an inanimate item

such as a watch, sign, or law, as well. Other participants which may be present in verbal processes include the receiver, the verbiage and the target. The presence of these participants depend on whether or not the verb accepts or requires this information and whether or not the sayers provides the information when it is optional. The receiver is whomever or whatever the sayers intends to get the information. In (12), the receiver is *me*.

(12) Murray (WA, D)

line

831 ..I had a young student tell me.. sayers (student) and receiver (me)

The receiver may or may not be named, and, in a passive construction, the receiver can be the grammatical subject as for example, *I was told by a young student*.

Another participant in the verbal process is what Halliday (1984: 141) calls verbiage. This title is deceptive because verbiage is not the quoted or reported information, as we might expect. Instead, the verbiage specifies the range or nature of the verbal process. In (13), the verbiage is *one thing*. The other components in (13) are the sayers, *I*, the verbal process, *can tell*, and the receiver, *you*.

(13) Murray (WA, D)

line

563 ...but I can tell you one thing verbiage (one thing)

The third participant is the target—the person or thing toward which the saying is aimed. Some verbs associated with the presence of a target include *praise*, *thank blame*, and *criticize*. One of the most common targets in these debates is the host or sponsor of the debate.

(14) Murray (WA, D)

line

10 ..thank you to all the hosts.. target (all the hosts)

Since most thanks usually occur directly to the speaker's interlocutor, the target, *you*, is clear. However, when there are many participants, as there are in candidate debates, the referent for *you* is not clear, so the speaker explicitly identifies the target of her thanks.

An expansion of the previous two examples shows that most verbal process clauses have a second clause which completes them. Example (15) shows the clauses following the clause we have examined in (12). The grammatical subject in the main clause, *I*, is the receiver of the information presented in the embedded verbal process clause, as indicated by *me*. Recall that the sayer is *a young student* and the verbal process verb is *tell*.

(15) Murray (WA, D)

line		
831	..I had a young student tell me	sayer (student) receiver (me)
832	..that they just don't think	verbiage (lines 832 and 833)
833	..that adults pay enough attention to them.	

The information being reported, *that they just don't think that adults pay enough attention to them*, is the verbiage and is embedded in the verbal process clause (and this information has an additional embedded clause, *adults pay enough attention to them*). In (15) the speaker has presented an indirect quote, indicating the speaker's paraphrase or summary of the original content of what the young student said.

When speakers use verbal process verbs, they not only report other people's words but present their own words, thoughts or actions. The speaker *tells* the listeners something that the listeners either do not know or, if they know, they may not have considered in a particular way. Moreover, the information which the speaker *tells* can be presented in clauses with other verb types, such as material action verbs or mental process verbs, as shown in example (16). The main clause is *I can tell you one thing*. However, the information that the sayer, *I*, intends to convey with *one thing* is not embedded in the main clause but presented several clauses later as *sometimes I wonder*.

## (16) Murray (WA, D)

line		
563	..But I can tell you one thing	sayer (I), direct verbal process (can tell)
564	..when I go to the grocery store	
565	..on Saturday with my family	
566	..and people look in my cart	
567	..to see what I'm buying	
568	...sometimes I wonder	information to which <i>one thing</i> (line 563) refers
569	..why am I doing this.	

The main difference between (15) and (16) is the source of the information the sayer is conveying. When the source of information is from another, and presented as a quote or a report of another's words, the verbal process is classified as an indirect one. This is the case in example (15), because Murray is giving a report and ascribes the information to a young student. Conversely, when the source of information is the speaker, as is true in example (16), the verbal process is classified as direct.

## 4.3.1.4.3 Mental Process Verbs

The third major category of verbs is mental process verbs. These verbs involve a conscious participant, the sensor, who feels, thinks, or perceives something, the phenomenon (Halliday 1984: 118). The four subcategories of mental process verbs are called perception, affection, cognition and intention. The mental process verbs of perception include those in which the sensor sees and hears.<sup>14</sup> In example (17), the sensor is *they*, the perception verb is *see*, and the phenomenon is *violence*.

## (17) Murray (WA, D)

line		
846	..so that if they [young people] see violence	perception mental process (see)
847	..they can stop it.	

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<sup>14</sup> Note that *seeing* used as a mental process of perception differs in meaning from instances when *seeing* is used metaphorically to mean *understanding*.

Another subcategory of mental process verbs is the group of verbs which express the sensor's emotional response to something, such as liking<sup>15</sup> or fearing something and are called affection verbs.

- (18) Murray (WA, D)  
 line  
 45 ..I would appreciate your vote affection mental process (appreciate)

The verb in (18) indicates the speaker's emotional response of appreciation, though she adds the modal *would*, which suggests a future event. The modal creates an ambiguity in this clause. What the speaker appreciates may refer to an uncertain future event, or the statement may indicate that her appreciation is a condition of the listener's future votes.

The third subcategory of mental process verbs includes all of the verbs related to the sensor's cognition, such as *think*, *know*, and *understand*. In (19), the main clause verb, *know*, expresses the speaker's mental process of cognition, and the dependent clause verb, *worries* expresses the emotional mental process of the student.

- (19) Murray (WA, D)  
 line  
 820 ..and I know cognition mental process (know)  
 821 .. that every young student out there  
 822 ..worries about it [violence].

The last subcategory of mental process verbs includes expressions of the sensor's intention. Verbs such as *want*, *hope*, and *wish* belong to this category. Although these

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<sup>15</sup> *Like* as an affection mental process verb differs from *like* as a synonym for *similar* or *as though*. For example, when the speaker says "politicians like to tell you.. what they are against" (Murray lines 23-24), the verb signals the mental process of politicians, but when the speaker says "that's like a grand censure" (Smith line 688), the verb is *is*, a relational process verb, and *like* functions as an adjective.

verbs seem similar to those which express affection or cognition, they differ because they express a desire which is currently not realized. In (20), the futurity is explicitly stated.

(20) Smith (WA, R)

line

65

..I want the best future for our kids

Although the previous three major categories discussed so far, material, verbal and mental processes, account for many of the verbs, one important category remains—relational processes. Relational process verbs establish a relationship between two entities. Halliday (1984: 119) separates relational processes into three subcategories, intensive, circumstantial, and possessive, and each of these subcategories into attributive and identifying. In addition, I include a separate category for existential relationships, such as those in *There are...* clauses. This classification system produces seven varieties of relational processes. The most common verb associated with relational processes is *to be*, so the distinction between subcategories depends on the participants and circumstances in the clause.

When the clause has an intensive relational process verb, the participant is called the carrier, and the quality assigned to the carrier is called the attribute and tends to be indefinite. Halliday (1984:121) points out that some attributive clauses in this class have a quality similar to those of mental process verbs, such as *be glad*, or *worry*, and suggests that accurate classification depends upon the researcher looking at several additional indicators. However, a preliminary examination of the data indicated that few words which overlap into these two processes are present, I omitted further subclassification or division steps which would address this issue. During the same preliminary examination, I noticed that attributes were assigned to both people and objects, and decided to classify them separately. Examples of each of these groups are shown in table 15.

Table 15. Attributive Intensive Relational Process Verbs

Type	Group	Example	Carrier	Attribute
attributive	human quality	..they live where parents are busy..	parents	busy
attributive	object quality	..the budget is balanced..	budget	balanced

Attributive intensive relational process verbs differ in several ways from those that are identifying intensive relational process verbs. First, the two parts are equal and either one of the parts can be used to identify the other. Next, the two parts are interchangeable. In clauses which are active, the participant, labeled the token, is the identified, and the circumstance, labeled the value, is the identifier. The example in table 16 shows an active structure. Notice that we could reverse the information and place the identifier (value) before the identified (token), *the ninth woman... is I* [Patty Murray], and have the same meaning.

Table 16. Identifying Intensive Relational Process Verbs

Type	Form	Example	Identified	Identifier
identifying	active	..I am the ninth woman in the history of this country ..to be elected in my own right.. to the United States Senate.	I (token)	the ninth woman (value)

The third category of relational process verbs is classified as circumstantial. The verb signals that two entities are related in time, manner, place, cause or role (Halliday 1984: 130). There are two types of circumstantial relational processes. One type is identifying and the other type is attributive. The identifying type of circumstantial relational process, like other identifying types, is interchangeable, whereas the attributive



is not. In the attributive clause shown in table 17 the speaker ascribes a circumstance of “a measure of price,” that is *cost*, to justice. (Halliday 1984: 131). In the identifying clause, the speaker establishes a circumstance of cause.

Table 17. Circumstantial Relational Process Verbs

Type	Example	Participant	Circumstance
attributive	..all justice costs a lot of money.	carrier justice	attribute money
identifying	..the reason that the farmers and the farm bureau has decided to choose me as their new senator is.. I am a tough negotiator.	identified reason	identifier I am a tough negotiator

Possessive relational process verbs share many of the same characteristics as the other relational process verbs, with the major difference being that one of the entities owns the other one. The attributive possessives can appear as either an attribute or a process in the circumstances part of the clause. A familiar form of possessive is expressed as a possessive marker on the carrier, for example *the candidate's debate* which is a shortened form of *the debate is the candidate* or *the candidate has a debate*. In table 18, the attributive possessive, is Murray's claim that the process to investigate allegations against Clinton is something that the United States Government possesses. The identifying possessive establishes a relationship of identity, and includes abstract relations of containment, such as *include*, *involve*, and *provide* (Halliday 1984:133). The example in 18 is Smith's (line 1742) assertion that the money that people donate, *cash*, involves people in campaigns. In other words, the money is personified so that it can carry out the material process of *giving* people something, and the something that the people (the indirect object of *give*) receive is a chance (the object of *give*) to be part of or contained in the campaign.

Table 18. Possessive Relational Process Verbs

Type	Example	Carrier/Possessor	Attribute/Possessed
attributive	..we have a process in place..	we	a process
identifying	..and it [hard cash] gives people the chance to be involved in campaigns.	cash	people

The final category of verbs is the existential category. In general, existential clauses have *there* as the subject. Since the verb is usually *to be*, existential clauses look like relational process verbs (Halliday 1994:142). In these clauses, the subject carries no meaning, but serves as a place holder, filling the subject slot when the clause has no subject. In the example presented in table 19, the entire content of the main clause is *a law*. Even though *a law* occupies the complement position in the clause, it is the logical subject of the clause. All of the information about the law is presented as a relative clause.

Table 19. Existential Verb Process Example

Type	Example	Participant	Existent
existential	..there is currently a law that if the child is determined to be mentally unable or handicapped.. the teacher and the school district have to put him back in the classroom in ten days.	none	a law

#### 4.3.1.5 Coding Intensification and Mitigation

One of the ways that speakers express the amount of certainty or uncertainty of their propositions is through mitigation. Mitigation can either strengthen or weaken a proposition. Strengtheners, such as *very* and *certainly*, enhance, amplify, or intensifier the speaker's statement. Weakeners, such as *might* and *possibly*, diminish, abridge, or

mitigate the speaker's statement (see Bradac et al. 1995; Furrow and Moore 1990; Holmes 1990;). Initially, a total of twelve words were counted as strengtheners, and nine words were counted as weakeners (appendix E). After the data were coded, the number of tokens of each word were too few, and all the strengtheners (also called intensifiers) and all the weakeners (also called mitigators) were grouped together.

#### 4.3.1.6 Coding Positive Politeness

The last type of coding relates to the candidates' kind and amount of politeness. The concept of politeness is based on a rationality model developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). They argue that speakers are concerned with their own and others' positive and negative face. They define face as "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" or herself (61). Positive face is the person's desire to be liked, approved, validated, and respected. Negative face is the person's desire to avoid being imposed upon or to maintain his or her own personal freedom of action. When speakers say something which threatens either the speakers' or the hearer's face, what Brown and Levinson call a face threatening act (FTA), speakers can choose to provide verbal compensation—politeness. Speakers determine the amount of politeness they give by the amount of threat they perceive the FTA to be. Although it is difficult to verify empirically how speakers make this determination, it makes intuitive sense. Too little politeness can be seen as rudeness, and too much politeness may imply that the speaker is asking a lot from the interlocutor. The speaker, therefore, has to weigh the amount of threat their words pose, and choose the appropriate amount of politeness.

In this study, positive politeness is an important factor because candidates are expected to behave in a friendly and polite manner and also to behave competitively. On the one hand, they are expected to say things which signal consideration for their own and their interlocutors' self image, desire to be liked, appreciated, approved of, validated, and

respected (Brown and Levinson 1987:61). On the other hand, during the debate the candidates are also expected to disagree with their opponents, and often, the candidates receive kudos from the press if they can enhance their own status (Holmes 1993: 194), and decrease their opponent's status at the same time. Verbal attacks, criticism, blame and fault finding, the strategies for decreasing an opponent's status, are violations of positive politeness.

The codes for politeness, then, require two separate categories: observations of positive politeness, and violations of positive politeness (see Herring 1994 for this distinction). Instances of politeness generally involve more than a single utterance or intonation unit, so the codes in this section need to be applied to the entire speech act of politeness. A speech act (Searle 1969) is a collection of utterances which accomplishes the speaker's intention. In this study, I identified eleven speech acts related to politeness. Four, thanks, affiliation, praise and agreement, are observances of positive politeness. The speech act examples come from the Ohio debate between Voinovich (R) and Boyle (D). Thanking someone accords the receiver appreciation and validates what they have done.

Table 20. Thanks

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Thank	I'd like to thank the sponsors of tonight's debate.	sponsors	I appreciate the question.	questioner

Although thanks are usually positive, the words themselves cannot be used as the sole determination that it is an act of positive politeness. The speaker could be thanking sarcastically, or insincerely, and the same words, *thank you*, would be classified as a violation instead. Therefore, not only are the words, or utterances of thanks necessary for

a positive politeness speech act, but also the context, and sometimes the prosodic features.

The second category, affiliation, is a positive politeness act that has a bi-directional component. An affiliative utterance suggests the speaker's respect for the person, and at the same time, the speaker grants respect to others who also think highly of the named person. Perhaps most important of all for political candidates, the speaker becomes imbued with the same positive qualities as the person mentioned. For example, when Voinovich mentions Abraham Lincoln and paraphrases Lincoln's words, he signals his approval of Lincoln and also signals approval and respect for others who approve of or admire Lincoln. Moreover, a reciprocal effect accompanies such affiliation, and Voinovich takes on the view, and possibly other traits associated with Lincoln. The bi-directional advantage is also a part of Boyle's affiliative comment. She validates the questioner's concern, and at the same time strengthens her trait of being understanding.

Table 21. Affiliation

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Affiliation	..and Lincoln said that all government ought not to interfere in anything that people can do for themselves.	Lincoln ? audience	..I understand your concern about the current situation in Ohio.	questioner

The last two types of speech acts associated with positive politeness are praise and agreement. Similar to thanks, when the speaker gives praise, or expresses agreement, the hearer's positive face is addressed. The difference between these two is that praise is evaluative and the speaker implies the authority to judge or evaluate, whereas agreement is an expression of one's opinion in relation to another's opinion. The difference between these two is easier to see when we look at the examples in table 22.

Table 22. Praise and Agreement

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Praise	I think that the president.. and Secretary of State Albright.. and Mr. Holbrook.. have done an outstanding job in Kosovo.	people named	I think the president's initiative was a very good first step.. to really address the concrete issues.	initiative
Agree	I agree very much with my opponent on this issue. I think the matter before Congress is not political. (Clinton impeachment)	opponent	You're absolutely right about how long it takes to raise enough money to run a race for the senate.. and it is obscene.	questioner

In these examples, the participants immediately involved in the debate are not praised. Instead, high-level government officials (in Voinovich's praise) or legislation (in Boyle's) receive praise. Both of the candidates assume the authority to evaluate the performance of others in government or the value of pieces of legislation. When the candidates express agreement, however, they tend to direct their agreement to the people who are present. Voinovich says he agrees with his opponent. Boyle begins by validating the questioner's comment about the time it takes to raise money for a senate race, and then directly agrees with the questioner's opinion that the amount of money is *obscene*.

Because the debates are televised, the candidates have numerous hearers, so candidates face the possibility that their words may be FTAs to some of the hearers, but not others. Therefore, the person toward whom the politeness was directed was also recorded. Many times, the candidates' comments are directed at more than one audience, so multiple lists were used to record each probable recipient of a observation of politeness. A caveat is in order concerning who the actual recipients are. In some cases, the candidates's comments are clearly directed to the questioner or to their opponent. At

other times, the comment could be directed to many people, and who the primary or intended recipient is was not clear. I chose the most obvious recipient for the first list, and noted others in the second and third list. However, the speaker may have intended recipients that I did not consider.

Although the candidates observed positive politeness, they also violated the conventions of positive politeness. Therefore, I developed a second group of speech acts to count the violations. As a whole, these speech acts threaten the positive face of another by disapproving, criticizing, ridiculing, disagreeing, or blaming.

The first category is the speaker's reformulation of someone else's question or comment. In this study, reformulation means changing the topic or putting a spin on the topic that redirects the discussion about the topic. One way candidates accomplish reformulation is that they redefine the topic that the questioner has advanced. For example, when Voinovich (R, OH) is asked about the environment, he changes the topic completely, and defines the issue as employment progress rather than environmental legislation (shown in table 23). Another strategy candidates employ to accomplish reformulation is to increase or decrease the scope of the topic. For example, when Boyle is asked about the expanded role of the United States in the world, she narrows the scope of question from the questioner's general focus of the role of the United States in the world economy to the United States' role in building alliances and giving support to other countries. In effect, the candidates do not ask the question which is posed. Instead, they give information which is consonant with their agenda or allows them to give a response which will be more favorably received by the audience.

Table 23. Reformulation

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Reformulation	..you need to understand .. that in Ohio we are a manufacturing state.. and we have created more jobs than any state in the nation. [The questioner asks: what is your position on federal environmental laws?]	questioner	We can form alliances and support for those countries.. working toward self-determination ..that's our real challenge. Because sometimes we mix up our trade agenda with our responsibilities. [The questioner asks: do you favor an expanded role [for the U.S.] in the global economy?]	questioner

The next category is indirect criticism. Instances which were critical, but did not name a specific person or group were coded as indirect criticism. Consequently, the context was crucial for making a determination of indirectness. In each case, the criticism is somewhat opaque without the context. In Voinovich's comment (table 24), *everyone* could refer to the whole country, or perhaps a group.

Table 24. Indirect Criticism

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Indirect Criticism	Well.. I think that everyone ought to admit that there is no surplus.	opponent	..and I'm sure that it is likely.. that your parents in fact are saving money.. but are still challenged with how to put children through college.*	opponent

\* See example from Voinovich Direct Criticism (table 25)



However, if we have heard the previous turn by his opponent, Boyle, we would readily recall that she has been talking about what she would do with the budget surplus. This information makes it clear that the *everyone* refers to Boyle, and perhaps Democrats.

Table 25. Direct Criticism

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Direct Criticism	.. I think too many parents in this country don't start early enough.. to try and save for their kids' college education.	parents Indirect questioner	..the governor promised that he would make college more affordable..but today it's more expensive and tuition has gone up more than twice the rate of inflation.	opponent

The second example is Boyle's comments to a questioner which out of context seem almost condescending. However, immediately before she speaks, her opponent, Voinovich, has made a bald criticism directed at the questioner's parents and indirectly at the questioner (shown in table 24). During her turn, Boyle attempts to mitigate or compensate for her opponent's attack, and also, indirectly criticizes her opponent for making his comment.

Another violation of positive politeness is contradiction. The candidates generally employ this strategy to contradict something that was said earlier in the debate. A contradiction states or implies that the previous comment is wrong. In the example below, Voinovich not only disagrees with, but also contradicts the questioner's claim that the impeachment is interfering with the operation of the government (table 26). He goes on to indirectly criticize the questioner who is concerned about the issue. Boyle contradicts the claim that her opponent made in his previous turn. Then Boyle suggests that the

questioner did not ask the “real” question, and reformulates the topic as the lottery for education rather than campaign finance.

Table 26. Contradiction

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Contradiction	..and I don't think the argument that this [impeachment] is slowing things down.. and we're stopping things.. is one that we should be concerned about [The questioner asked about the work slow-down because of the impeachment hearings].	questioner	..the Ohio Democratic Party expenditures are reported.. but let's get to the real issue here..it had to do with the lottery. [The questioner asked about campaign finance..the opponent says: we know the money is being spent out there to help her campaign]	opponent questioner

Another category of violations of positive politeness is blame. The candidates point to a particular problem and then ascribe responsibility to someone (table 27).

Table 27. Blame

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Blame	..we ought to go back to the way it was.. before Lyndon Johnson.. who took the money out of the Social Security surplus.. and put it into the unified budget.. to cover up the expenses of the Vietnam war.	Lyndon Johnson  implied Democrats	..and you know the education initiatives at the federal level have been at risk over the last couple of years.. when Newt Gingrich and the Republicans became the leaders in Congress.	Republicans

Voinovich blames President Johnson for the problems with Social Security, and at the same time implicates Democrats, Johnson's political party and his opponent's party.

Boyle also blames her opponent's party when she blames the Republicans for the problems the government has had when Congress was passing or implementing the education initiative.

The final category of violations of positive politeness is the question. In this case, the questions under consideration are those asked by the candidates, rather than those asked by the audience, moderator, or panelists. In general, candidates' questions tend to be directed to her or his opponent and are rhetorical questions, meaning no answer is expected or possible. Since the opponent cannot give the answer immediately, the question can have one of two results: the opponent can use part of the next speaking turn to answer, or ignore the question and allow the implied proposition within the question to stand unchallenged. In the examples shown in table 28, Voinovich implies that his opponent has money which she has not disclosed, and Boyle asks her opponent for a reason, but at the same time implies that he has (a) made a promise to the children in the state, and (b) failed to keep the promise.

Table 28. Question

Speech Act	Example from Voinovich	toward	Example from Boyle	toward
Question	..I'd like to ask her.. will she disclose the money.	opponent	.why is it governor.. that you have failed to keep your most important promise to our children.	opponent

#### 4.3.1.7 Problems with Coding

A few unusual situations arose during the transcription and coding process that warrant mention. Incomprehensible segments occurred when the speakers overlapped each other or the moderator and the candidate were speaking at the same time. Only one debate,

Idaho, was set up so that the candidates could speak simultaneously, and they often did so. Nonetheless, most of the intonation units were transcribed and the clauses were coded with a high level of confidence. In all, 17 intonation units were unintelligible, 13 for Crapo and 4 for Mauk. These intonation units were omitted from the study.

Only a few intonation units were incomprehensible because of the content. For example, in the North Dakota debate, Naleweja (R) is responding to an earlier comment made by her opponent, Dorgan (D) who said it has hard to get support for the Dakota Water Resources Act and that Naleweja was misinformed about it. Her response, in example (21), is as follows:

(21) Naleweja (ND, R)

line	
498	..I never said
499	..Senator Dorgan had bipartisan support on the state level.
500	..In fact..
501	..he /has/ probably been shored up for the press interview.
502	..What I said was
503	..it didn't have bipartisan support in Congress.

The information in line 501 does not seem to make sense in the context of her rebuttal. At no time during their response to this topic, or in the two question and answer sequences preceding this statement does either Naleweja or Dorgan mention the press or media coverage. Moreover, the researcher understands "shored up" to mean "supported," but rarely would bipartisan support be necessary before a candidate engaged in a press interview. Several steps were taken to resolve this confusion. First, the researcher revisited the video-tape of the debate and listened to it several times. She also had several others listen to the audio-tape, and other than the uncertainty of the word *has*, the words as they are transcribed above are what we all heard. Next, the Associate Press reports and North Dakota newspaper archives were consulted for any articles about the water project, the debate, or the candidates' positions and activities related to the water project for a

period from two months before the debate to two weeks after the debate. None of these steps resolved the problem. Initially the clause was coded and counted, a note was added that the codes may be unreliable. However, ultimately this line, and two others, one in the Ohio debate and one from the Indiana debate, were omitted from all aspects of the analysis.

Occasional disfluencies in which the speaker repeated a word or two meant some words might be over or under counted. In other words, the researcher had to decide whether or not to count the repeated words. When the repeated words were language features which were not being coded, such as prepositions, articles or conjunctions, the repetition was ignored. However, when the repeated words were part of the features under analysis, the researcher had to make a decision whether the occurrence was simply a disfluency or an emphatic repetition. For example, Graham (D, FL) repeats *I* several times at the beginning of his intonation units, an example is in (22). Situations such as this seem to be disfluencies, and were counted as one token of *I* rather than two.

(22) Graham (D, FL)

line	
188	..I..I believe
189	..that we also need
190	..to avoid repealing some of those
191	..uh..important sources of income.

On the other hand, other instances seem to be emphatic. In example (23), Crist (R, FL) pauses between instances of *easier*, and says the second one louder than the first. The researcher relied on prosodic cues to distinguish between disfluencies and emphatics.

(23) Crist (R, FL)

line	
400	..uh..second
401	..we should make it easier
402	..easier..
403	..for more Americans to access Medicare.. HMO.

Another coding problem occurred when the speaker omitted the words needed to complete the idea. For example, the speaker uses a transitive verb which requires an object but omits the object (24).

(24) Campbell (R, CO)

line	
538	..as you probably know
539	..when you stick that in wilderness
540	..you jeopardize-
541	..if you do not have state supremacy in the water courts
542	..you are in real danger

In line 540, the verb *jeopardize* requires an object, but it is not there. From the context, we might infer that he is referring to either the wilderness or the water, both key issues in the Colorado debate. Moreover, it is possible that the speaker omitted the rest of the clause intentionally, so that the listeners can infer dire consequences which may or may not actually result from the action. Therefore, the words that were present were coded, but a comment about the omission was added.

One interesting problem in coding was when the speakers occasionally personified inanimate items and named them as actors. For example, candidates claim that states make decisions, the IRS treats people fairly, and legislation helps people. When this occurred, each of the parts of the clause were coded as though the actor met the criterion of consciousness, but a comment was added so that the researcher could return to it later.

After all of the data were coded, they were ready for analysis. One part of the analysis was to use the codes to search for all the cases of particular features for a closer qualitative discourse analysis. The other part of the analysis was to use the codes to perform statistical analyses which would indicate relationships between the various features and the independent variables. The comments associated with problem or unusual

lines of data and problematic codings were used as markers for closer examination in the qualitative analysis, and for indications of problems in the quantitative analysis.

#### 4.3.2 Discourse Analysis Method

Although most of the coding presented above focuses on clauses or smaller units, these codes are a tool for looking at the whole of the discourse produced by the candidates. In other words, the codes provide a way to count and measure a number of features in each candidates' discourse as a part of the process for analyzing the data. The purpose of this study is to interpret as much as to describe the data, doing what might parallel anthropologist Geertz's "thick description."

The FoxPro database software has a filtering function which allowed the researcher to specify a particular feature, pattern of text, or a code, and it would return only those items which met the search parameters. One strength of the filter function is that the search parameter can include more than one feature. For example, in these data, three features, for Democrat, and direct action verbs, and clause subject *I* could be set as one filter. This output always included the line number and the content of the intonation unit and other identifying information such as speaker and question number that accompanied each instance. This output could also be saved in a separate file and further subdivided into other categories such as Incumbents and Challengers. Meanwhile, the original file remained unchanged and could be used for other kinds of searches and counts.

The Excel software was essential for looking at the context of particular features. Excel allows a search for particular features, but is less dynamic than FoxPro because it allows for a search on only one feature or set of text. However, searching by line number or code is very effective for navigating within the entire text of a debate. The searched item is bolded, and all of the text preceding and following that item is readily available.

Critical Discourse Analysis was used to examine the systematic organization of the coded features within the candidates' discourse. Discourse analysis shows "features, patterns and structures which are typical of certain types of discourse" and describes the ways the speakers use "conventional resources which are specific to this sample" (Fairclough 1994:231). The features in the candidates' discourse are brought together to accomplish particular tasks: the candidates construct their ethos, assign action, (re) create the power structure between legislators and citizens, and distinguish themselves from others.

The null hypothesis is that there are no differences between the candidates; each candidate's discourse, regardless of the candidate's incumbency status, party affiliation, or gender reflects similar patterns to accomplish these tasks .

#### 4.3.3 Statistical Methods

What follows is a brief summary of the steps and some of the statistical tests the researcher conducted. In addition, some of the assumptions of the tests, and the motivation for doing them, are presented. A total of 134 dependent variables were examined, and four independent variables (see appendix F). The results of these tests are discussed in chapter 5.

For the quantitative analysis SPSS (*Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*) 9.0 Graduate Package was used. Since codes were assigned to fixed locations in Excel, the codes easily imported to SPSS. However, SPSS counts blank spaces and zeros differently. Therefore, it was necessary for the researcher to go through the data and add or remove zeros to some of the fields so the items would be counted accurately

One of the initial problems which had to be addressed before doing the statistical analysis was to standardize the data. Since the debates were not the same length in time and number of clauses or intonation units that the candidates produced differed, any



comparisons of features between groups would not be meaningful. SPSS allows the researcher to standardize the data using the total number of tokens for each feature minus the individual mean for each feature divided by the standard deviation of the entire sample (as shown in (25)). This provides the z scores for the quantitative variables (SPSS 1999).

$$(25) \quad z_1 = (x_1 - \bar{x})/s$$

Another early issue was the problem that statistical comparisons of groups ignore the impact of the performance of the individual. For example, a statistical comparison of the amount of reformulation that Democrats and Republicans use might produce a result that suggests there is no difference between the groups, but when we inspect the data, we find that one person produced none. This outlier lowers the groups' total. In this situation, excluding the outlier gives us a different picture of the data. This problem, often referred to as an inflated N, was addressed by analyzing each individual's data first. Descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation) were calculated for each of the 134 dependent variables. Box plots were used to identify outliers. Many of the tests which could be used to analyze these data require that the data be normally distributed and that the variance among groups not be different; the descriptive statistics indicated that many of the variables did not meet one or both of these requirements.

When the data met the assumptions of the normal distribution and variance, the data were analyzed for the effect of each of the independent variables (incumbency, political party, gender, and race type) on the dependent variables using an analysis of variance (ANOVA). This test compares the variation among groups, such as the variation between Incumbents and Challenger candidates for a particular feature, such as the number of references to legislative activity. The test results were used to determine whether or not there is sufficient difference to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference

between the group means. Post Hoc Tests included Tamhane (T), Dunnett T3 (D), and Games-Howell (GH); the significance level was set at  $<.05$ . Since the distribution values of some of the data were not normal, but they are symmetric, I used the Wilcoxon test and the Mann-Whitney test. The Wilcoxon test uses the information about the size of the difference between the two members of a pair. The Mann-Whitney test is an alternative to the independent samples t-test to test for independent samples (different populations). The Mann-Whitney Tests were set up with an independent variable as the grouping variable, and then each of the dependent variables within a subgroup were compared. The Moses Extreme Reactions test is a non-parametric test for extreme values, and the results include the untrimmed and the trimmed (removing the extremes) means. This test focuses on the span of the control group (generated from the data by the program) and is a measure of how much extreme values in the experimental group (the grouping variables in this study are the independent variables) influence the span when combined with the control group. When used in conjunction with the Mann-Whitney Test and other tests for independence, this test suggests how extremes affect, in one direction or the other, the expected value (and the mean).

Pearson Correlations were done for each of the variables in each category of variables, such as clauses, or politeness. Because the effects of other variables may influence the correlations, several partial correlations were done, removing or adjusting for the linear effects of control variables.

#### 4.4 Summary

This chapter describes the procedure for selecting, gathering and transcribing the data and illustrates the coding strategies for the variables. Each section also includes a brief summary how the data were coded for clause type, level of embeddedness, transitivity,

lexical choices candidates make, mitigation, and politeness. The results of the discourse analysis and statistical findings are presented in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter reports on the results of the analysis of the features identified in the previous chapter which help us to understand how candidates present themselves and differentiate themselves from their opponents. Before presenting each set of results in detail, summary data for all ten debates is presented in section 5.1. Section 5.2 covers the various forms of shared knowledge candidates evoke to establish their ethos. Section 5.3 deals with the kinds of actions the candidates claim for themselves and the kinds of actions they attribute to others. Section 5.4 presents a comparison of the candidates' use of and violation of politeness.

#### 5.1 Summary Data for the Ten Debates

Even though each candidate in each debate was allotted equal amounts of time to answer questions and give opening and closing remarks, the candidates did not speak the same amount of time, or produce the same amount of discourse, as measured in number of words, intonation units, and clauses. Since clauses are the principle unit of measure for many of the comparisons done in this study, the amount of talk presented here, unless otherwise stated, is in clauses. (See chapter 4.3.1.1 for the operational definition of a clause.)

The two major categories for these debates are the open races and the contested races, and a comparison between these debate types shows slight differences between the two in terms of the proportion of clauses contributed by each candidate. Figure 2 shows the proportion of clauses for each of the open race candidates who are listed in pairs by state: for example Lincoln and Boozman are the candidates in the Arkansas debate, and the proportion that each contributed to the debate is labeled at the top of the column. The winning candidate is listed first in each pair, and therefore the winning candidates' names are in the lower line. The

winning candidates, Lincoln (AR, D), Crapo (ID, R), and Voinovich (OH, R), have a higher proportion of talk than did the candidates who lost. The candidates in the Indiana debate are the exception. Bayh (D), who won the race, contributes a smaller proportion of talk than his losing opponent, Helmke (R). The Indiana debate also differs from the other open races because the range between Bayh and Helmke is less than the range between the candidates in the other three races.

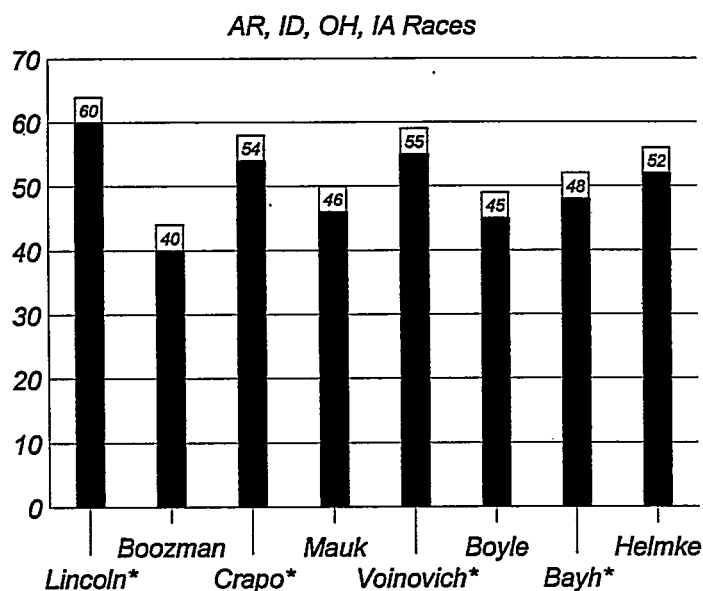


Figure 2. Percentage of clauses in open races.

The second group of debates is from the contested races. As noted earlier, in this study all of the incumbents are the winning candidates. In figure 3, the incumbent candidates are listed in the bottom row and marked with a \*. In three of the five contested races, the challenger candidate (Lamm, CO, D; Crist, FL, R; and Smith, WA, R) produced more clauses than the incumbent. The wide range of talk between candidates is unexpected since each of these debates had specified speaking times for each candidate. Three factors account for this difference. First, some of the candidates (Boxer CA, D; Lamm CO, D; and Smith, WA, R)

spoke more quickly than their opponents (Campbell, CO, R; and Murray, WA, D). Next, some of the candidates produced a large number of non-words, such as *ah* and *um*, during several of their answers (Graham, FL, D; and Campbell CO, R); non-words were not counted as clauses since these words are not verbs, and the presence of a verb is the identifying characteristic of a clause. Third, some of the candidates did not speak for the entire time allotted to them (Fong, CA, R; and Murray, WA, D).

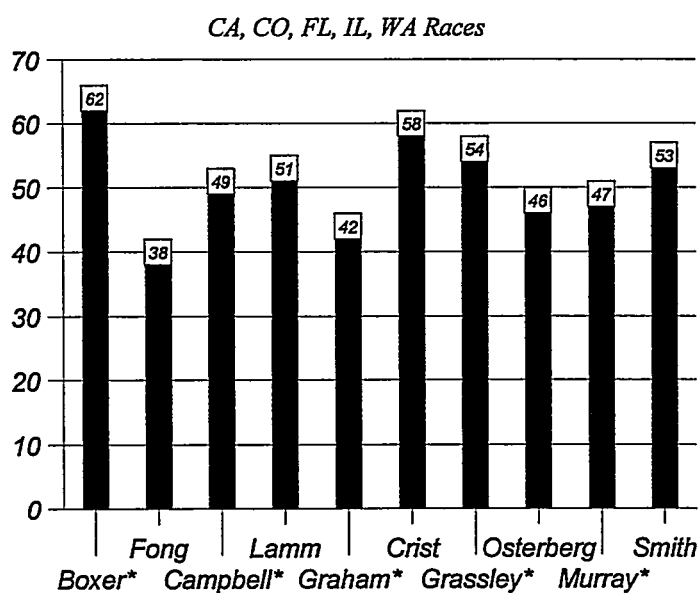


Figure 3. Percentage of clauses in contested races.

Candidates place a limited number of topics in the subject slots of their clauses. Candidates situate themselves most often as the subject of their clauses, and legislators next most often. This result might reasonably be expected since the purpose of the debate is for the candidates to answer questions about themselves. Table 29 shows the average distribution of the topics which candidates name in the subject of their clauses. In all, the items listed account for 63 percent of the clause subjects in the candidates debate discourse.

Table 29. Average Distribution of Subjects of all Clauses Combined  
(percentage of clauses)

Subject Type	Average Percentage
Self (I)	24
Opponent	06
Legislators	12
People	08
Groups	04
Legislation	06
Taxes	02
Money	01
All others (less than 1 percent each)	37
Total	100

As noted earlier, main clause information is relatively more important because it is placed at the top of the clause hierarchy. Information presented inside, or embedded in main clauses is demoted to a less important position. The embedded information is understood within the context of the main clause information. Consequently, where candidates place information determines the relative salience of that information. These data indicate that candidates place a great deal of information in embedded clauses. Table 30 indicates the most common nouns that the candidates place in the subject and object slots of clause types. Initial counts of nouns produced too few tokens of individual nouns to provide any comparisons among candidates. Consequently, the nouns were grouped into categories, and given classification headings. Most of the terms in table 30 are classification headings for a group of nouns and pronouns; for example, the nouns *congress* and *the Senate*, and the pronoun *we* that refers to the United

States legislators are classified under one heading, legislators. The highest number of tokens for each is based on the mean amounts.

Table 30. High Frequency Subjects and Objects for Each Clause Type  
(All Candidates)

clause type	high frequency subjects	high frequency objects
main clause	self, legislation, legislators	legislation, people, groups
subordinate	self, people, legislators	legislators, people
complement	people, U.S. government, opponent	people, groups, welfare
infinitive	legislators, employment, groups	social security, groups, taxes
nominalized	employment, the economy	education, opponent
relative	legislation, Americans	campaign finance, legislation, problems

Candidates position themselves, legislation, and legislators as the subject of main clauses more often than all subjects. This finding is consistent with our expectation since the focus of debates is on the candidates and their role as a legislators. Candidates place people (*everyone, you, people*), groups (*farmers, parents, students*) and legislators in the subject and in the object slots of clauses. Most of the issues which candidates were asked to address, such as social security, education, and campaign finance, are grammatically demoted, and thereby receive less prominence.

Table 31 presents the distribution of clause types for all candidates. As we might expect in oral discourse, main clauses are more frequent than any other type of clause type. However, more than half of the clauses are embedded in main clauses. The amount of embedded clauses indicates that the candidates' responses are more like written discourse (Chafe 1980). Table 31 shows the average distribution of clause types. Although candidates use more main clauses than any other individual type of clause, when we consider that subordinate, complement,



infinitive, nominalized, and relative clauses are embedded in the main clause, the percentage of embedded clauses exceeds that of main clauses.

Table 31. Average Distribution of Clause Types  
(All Candidates)

Clause Type	Average Percentage
Main clause	41
Subordinate clause	14
Complement clause	19
Infinitive clause	11
Nominalized clause	08
Relative clause	07

The level of embeddedness of information without regard for the type of clause in which the information appears was also counted. Again, synonyms and pronouns referencing the class noun were counted together. For example, candidates refer to political parties in several different ways. Within a single turn, and throughout the debates, candidates mention *Democrats, Republicans, the Democratic Party, the Republican Party, my party, my opponent's party* and the pronouns *we* and *they* which reference one of the political parties. All of these different tokens were grouped together and classified as *political party*. The mean amount for all candidates in all debates was used to determine the highest frequency subjects and objects of the clauses at each level of embedding. The information in table 30, which listed the subject for clause types, and in table 32, have similar content because they list the subjects and objects. The information differs, however, because the speakers can place any embedded clause at any level (see chapter 4, example 8 and table 13). Although candidates addressed many topics, as a whole, they talked about the items listed in table 32. What is interesting to

notice is that the candidates presented the information at the third, or fourth level the issues which was part of the their campaign agenda or the issues about which they were asked. This finding suggests that the issues, because they are embedded and thereby given less prominence, are less important to the candidates than presenting themselves, which most often occurs in main clauses.

Table 32. Topics as Subject of Clauses at Different Levels of Embeddedness, Regardless of Clause Type

<b>Embedded in main clause</b>	<b>high frequency subjects</b>	<b>high frequency objects</b>
Level 1	legislation, people	legislation, legislators, people, groups
Level 2	people, legislators	legislation, people, groups
Level 3	problems, groups, opponent	employment, the economy, legislation
Level 4	political parties, taxes	employment, welfare, government spending
Level 5	employment, taxes, education	employment, education, welfare

The average distribution of embedded clauses for all of the candidates indicates that the majority of the time the candidates use main clauses or clauses embedded at the first level. The single largest clause type are main clauses which are at the top level. The majority of the information that candidates present in their discourse, however, is located in embedded clauses at the first or second level, and the percentage of clauses which are embedded at all levels exceeds the percentage of top level main clauses. The analysis revealed that the distribution of embedded clauses did not vary significantly between incumbents and challengers, Democratic and Republican candidates, or female and male candidates. The proportion of each level of embeddedness for all clauses that the candidates produced is presented in table 33. The proportions listed are based on the mean of all of the candidates.

Table 33. Average Distribution of Embedded Clauses  
(All Candidates)

Level of Embeddedness	Average Percentage
Top level	41
First level embedded	29
Second level embedded	16
Third level embedded	09
Fourth level embedded	05

The location of information within the discourse is a small part of the picture of candidate's discourse during the pre-election debates. Further analysis indicates the transitivity patterns and context of the clauses in each candidates' response. The results of the analysis of the grammatical structures which indicate the candidates' priorities during their debates will be discussed in the following sections.

## 5.2 Establishing an Ethos

Political speech, according to Aristotle, relies on speakers impressing their audience with the speakers' mental and moral integrity, and general good will toward the audience, and that impression is made through the speakers' words. Aristotle goes on to claim that the task is easier for speakers who actually possess those characteristics. Because the audience cannot know whether or not candidates actually possess mental and moral integrity or have good will, the audience must rely on the words the candidates use as their primary access to the candidates' ethos.

We tend to gauge candidates' mental caliber through their discourse, and from it decide if they have adequate (or, even better, expert) knowledge of the subjects under discussion. The results of this study show that candidates suggest their expertise by talking about current

problems and issues, existing legislation or legislation that should be passed to solve the problems or address the issues (see section 5.2.3).

Candidates convey their moral character by displaying their respect for the virtues accepted by their audience, and expressing their determination to maintain their integrity. A topic common to all of the 1998 debates, the impeachment hearings of President Clinton, provided candidates with a way to express their accord with the virtues and behavior expected of high-ranking officeholders, and affirm the authority of the legal and political process, and in so doing attest to their own integrity and their ability to judge others. Every candidate expressed disapproval of Clinton's actions, outlined the process of the impeachment, and then claimed qualifications to serve as an unbiased juror. Murray's (WA, D) response, for example, is typical.

(26) Murray (WA, D) lines 237-259

..What the president did was wrong. I have said it was wrong. And now we have a process in place..to make a determination..what the next step will be. The house of representatives has voted to..uh..look into the matter..the..the..uh.. judiciary committee..will spend the next several months...and make the determination whether or not..to send them to the United States Senate. If they do that..I will be required..as part of the process..to be a juror in a case..with 99 other Senators. I take that role very seriously. I will be required to see..if there is sufficient evidence..if the grounds are there..and I wanna be there to take the oath of impartiality..that I will be required to take as a United States Senator.

Murray frames her response with two components of ethos—an affirmation of her and her audience's moral norms at the beginning of her response, *what the president did was wrong*, and an expression of her integrity twice at the end, *I take that role very seriously* and *I wanna be there to take the oath of impartiality*.

Another component of ethos is the speakers' expression of their good will toward their audience through a display of their interest in the welfare of the people in their audience. An essential requirement of good will is that the speakers avoid any self-aggrandizement. Candidates must establish their authority and qualifications with restraint and a degree of

humility and show how they will use their authority to serve the citizenry; otherwise, their audience might perceive them as boastful, brash or self-centered. The candidates often bring together references to their personal qualities, what we might consider the private sphere qualities of home and family, and references to their professional qualities, or public sphere qualities, of experience and service. They tend to use terms with broad, general appeal that might leave their audience with a favorable opinion of them. Although candidates present their credentials throughout the debate, they usually make overt attempts to do so in their opening and closing remarks, the material they prepare in advance. Example (26) demonstrates how candidates draw together several aspects of ethos building: the values and principles they share with the audience, their moral character, and their good will.

(27) Voinovich (OH, R) lines 1887-1896

It was my mom who taught me..that my life would have real meaning..if it was based on faith..family..and a genuine concern for my fellow man. Those principles have been my guiding light throughout my 32 year career in public service..and I'm even more committed to them now...I know they will help me..become a senator..you'll be proud of.

Voinovich begins by naming his mother as the teacher or giver of the positive attributes he is going to give himself. In addition, he indexes "family values," a Republican Party platform topic. Two of the three principles he names, *faith* and *family*, are factors in the private sphere, but are shared by most members of his audience, particularly since neither faith nor family is defined and the listeners can (and probably do) assume Voinovich defines them as they do. The last principle, *genuine concern for my fellow man*, relates to the public sphere, and is followed by a claim of long-term public service. These two principles together summarize the candidate's experience, moral character, and good will toward the audience.

Another component that speakers consider when establishing their ethos is the audience. When the candidates debate, they are addressing multiple audiences: the immediate audience of people physically present (the studio audience, moderator, and other candidate(s)), and the

distant television audience, presumably made up of the voters in the state and interested citizens from other states. The third audience is the media, including the camera operators, the director, and the reporters covering and analyzing the debate. Candidates tend to address the first two of these audiences and not the third. Because candidates attempt to address as many audiences as possible, they tend to refer to people in general terms, with nouns such as *people*, *everyone*, or the second person pronoun, *you*. In addition, they make general references to the state's citizens or Americans.

The analysis of the types of references the candidates make to others clarifies who the candidates are naming as agents of action and who are the recipients of the actions of others. The analysis focuses on the differences, if any, between Democrats and Republicans, incumbents and challengers, and female and male candidates.

Candidates in open races most often include everyone by referring to people in general and naming groups of people such as *farmers* or *parents*, as shown in table 34.

Table 34. Open Race Candidates' References to Their Audiences  
(percentage of clauses)

Candidate	People in general	Groups	State citizens	Americans
Lincoln *	05	06	01	01
Boozman	04	05	00	00
Crapo *	06	08	01	02
Mauk	04	11	00	02
Bayh *	04	04	02	01
Helmke	03	00	02	03
Voinovich *	06	03	05	01
Boyle	06	07	04	01

\* winner

Two candidates, Boozman and Mauk, do not mention state citizens at all, and Boozman does not mention Americans. The population which candidates include in their debate discourse tends to be a general one which allows listeners to infer or assume that the candidates are addressing them or including them. Although none of the open race candidates have a high percentage of reference to people in general, the winning candidates have a higher percentage of reference to people in general than the loser. Conversely, winning candidates in open races refer to groups of people less often than do losing candidates. Candidates in contested races (table 35) refer to people in general and state citizens more often than candidates in open

Table 35. Contested Race Candidates References to Their Audiences  
(percentage of clauses)

Candidate	People in general	Groups	State citizens	Americans
Boxer *	07	01	02	04
Fong	07	03	01	05
Campbell *	11	02	05	00
Lamm	10	02	01	00
Graham *	07	03	05	01
Crist	06	06	04	01
Grassley *	02	06	03	00
Osterberg	01	06	02	00
Dorgan *	06	04	02	00
Naleweja	04	03	08	00
Murray *	05	09	01	00
Smith	11	02	03	01

\*winning candidate

racers. Although the candidates overall seldom refer to Americans in their answers, candidates in contested races do so even less. In all, candidates refer to the members of their audience through general class nouns, such as *teachers*, or *Floridians*, or *Americans*, or include everyone with general nouns or non-referential pronouns.

What is interesting in Tables 34 and 35 is that candidates in the same debate tend to have similar proportions or reference to people in general. For example, Boxer (CA, D) and Fong (CA, R) both refer to people in a similar proportion of their clauses. Moreover, whether their amounts are high or low, both candidates refer to people in nearly equal amounts. The exception is Smith (WA, R) whose proportion is more than twice that of her opponent. This finding suggests that the candidates in the same debate are alike in the amount that they refer to people.

Ethos is also related to the candidate's and the voters' partisan affiliation. In the 1998 elections, the Washington Post reported the majority partisan affiliation of the 34 states which had U.S. Senate races (figure 4). According to the Washington Post, 18 of the states were

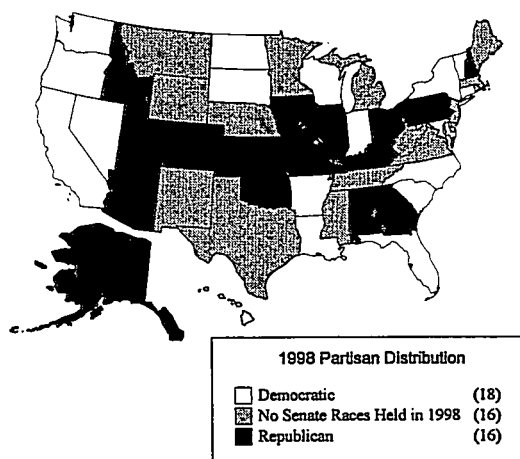


Figure 4. Partisan Distribution of States Holding Elections for U.S. Senate seats in 1998.



considered Democratic states, and 16 were considered Republican. The remaining states were not reported because no Senate elections were held in those states in 1998. In each the part of the candidates' audience favor the candidate solely because of their shared party affiliation, and candidates' must reflect their shared values. At the same time, some of the audience favor the candidates from the opposing part. The candidate must consider their own and their electorate's political affiliation when building their ethos.

All of the incumbent candidates in this study had the advantage of being from the state's majority party. Moreover, most of the candidates who won in open-seat races also belonged to the majority party in their state. This situation suggests that candidates need to emphasize their party affiliation and the party's platform if they are members of the majority party, but moderate or de-emphasize their party's differences if they are members of the minority party.

The debate data provide much evidence that candidates stand with their party's position on a number of issues. Candidates from the same party tend to give similar responses when addressing the same topic. For example, the Democratic candidates asked about abortion gave nearly identical responses which in many ways matches the Democratic Party Platform.<sup>16</sup>

(28) Murray (WA, D) line 1145-1154

When she has to make a decision like that..we in Congress shouldn't be the ones telling her..she will go to jail. That decision should be made between her..her family..her doctor..and her faith...I believe that every woman should have the right..to make her own decisions about her health

(29) Lincoln (AR, D) 344-351

..but abortion before viability..is something that government and politicians should not be deciding... it's a decision that should be made by a woman in consultation with her family..her creator..and her physician..and I think that's the most important thing..that we must look at in this nation.

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<sup>16</sup>The Democratic Party Platform, adopted in 1996, states:

“We believe it is a fundamental constitutional liberty that individual Americans—not government—can best take responsibility for making the most difficult and intensely personal decisions regarding reproduction.”

Murray begins with the assertion that the decision is not the government's, and thereby She also lists the people whom she believes should be involved: the woman, her family, her doctor, and her religious faith. Lincoln (AR, D) responds with words that closely parallel those used by Murray (28). Her choice is somewhat surprising since the partisan affiliation of her audience may be uncertain. In the 1996 elections, the voters in Arkansas elected a Republican U.S. Senator (Tim Hutchison) in an open seat race. Nonetheless, Lincoln, a Democratic candidate, won the 1998 open seat race.

Republican candidates adopt the same strategy—using the wording and ideas written in their party platform. For example, Republican candidates often mention that “the world is a dangerous place”<sup>17</sup> as part of their response to foreign policy and military intervention.

(30) Helmke (IN, R) 809-814

The world is a dangerous place. How do we respond. There are two major things that we need to do. Number one..we need to keep our defense..and information systems strong.

These examples show that the candidates draw on their party platform for some parts of their responses to questions. The ideas and words that the candidates use are those from the platform which resonate with the voters of the same political and ideological position. This strategy is what Fairclough 1992:103 calls “intertextuality,” the presence of other discourses, in this case, the discourse published in the parties' platforms. The audience members are familiar with these phrases, and because they have heard them before, and hear them repeated by different candidates, voters may not question the statement, or the sources, or the ideology behind them.

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<sup>17</sup> Republican Party Platform, 1996.

The first part of the 14th principle states: “Because this is a difficult and dangerous world, we believe that peace can be assured only through strength, that a strong national defense is necessary to protect America at home and secure its interests abroad.”

In sum, successful candidates are those who persuade the various audiences that they have values and an ideological perspective similar to the members of many audiences. The results suggest that candidates pay attention to building their ethos.

### 5.3 Claiming and assigning action

Since candidates are people who want to be or who have been members of the federal legislature, they are people who have a measure of power. Their power, however, depends on the favor of the voters, and voters may withhold their vote if candidates do not satisfactorily explain what they have done, what they will do, and what they believe. Through their discourse, the candidates indicate their views of who has the ability to influence events and cause things to happen (i.e., agency), who has responsibility for events, and who (or what) are the recipients of the action. In the context of campaign debates, candidates must claim responsibility, action, and credit for events that voters might perceive as positive, but equally important deflect or avoid responsibility and blame for events that voters might perceive as negative.

A summary of the percentage of subjects in each of the clause types for each of the candidates are presented in the following tables. The percentages are based on the number of tokens divided by the total number of clauses that the candidate produced. Winning candidates are identified with a \*, and each candidates' political affiliation (D for Democrat and R for Republican) and gender (F for female and M for male). Each of the subject categories includes synonyms as well as the word named. For example, the class of subjects *legislation* includes synonyms such as *bill*, *act*, or *law* and specific legislation such as the Clean Air Act or Affirmative Action. Table 31 summarizes the highest frequency topics for each clause type for open race candidates. All other subjects are present in less than one percent of the clauses.

Table 36 shows that most candidates in open race debates name themselves and other legislators as the subjects most often in main clauses. Their constituents are named more often

in subordinate or complement clauses. Since the debate is focused on the candidates, it is reasonable to expect candidates to name themselves as subjects. The candidates' constituents and legislation tend to be placed as subject in grammatically subordinate positions. Finally, the issues that candidates are asked to address, notably Social Security and the U.S. economy, are most often the subjects of the nominalized clauses.

Table 36. Highest Frequency Topics for Each Clause Type for Open Race Candidates

Clause type	Subject	Lincoln * D, F	Boozman R, M	Crapo * R, M	Mauk D, M	Bayh * D, M	Helmke R, M	Voinovich * R, M	Boyle D, F
main	self	18	15	15	13	17	07	14	12
	legislators	05	02	13	06	04	08	05	04
	legislation	03	02	02	02	01	02	01	01
subordinate	legislators	08	06	08	07	12	15	08	07
	people	02	02	04	01	01	01	02	03
	self	04	05	05	07	09	08	06	07
complement	people	03	02	02	03	03	02	04	03
	groups	04	08	01	02	02	01	03	01
	state citizens	01	00	01	00	02	02	05	04
	opponent	05	05	06	15	01	01	01	02
infinitive	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
nominalized	social security	01	02	02	01	01	01	01	01
	economics	00	01	01	01	02	01	02	01
relative	employment	01	01	01	00	01	01	02	01
	Americans	01	00	02	02	01	03	01	01

The subjects for infinitive clauses are not listed because in most instances of an infinitive clause, no subject is named and must be interpreted by referencing the subject of the main

clause or the context. Moreover, the number of tokens of any particular subject are too few to comprise one percent of the candidates' clauses. Excerpt (30) includes several infinitive clauses (the infinitive at the beginning of the clause is underlined) and illustrates how the listener and the researcher must infer from the context the subject of each infinitive. Of particular interest is the clause that is italicized.

(31) Fong (CA, R) lines 607-615

We need to ensure that..when two out of three of our students graduate from high school..they can do better than just read..write..and speak English..which most of them cannot do proficiently..which is why they're having such a difficult time..getting into school. So the answer is..higher standards..greater accountability of public education systems..so that they can qualify for..uh..higher education..and *to promote a program called Affirmative Opportunities*..to help those who truly need help.. based upon qualifications and need..not ethnicity and gender

The subject of the first infinitive clause in this sample, *to ensure*, can be inferred as being the same subject, *we*, as the main clause, *We need*. In this case *we* might be understood to be educators, parents, all of the people in the state, all of the members of the audience, legislators, of the United States government. (see section 5.3.2 for a more detailed discussion of the candidates' use of *we*.) Each of these people, or all of them are plausible agents who *need* or could *ensure*. A similar ambiguity is present in the second infinitive clause, *to promote a program called Affirmative Opportunities*. The main clause, *So the answer is higher standards greater accountability*, does not have a human subject; the subject is *answer*, and logically *answer* cannot be the subject of the infinitive clause. The next most plausible subject is the subject of the first clause, *we*.

The high-frequency topics for each clause type for contested race candidates were similar for all the candidates, though the proportion for each topic varied somewhat among candidates. Table 36 presents a summary of the proportion of each candidates' subject topics in relation to their location in the clause types. Subjects which occurred in less than one percent of the clauses are not included.

Table 37. Highest Frequency Topics for Each Clause Type for Contested Race Candidates

Clause type	Subject	Boxer * D, F	Fong R, M	Campbell * R, M	Lamm D, F	Graham * D, M	Crist R, M	Grassley * R, M	Osterberg D, M	Dorgan * D, M	Naleweja R, F	Murray * D, F	Smith R, F
main	self	10	09	12	14	11	14	14	06	12	09	14	16
	legislators	10	04	07	04	10	06	16	11	14	13	13	12
subordinate	legislation	03	01	01	02	03	02	02	02	00	02	01	01
	legislators	03	02	02	02	03	03	11	06	07	06	08	05
complement	people	04	03	08	06	04	04	02	01	04	01	03	05
	self	11	03	12	13	10	10	10	03	05	04	05	09
relative	people	03	04	03	04	03	02	00	00	02	03	02	06
	groups	05	03	01	01	02	05	05	05	02	03	07	01
infinite	state citizens	02	01	05	01	05	04	03	02	02	08	01	03
	opponent	06	07	07	09	02	04	00	04	10	13	02	03
nominalized	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
	legislation	05	05	07	07	08	08	07	06	09	05	11	08
relative	taxes	01	03	01	03	05	01	02	04	08	03	02	04
	employment	01	01	01	00	01	01	02	01	01	01	01	00
	legislation	01	02	00	02	02	04	00	01	01	02	01	01

### 5.3.1 Candidates Naming Themselves as Subjects

The first, and perhaps most obvious subject in candidates' clauses are the candidates themselves. Candidates in open races name themselves as the subject of their main clauses at least seven percent of the time. As shown in table 38, the winning candidates have a higher proportion of clauses with *I* as the subject (.167 +/- .006; N=4), than do the losing candidates (.105 +/- .020; N=4) (t-test,  $t=2.90$ , 6 d.f.,  $p=.027$ ). This distribution suggests that self-reference and winning in open races are correlated. This is consistent with the idea that candidates are expected to define themselves and their agenda during the debate, and that those who do so more are more successful.

Table 38. Self as Subject in Open Races  
(percentage of clauses)

State	Winner	self as subject	Loser	self as subject
AR	Lincoln	18	Boozman	15
ID	Crapo	15	Mauk	13
IN	Bayh	17	Helmke	07
OH	Voinovich	14	Boyle	12

In contested races (table 39), however, this pattern of self-reference does not hold. Half of the incumbent candidates have a higher proportion of self reference than their opponent, but half do not. Moreover, the proportion in contested races is lower, on average, than in open races. Contrary to expectations, the differences between candidates in the amount of self reference in the open and contested races are not significant (ANOVA) by gender ( $p=.891$ ), by political party ( $p=.604$ ), or by incumbency ( $p=.123$ ).

Table 39. Self as Subject in Contested Races  
(percentage of clauses)

State	Incumbent	self as subject	Challenger	self as subject
CA	Boxer	10	Fong	09
CO	Campbell	12	Lamm	14
FL	Graham	11	Crist	14
IA	Grassley	14	Osterberg	06
ND	Dorgan	12	Naleweja	09
WA	Murray	14	Smith	16

We might expect that incumbent candidates are already known to the voters and have used their franking privileges and free press coverage to make their names and records familiar to voters and thereby do not need to devote as much time to promoting themselves. It would follow then that challenger candidates in contested races, because they do not have these advantages, would devote more time to self-promotion than incumbents, but only half of the challenger candidates do so. Therefore, this explanation is inadequate to explain the data. Another possibility is that candidates in contested races are more selective of the things for which they will take credit or responsibility. They may choose, instead, to disperse the credit or responsibility to a larger group. If candidates choose *we* as the subject, they can include themselves, but they also allow themselves some distance from the event or action they are discussing. *We*, according to Kress (1989:53), could refer to an institution or a group and be a distancing device which gives speakers anonymity and impersonality. Candidates may prefer to distance themselves from events which some members of the audience disapprove. However, candidates must claim some actions for themselves, and they do. The candidates' use of *we* allows them to do both.



### 5.3.1.1 Self-reference and Verbs of Doing

It is relevant to investigate how much and in what way candidates assign roles to themselves. Material process verbs are one way the candidates can encode their involvement as agents. Candidates use material process verbs in more than one-fourth of their self-reference clauses. Candidates in open races have a higher proportion of material process verbs in self-reference clauses (mean .29 +/- .08; N=8) than candidates in contested races (mean .26 +/- .08; N=12). However, the difference in proportion between open and contested races is not significant. In addition, no significance was found between winners and losers, incumbents and challengers, Democrats and Republicans or female and male candidates.

Some tendencies, however, are present, though not statistically significant. When we examine the percentages of material process verbs in self-reference clauses for open race candidates, we see that Democratic candidates tend to have a higher percentage of material process verbs in self-reference clauses (mean .34 +/- .08; N=4) than the Republican candidates' (mean .24 +/- .04; N=4) (t-test,  $t=.021$ , 6 d.f,  $p=.07$ ) (table 40).

Table 40. Open Race Candidates' Self-reference and Material Process Verbs (Percentage of Self-reference Clauses)

State	Democrat	Material Process	Republican	Material Process
AR	Lincoln *	40	Boozman	26
ID	Mauk	38	Crapo *	27
IN	Bayh *	34	Helmke	26
OH	Boyle	23	Voinovich *	18

Consequently, to the listeners, Democratic candidates may seem to be more "active" than the Republican candidates. The range of the Democratic candidates is 17 percentage points, and

the range of the Republican candidates is 09, which reveals that there are greater individual variations among Democratic candidates than among Republican candidates.

The opposite trend in the amount of material process verbs in self-reference clauses for candidates in contested races is evident. The Republican candidates have a higher average amount of material process verbs (mean .28 +/- .05; N=6) than Democratic candidates (mean .25 +/- .09; N=6) (t-test,  $t = -.58 \pm .25$ , 10 d.f.,  $p = .589$ ). The lack of significance is partly explained by the wide range among Democratic candidates (a range of 30 percentage points), whereas the range for Republicans is narrow (13 percentage points).

As table 41 shows, two Democratic candidates have a higher percentage of self-reference and material process verb than their Republican opponents. In both of these races, one of the main arguments the opponent candidate leveled against the incumbent was his (both incumbents are male) lack of legislative performance. In response to this criticism, both candidates claimed more action for themselves.

Table 41. Contested Race Candidates' Self-reference and Material Process Verbs (Percentage of Self-reference Clauses)

State	Democratic	Material Process	Republican	Material Process
CA	Boxer*	28	Fong	34
CO	Lamm	25	Campbell *	28
FL	Graham*	39	Crist	30
IA	Osterberg	09	Grassley *	21
ND	Dorgan *	25	Naleweja	21
WA	Murray *	25	Smith	31

These results indicate that overall candidates in both race types have similar amounts of talk devoted to their own agency and the actions that they take. The Democratic candidates in both open and contested races have a wider range than the Republican candidates, and this finding

suggests that the Republican candidates are more like each other in claiming action for themselves than the Democratic candidates are. However, candidates claim more direct action for themselves when their legislative performance is criticized.

Tables 40 and 41 also show that open race winners and contested race incumbents usually have higher amounts of material process verbs in self-reference clauses, so the candidates who win (mean .28 +/- .07) claim agency slightly more often than do losing candidates (mean .26 +/- .08). The amount of difference lacks statistical significance. These findings suggest that all of the candidates have an implicit knowledge of how much agency to claim for themselves. One candidate, Osterberg (IA, D), is an outlier with only nine percent of his self-reference clauses containing material action verbs. Perhaps because Osterberg's experience has been primarily academic, as a professor of economics, he has less experience in politics than the other candidates. Therefore, he may not have learned the importance of talking about himself or claiming agency for himself.

Even though candidates have similar amounts of talk about what they are doing, they use different strategies for presenting the actions that they take. A discourse analysis of when in their responses candidates claim agency indicates that most of the candidates define their action in terms of their political activities of sponsoring or voting for legislation, and use non-directed action verbs, such as *vote*, and direct action verbs, such as *forge*. The placement of these clauses within the candidates' responses occurs in one of two patterns: (a) frequently remind the listeners of the actions the candidates have taken, or (b) emphasize their actions in relation to the key campaign issues. These patterns tend to relate to the candidate's gender.

Most of the female candidates use pattern (a) and claim some agency in each of their responses. In addition, more than half of their self-reference clauses with material action verbs are about their voting record. Candidates usually remind the listeners of the votes they have already cast (as illustrated in 32).

## (32) Boxer (CA, D) lines 331-333

I voted for over eight hundred and fifty nine billion dollars worth of tax cuts and just recently voted for the five hundred dollar per child tax credit education IRAs

By following this pattern, candidates claim an active stance for themselves concerning all of the issues and emphasize that they are dealing actively with each issue.

Most of the male candidates, on the other hand, devote most of their self-reference clauses with material process to their major campaign issues (pattern (b)). Most candidates have two or three major issues on which they focus. For example, Campbell (CO, R) focuses on water and transportation, which are important issues in Colorado. More than 60% of the clauses in which Campbell claims agency are located in his comments on these issues (33). Candidates who choose this pattern rarely claim action for themselves when they talk about other issues. These candidates adopt a strategy of emphasizing their activity in a few important areas.

## (33) Campbell (R) 754-756

I earmarked about 116 million dollars of that money..nine million for Lane in Douglas County..four million for widening the road in Montrose

When candidates are claiming action for themselves, they reveal their incumbency status by the verb tenses they use. Most incumbent candidates claim agency as a past event by using mostly past tense verbs. Challenger candidates claim future agency. This difference may be an expected feature of incumbency, since incumbent candidates have past senatorial actions but challengers have to refer to their future senatorial actions. It is a revealing feature, however, since some debates do not announce the incumbency status of the candidates as a way to mitigate the incumbent's advantage.

It is not surprising that most of the time the incumbent candidates claim agency and credit for legislation. What, then, of non-incumbent candidates—challenger candidates, open race

candidates and contested race challengers? They do not have a U.S. Senate voting record, so the theme of the action has to be something else. The results show that winning candidates in open races tend to claim legislative action similar to the incumbent candidates, as illustrated in (34).

(34) Lincoln (AR, D) 891-892

I have supported an increase in minimum wage..and I would do so again.

Although they do not have a voting record, they claim the action of supporting past legislation and promising similar action in the future.

Conversely, the challengers who do not win claim action in stereotypically gendered ways. Female candidates who lose assign people-oriented actions to themselves and choose verbs such as *visit*, *take care of*, and *raise* (as it relates to children) (35). Although female candidates usually are providing support for their campaign promises to keep close ties with the people in the state, they choose activities stereotypically assigned to women and to the private sphere.

(35) Naleweja (ND, R) 516-519

I visit everyday in North Dakota..with young people.. and raised four children in this state... and I know how important jobs are.

Male candidates who lose tend to present their action by using military verbs such as *fight*, *guard* and *protect*, as illustrated in (36).

(36) Crist 108-110

I have guarded against increased taxes during my six years in Tallahassee..and I would like to guard against that..in Washington too.

Male candidates talk about activities in the public sphere, and chooses verbs which suggest activities stereotypically associated with men. Thus the winning candidates claim legislative

action, regardless of gender, whereas losing candidates claim action in more gender-stereotypical ways.

However, neither pattern adequately describes how the two female candidates in the Washington debate present their activity. Both of the candidates, Murray (D) and Smith (R), claim agency when they are talking about their campaign agenda items. The format of the debate contributes to the placement of when in the debate the candidates talk about their campaign issues. The panelists direct their questions to only one candidate, and that candidate has two turns to respond: first, to answer the question, and again, after her opponent speaks. Moreover, most of these candidate-specific questions concern issues from the candidates' campaign. Murray and Smith have similar amounts of material process verbs in self-reference clauses associated with people. However, they represent themselves differently. As the following examples demonstrate, Murray associates herself with people as a means to accomplish legislative ends; Smith actively investigates her own mental process.

(37) Murray 1070-1078

I took a business delegation to China.. a year ago...I took the head of the Wheat Growers Association with me..and we were able to sit across the table.. from the agricultural minister in China.. and talk about what we could do.. to facilitate putting our products.. into China.

In (37), and in many others of Murray's clauses, her activity involves particular people or groups of people rather than legislation, and she usually situates herself in a collaborative position with others to achieve a particular goal. She mentions working with a youth caucus when she addresses youth violence, and has worked with local communities "to put into place habitat conservation plans" (line 349). In short, her public actions relate to people.

Smith also places most of her self-reference clauses with material action verbs in responses about her own campaign issues. However, Smith frequently claims agentive action which actually references a mental process.

## (38) Smith 1442-1447

I made a choice not to [take PAC money]..at that point..not only did I lead by example..but I had to make other choices..I made a choice..that I would choose what's called hard money.

Smith elides the reference to PAC money, one of the topics on which she heavily criticizes her opponent. She offers her reasons for her subsequent actions by using *made*, suggesting a material process of creating, but she is describing her mental process. She adopts this same strategy elsewhere in the debate as well. In response to a question about a politician's right to privacy (an indirect question about the Clinton impeachment), Smith says she "had to dig deep and think about" her position on character and privacy (line 434). Again, she is describing her mental process. Smith appears self-revealing and thoughtful, but also troubled by the demands of politics.

In sum, the results indicate that candidates in open races attribute more direct action to themselves than contested race candidates. Moreover, when we consider the candidates' political party, we find that among open race candidates, the Democratic candidates claim more action for themselves than their Republican opponents, but among contested race candidates, the Republican candidates claim more action. Finally, winners attribute more action to themselves than losers in both types of races. Candidates tend to claim action strategically: they emphasize their action on each issue, or they emphasize their action on their major campaign issues; usually, the pattern depends on the gender of the candidate. Finally, winning candidates talk about legislative activities, while losing candidates tend to use material process verbs which are associated with stereotypically gender-based activities.

### 5.3.1.2 Self-reference and Verbs of Mental Cognition

Although candidates present themselves as active agents (see example 37), they also present themselves as individuals who think. Candidates use mental cognition verbs nearly as

often as they use material action verbs, and they select *think* and *believe* more often than other mental cognition verbs. As we might expect given the structural requirements on mental process verbs (i.e., they are verbs that take sentential complements), the candidates' use of mental cognition verbs has a positive correlation with complement clauses (Pearson Correlation .695,  $p=.001$ ;  $N=20$ ).

As shown in table 42, the candidates use mental cognition verbs in about one-fourth of their self-reference clauses. In open races, the mean amount of mental cognition verbs in self-reference clauses for winning candidates is greater (mean, .33 +/- .02;  $N = 4$ ) than for losing candidates (mean, .25 +/- .06,  $N=4$ ). However, this difference is not statistically significant.

Table 42. Open Race Candidates' Self-reference and Mental Cognition Verbs (Percentage of Self-reference Clauses)

State	Winner (F/M)	Mental Cognition	Loser (F/M)	Mental Cognition
AR	Lincoln (F)	27	Boozman (M)	27
ID	Crapo (M)	37	Mauk (M)	19
IN	Bayh (M)	35	Helmke (M)	18
OH	Voinovich (M)	33	Boyle (F)	42

Conversely, in contested races, the mean amount of mental cognition verbs for losing candidates is greater (mean .25 +/- .04;  $N=6$ ) than for winning candidates (mean .18 +/- .02;  $N=6$ ). Female incumbents have the highest amount of mental cognition verbs, and female challengers have the lowest amounts. However, note also that each woman has a higher percentage of mental cognition verbs than her opponent when her opponent is male. This finding suggests that female candidates may seem to be more thoughtful or tentative than their male opponents. Since mental cognition verbs have at least two possible interpretations, speakers who use mental cognition verbs may indicate to their listeners that they are thoughtful



and/or tentative, since *think* and similar words can be understood to indicate the speaker's uncertainty.

Table 43. Contested Race Candidates' Self-reference and Mental Cognition Verbs (Percentage of Self-reference Clauses)

State	Incumbent (F/M)	Mental Cognition	Challenger (F/M)	Mental Cognition
CA	Boxer (F)	28	Fong (M)	24
CO	Campbell (M)	17	Lamm (F)	19
FL	Graham (M)	16	Crist (M)	43
IA	Grassley (M)	14	Osterberg (M)	25
ND	Dorgan (M)	13	Naleweja (F)	14
WA	Murray (F)	22	Smith (F)	25

In addition, the reverse pattern is evident in the open races. The female winning candidate in an open race has the lowest proportion and the female losing candidate has the highest proportion (table 42). This distribution effects the variance such that differences are not statistically significant. Nonetheless, female candidates in open races use equal of more mental cognition verbs than their opponents. Thus female candidates, regardless of race type, seem to prefer mental cognition verbs overall.

The word *think* presents the researcher with a challenge for interpretation, especially in the genre of political debate. This verb can indicate that the candidate has considered the topic logically rather than emotionally. For example, the candidates say *I think that x is important*, which suggests the speaker's logical process, rather than *I feel that x is important*, which suggests the speaker's emotional process. At the same time, however, *think* indicates a degree of uncertainty, especially when compared with *know*. Thus, the candidates indicate a certain

amount of tentativeness<sup>18</sup> along with their subjective evaluation of whatever information they provide in the complement clause that follows *I think*. The tentative nature of *think* seems to provide the candidates with several advantages. First, it gives them an “out” or a way to change their minds if they gather new information. Next, it is a way to suggest a difference of opinion with their opponent, but not make the claim that they are right and their opponent is wrong. Third, *think* allows candidates to mitigate their authority, a necessary strategy since candidates are expected to be knowledgeable, but at the same time deferential to the voters’ wishes; voters could view candidates who claim to *know* everything as pompous, impolite, and insufficiently deferential, and accordingly withhold their vote.

When candidates do use *know*, they do so with a limited number of topics. They claim knowledge about someone else, senior citizens, voters, the opponent, or a colleague, but not about legislation or policy. For example, Boxer (CA, D) claims that she knows voters are “gonna get out and vote.” Voinovich (OH, R) knows about his principles (39).

(39) Voinovich (line 39)

I know that my principles will help me to be a senator that people will be proud of.

Other candidates claim knowledge about their opponents or their opponents’ actions.

(40) Bayh (line 141)

I know my opponent has expressed his disappointment in the president.

What is noteworthy about the candidates’ use of the verb *know* is that none of the candidates claims knowledge about a particular issue, policy, or legislation, even though a number of studies have shown that people want their representatives to be knowledgeable, and presumably certain of their knowledge. When candidates talk about issues, policies, and legislation, they use *think* or *believe*—verbs with built in plausible deniability.

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<sup>18</sup> Holmes (1984) considers *I think* as a hedge.

All of the candidates use mental process verbs to talk about their agenda items and offer their opinions on the topics of the questions. Among the Democratic candidates, the female candidates use significantly more mental cognition verbs when they name themselves as the subject (.2379 +/- .0002; N=5) than the male Democratic candidates (.1445 +/- .0001; N=5) (independent samples t-test,  $t = 3.418$ , d.f., 8,  $p = .009$ ).<sup>19</sup> The additional amount of mental cognition verbs in the female candidates' speech most often appears as an evaluative comment such as "I think this is important" early in their response. Examples (41) and (42) show the difference between Boyle, a female Democratic candidate, and Bayh, a male Democratic candidate.

(41) Boyle (lines 229-236)

I also think it is important..that we make sure..that young people have as many opportunities to do well in their working career...to guarantee that they will have other options...and be able to supplement Social Security..because I believe it still must be the underpinning..for every single person

(42) Bayh (lines 409-411)

I think that is exactly the approach that we ought to take. But as Jack's question pointed out..we really don't have the surplus at the national level today..and the Congressional Budget Office said.. and it's controlled by Republicans...estimates that for at least the next five years we won't have any surplus at all.

Both of the candidates are talking about the reported budget surplus and Social Security. Both candidates have the opinion that Social Security should be protected. However, Boyle has two instances of mental cognitive verbs in self-reference clauses, whereas Bayh has only one. Boyle's first instance is an evaluative comment, which has been identified as a dispreferred strategy (Labov 1972), and her evaluation concerns the obligation of legislators to the constituents (*young people*). Bayh presents an evaluation as well, through the adverb *exactly*,

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<sup>19</sup>Differences between female and male Republican candidates' use of mental cognition verbs associated with their self-reference subjects could not be calculated because the sample contains too few female Republican candidates.

which suggests a high degree of certainty, and his evaluation concerns the obligation of legislators to take action (*approach*).

Candidates rarely choose mental cognition verbs other than *think* and *believe* in their self-reference clauses with one exception: losing candidates also use *understand*, usually in response to their opponent's claim or implication that they do not know the situation or the facts. For example, Naleweja (ND, R) responds to her opponent's assertion that she does not know what she is talking about.

(43) Naleweja (lines 39-41)

I understand that what happens in Washington D. C...and what does not happen...really does impact what happens back here

In much the same way that Naleweja adds a strengthener, *really* to the verb in the complement clause to reinforce her claim, candidates who choose *understand* tend to add other, strengthening modifiers to increase the certainty of their claim.

In addition to using modifiers, most candidates also have a token or two of negation in relation to their mental process verbs. One candidate, however, Osterberg (IA, D) has many more tokens of this feature than the other candidates. He uses *do not think* or *do not believe* in fully one-third of his tokens of mental cognition verbs. For example,

(44) Osterberg (lines 769-770)

I do not believe the tax cuts have gone to the middle class people. Most of the tax cuts we have seen in the past...go to very high income people.

Rather than offering an opposing or alternate claim, Osterberg repeats what his opponent has said, as the complement of a negated mental cognition verb. Moreover, he chooses the formal, non-contracted form, *do not*, rather than the informal, contracted form. The high proportion of negatives in the speaker's discourse may suggest that the candidate is contrary rather than

simply opposing the opponent's proposal. In addition, the formal structure tends to distance the listener from the speaker.

Individual candidates seldom vary from using *I think* and *I believe* when they use mental cognition verbs in their self-reference clauses. In general, candidates use *I think* as an introductory clause for their position statements. The most evident trend is that female candidates use more mental cognition verbs than their male opponents. Although this phenomenon could be attributed to a candidate's personal style, the variations evident in this sample are also suggestive of gender differences<sup>20</sup>

### 5.3.2 Assigning Action to Others

In addition to claiming action for themselves, the candidates attribute a great deal of action to others. All of the candidates place in the subject of their clauses their opponents, legislators, people in general, and inanimate items, such as bills, government programs, and taxes. All of the candidates attribute some action to their opponents, but tend to assign them low-agency types of actions. Candidates also name legislators as the subject of their clause. Incumbents, however, do so more often than the other candidates. The results indicate that candidates's references to legislators tend to serve several functions. The last group to whom candidates attribute action are the candidates' intended audience, specifically the voters who are watching the debate.

#### 5.3.2.1 Assigning Action to Opponents

Candidates are face-to-face with their opponent during a debate, and, as discussed in chapters 2 and 3, the format tends to facilitate confrontation between opposing candidates. Furthermore, an underlying assumption of campaign debates is that the candidates will not or do not agree on what the issues are or on the solutions to the problems and the candidates will

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<sup>20</sup>cf., research on gender and hedging such as Lakoff (1973) and Holmes (1994).

indicate in what ways they differ from their opponent. All of the candidates mention their opponent though the amount varies considerably. Figure 5 shows that some candidates seldom mention their opponent, whereas others talk a great deal about their opponent. Most of the open race candidates occupy the extreme ends; four of the five candidates with a lower proportion of references to their opponents are open race candidates, and the candidate with the highest proportion of clauses referencing his opponent (Mauk) is also an open race candidate. (Open race candidates are marked by a #). A Levene test of homogeneity of variance of the proportion of instances in which candidates place their opponent in the subject of a clause reveals that the variances among groups are equal [gender (.176, 18 d.f.,  $p=.679$ ), political party (.011, 18 d.f.,  $p=.918$ ); incumbency (.540, 18 d.f.,  $p=.472$ )], and ANOVA tests showed no significant difference among the candidates along any of these variables.

However, although the differences are small, there is a pattern between winning and losing candidates. Eighty percent of the winning candidates refer to their opponents less often than their opponents refer to them. (In figure 5, the winning candidates are marked with a \*). Moreover, in races where the difference between the amount of votes the winning and losing candidate received is small, that is, when it is a close race, the candidates in these races refer to their opponents in nearly equal amounts. For example, the Washington race between Murray (D) and Smith (R) was considered a close race: Murray received 58 percent of the votes and Smith received 42 percent; amounts over 40 percent are unusual for challenger candidates. Murray referred to her opponent in two percent of her clauses and Smith referred to her opponent in three percent of her clauses. Conversely, in the two cases in which the losing candidates refer to their opponents a great deal, they receive less than 40 percent of the votes; Mauk received 28 percent of the votes in the Idaho race and Naleweja received 35 percent of the votes (see appendix A). Challenger candidates may have a higher percentage of references to their opponents because they have to talk about their opponents' voting record and position

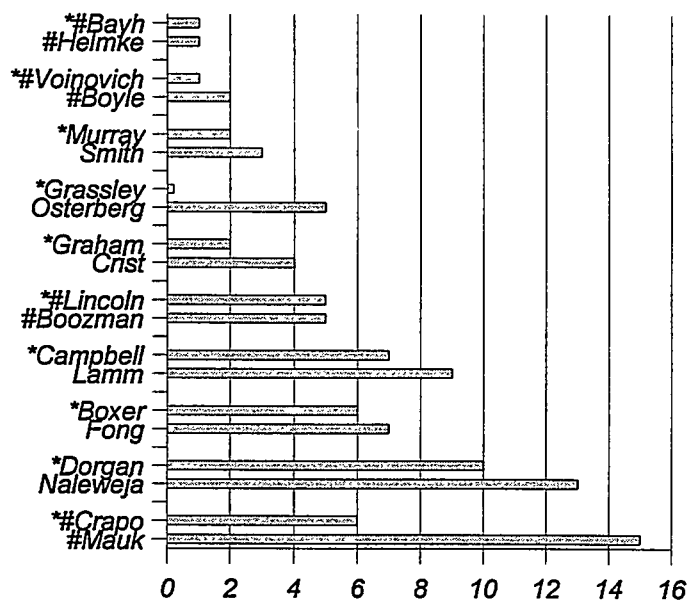


Figure 5. Percentage of clauses candidates refer to their opponents.

on the issues in order to contest them. Incumbent candidates, on the other hand, can, in effect, ignore their opponents by not talking about them.

When candidates talk about their opponents, they tend to present the opponents as weak, inefficient, and less agentic. Regardless of the race type, incumbency, political party, or gender, candidates represent themselves as agentic and their opponent as less agentic, regardless of the race type, or the incumbency status, political party, or gender of the speaker. One of the most striking examples of a candidate representing his opponent as less agentic is found in the North Dakota debate. In seven of nine questions, Dorgan (D) begins several of his responses with personal attacks against his opponent. In excerpt (45), he attributes three actions to his opponent, but two of the actions are negative, *misrepresents* and *mangles*, and one is a verbal process verb, *says*, which suggests his opponent talks about legislating, but has not legislated (or will not). Moreover, his tone, and the preamble “*oh Lord*” and “*it’s hard to*

*know where to start,*” suggest that her action is egregious and ill-founded. His word choice, particularly the word *mangles*, further emphasizes his displeasure with her claim. He says their differences are a “disagreement,” but seems to suggest that her “misrepresentation” is deliberate and intentional. Dorgan goes on to explain what Naleweja’s position “means,” and attributes to her, rather than to the government, the power to tax people and exempt people from paying taxes.

(45) Dorgan (lines 644-657)

Oh Lord..it’s hard to know where to start. She so...she so misrepresents and mangles my record...we have a disagreement about taxes...first of all...she says..we should abolish all capital gains taxes..which means..that she would tax people who work..but would exempt people who get their income from their investments. So guess what...that means that the richest Americans will pay no tax..and working Americans will be paying the bills for the government.

Dorgan presents a contradictory view of his opponent. On the one hand, she is being irrational, what many would see as a not-so-subtle gender-based attack. On the other hand, Dorgan attributes to her a great deal of power to help the rich and harm the poor. Dorgan also assumes an authoritative stance, addressing the audience as unknowledgeable or uninformed, indicated by *guess what*.<sup>21</sup>

Although most candidates do not attack their opponents as directly as Dorgan does in example (45), they use verbs, notably verbal process verbs and mental process verbs, which attribute less agency to their opponents. A typical pattern of reference to one’s opponent is found in Graham’s (FL, D) talk about Medicare. He uses a verbal process verb, *suggested*, to describe his opponent’s action.

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<sup>21</sup>cf., Chilton and Schäffner’s (1997:217) analysis of British Prime Minister John Major’s presupposition of authority through his use of pronouns and “redundant formulae” such as “I’ll tell you why.”



## (46) Graham (lines 172-178)

Mr Crist has suggested..that one of the important components of the financing of Medicare.. should be repealed. If he proposes to do so..I think it's his responsibility..to suggest how we are going to replace those funds.

Graham describes Crist's proposal as a suggestion, which ascribes less certainty to Crist. If Graham had chosen *said* or *propose* in the first clause, Graham could have indicated a stronger or more certain position for his opponent. However, Graham makes it clear that a proposal has not been made, but might be, by using the conditional *if*. Graham continues, through the possessive noun phrase, *his responsibility*, to talk about his opponent. This noun phrase occupies the syntactic location of the predicate of an embedded clause and shifts the subject from the opponent to the opponent's responsibility. Graham seems to bury his opponent grammatically while also assigning him a task. However, the task is merely to make another suggestion, rather than to take some kind of action, such as making a formal proposal or writing a piece of legislation. Here, Graham makes Crist appear less agentive.

In response to the same question, Crist counters with this comment:

## (47) Crist (lines 197-202)

Senator Graham...felt that one of the ways to improve and make Medicare last longer was to raise the age of eligibility of those for Medicare...as well as the premium cost for Medicare...I don't think that is the right approach

Crist's comment is representative of the second way in which candidates attribute low-agency to their opponents: candidates represent their opponent's opinion as a feeling, rather than as a belief or fact. Crist also suggests that Graham may feel there is more than one way to improve Medicare, although Crist only focuses on an undesirable one. In this excerpt, the entire approach is summarized in the predicate of a relational process verb, *was*. The embedded infinitive Crist uses, *to raise*, suggests that Graham is potentially agentive, but the grammatical structure of an infinitive is such that it does not have tense and thereby does not give a point

of reference in time for the action (Halliday 1994:75). Consequently, candidates can use infinitive to describe their opponent's actions, but suspend the action in time, and reduce its importance. Most directly, candidates attribute feelings, which are subjective and low in agency, to their opponents.

Excerpts 46 and 47 also exemplify two other features found in candidates' discourse which references their opponents. First, candidates often do not respond to their opponents comments. In (47), for example, Crist does not respond to Graham's comment that he explain what he would do to replace the funds (in 46). Candidates' lack of response might suggest to some listeners that the topic is not worth addressing. Opponents, however, can point out the absence of a response. Second, candidates tend to focus on one or two segment of their opponent's positions, usually the parts which can be presented negatively. For example, in (46) Graham focuses attention on his opponent's wanting to repeal funding for Medicare, and in (47) Crist focuses on his opponent's wanting to raise the eligibility age and premium costs.

During their debates, candidates attribute actions to their opponents, but they tend to present them in syntactically embedded clauses and with low-agency transitive expressions. Some candidates assign verbal processes to their opponents, suggesting that the opponents talk, but that they lack the agency to accomplish the duties of a legislator. Another strategy candidates use is to attribute to their opponent mental processes, feeling or thinking, which assigns the opponent to low-agentive activity. When we compare how candidates attribute low-agentive activity to their opponents and how they attribute material process verbs of doing to themselves, we can see how candidates differentiate themselves from their opponent.

### 5.3.2.2 Assigning Action to Legislators

In addition to naming themselves and their opponents as the subjects of clauses, candidates name legislators as the subjects of their clauses. Candidates name Congress, Senate,

or more often, their pronoun equivalent, *we*,<sup>22</sup> as the subject of their clauses in amounts ranging from about five percent to about 20 percent.

In contested races, incumbent candidates tend to favor legislators as the subject of their clauses. This result might be expected, since incumbents are members of the class of federal legislators, whereas the challenger candidates are not. Empirical evidence supports the observation that incumbent candidates name legislators as the subject (.20 +/- .0017; N=6) more often than challenger candidates (.13 +/- .0018); N=6) (t-test,  $t=-2.549$ , 10 d.f.,  $p=.02$ ). Figure 6 shows the percentage of references to legislators amounts of these types of subjects

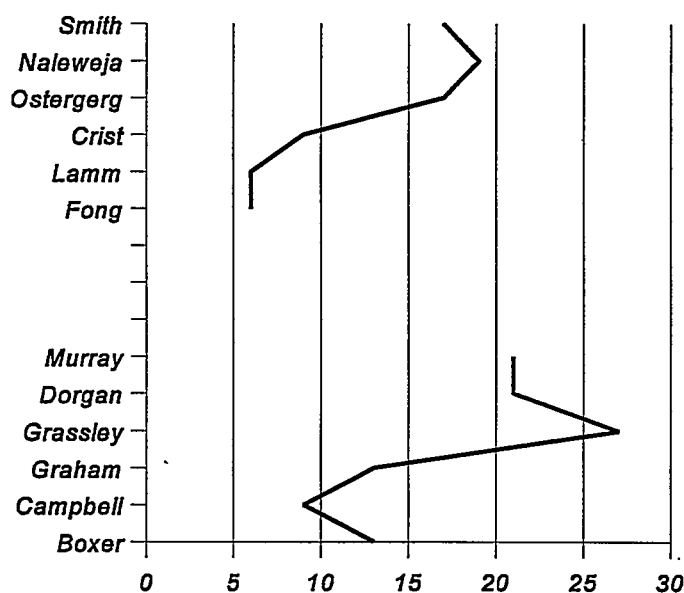


Figure 6. Contested race candidates' percentages of clauses with *legislators* as the subject.

for each candidate. The challengers are grouped together at the top of the chart, and incumbents are grouped together at the bottom of the chart; the candidates from the same

<sup>22</sup> To consider cases of self-reference and self-references which include others, tokens of *we* were coded, counted and examined separately from tokens of *I*

debate are located in the same position in the list: the first name in the challenger list, Smith, is debating the incumbent, Murray, who is listed first among the incumbents.

Although some of the challengers' amounts exceed those of some of the incumbents in other races, within each debate, the pattern is consistent. For example, Osterberg names legislators as the subject in 17 percent of his clauses, which exceeds incumbent candidate Campbell's nine percent. However, Grassley, who is Osterberg's opponent, names legislators as the subject in 27 percent of his clauses.

This result may seem trivial if most such references are self-references (i.e., all of the incumbents' references to legislators are references to themselves); however, further analysis of the context of the candidates' references to legislators indicates that candidates use *we*, which seems to refer to legislators, ambiguously. *We*, in conversation, usually includes the speaker and the hearer or a referent known to both. In campaign debates, the hearer is not an individual, but an audience, so the referent can include all or part of the listening audience and some or all legislators. In other words, the referent can be ambiguous, referring to the state's citizens, the state, the people who share the speaker's political affiliation, legislators from the speaker's political party, legislators from the House of Representatives or Senate, or both, the government, and the country. Candidates tend to blend these referents, so that in approximately half of the tokens in which candidates use *we*, the hearer can infer multiple referents.

The analysis indicates that candidates tend to name legislators as subjects most frequently when talking about their agenda topics, and they use the pronoun *we* much more often in their responses to these topics than to other topics. As we might expect, the majority of the topics are federal issues, such as taxes, the economy, and foreign policy. On average, candidates in open races have 45 percent of their references to legislators occur in the response to two or three topics. When open race candidates are compared with contested race candidate, the open race candidates have a slightly higher overall average of references to legislators in self

reference clauses; candidates in contested races have an overall average of 44 percent. Table 44 shows the percentage of references to legislators which occur in the open race candidate's responses to particular topics. Only topics which had greater than five percent of the total references to legislators are included. No trends are evident in the total amount of references to legislators when we consider the candidates' political affiliation or gender.

Table 44. Topics Associated with References to Legislators in Open Races

Candidate	Topic and Percentage	Total	Candidate	Topic and Percentage	Total
Lincoln D, F *	classroom discipline	19	Bayh D, M *	economic stability	.26
	impeachment	16		terrorism	.19
	foreign policy	16		taxes	.17
Boozman R, M	minimum wage	33	Helmke R, M	taxes	.24
	foreign policy	22		terrorism	.12
Crapo R, M *	foreign policy	23		economic stability	.09
	school vouchers	12	Voinovich R, M *	employment	.13
	tax cuts	09		impeachment	.11
Mauk D, M	tax cuts	21		Social Security	.11
	foreign policy	15	Boyle D, F	economic stability	.11
	school vouchers	11		foreign policy	.08

\* winning candidate

When candidates in open races have a higher percentage of references to legislators in their response than their opponents, the referent for *we* tends to be either state legislators or indirect references to federal legislators from the same political party as the speaker. In the first half of (48), Helmke (R, IN) could be referring to Congress. The referent for *we* in the second half shifts from the state legislators to federal legislators. Since Helmke is not a member of Congress, but *we* indicates the speaker's inclusion in the reference group, we can infer that he is referring to Republican legislators in at least the last two clauses.

## (48) Helmke (lines 547-558)

We need these tax cuts more than ever. It sounds real good to say...let's save this..and take care of Social Security first..but if we are waiting until 2030..and then we are paying off the national debt..we are never going to see those tax cuts. In Indiana we balanced the budget..and then we passed the largest tax cut in history. Now..we balanced the budget at the federal level. Let's get some tax cuts for Hoosier voters now.

In general, open race candidates' use of *we* refers to legislators from the same political party to which they, the speakers, belong.

Candidates in contested races differ from candidates in open races in the number of topics associated with references to legislators (table 45).

Table 45. Topics Associated with References to Legislators in Contested Races

Candidate	Topic and Percentage		Total	Candidate	Topic and Percentage		Total
Boxer D, F *	government safety	15	30	Grassley R, M *	impeachment	26	51
	federal budget	15			economic planning	25	
Fong R, M	gun control	18	35	Osterberg D, M	impeachment	27	48
	Affirmative Action	17			economic planning	21	
Campbell R, M *	Farm Bill	21	42	Dorgan D, M *	farm economy	30	60
	water	21			fast-track	30	
Lamm D, F	airline regulations	19	35	Nalaweja R, F	farm economy	35	61
	BLM	16			fast-track	26	
Graham D, M *	taxes	19	38	Murray D, F *	environment	13	26
	Medicare	19			impeachment	13	
Crist R, M	gun control	21	52	Smith R, F	impeachment	27	42
	Social Security	16			employment	15	
	Medicare	15					

\* winning candidate

In open races, most candidates had three topics which had amounts higher than ten percent of their references to legislators. In contested races, nearly all of the candidates had more than ten percent of their references to legislators grouped together in their response and in relation to two topics. Perhaps because incumbent candidates are experienced and have an increased awareness of the role and responsibility of legislators, candidates in contested races seem to have a more focused presentation of legislators. Challenger candidates paralleled the incumbent candidates in the concentration and amount of legislative references.

Candidates in contested races differ, however, in the distribution of their references to legislators. Challengers refer to legislators more often in one topic than another, whereas incumbents tend to have an equal or nearly equal proportion of their references devoted to their key issues. For example, Boxer most often refers to legislators when she is talking about government safety and the federal budget, and the amount is equal for both topics. On the other hand Fong, her opponent, has a greater proportion of his references to legislators in his talk about gun control. Another difference in the candidates's proportion of references to legislators is evident between Democratic and Republican candidates. Republican candidates's refer to legislators in higher amounts than Democratic candidates.

Because candidates use *we* for slightly more than half of the time that they name legislators as the subject of a clause, they introduce ambiguity into their responses. On the one hand, Candidates can claim credit for the actions that they attribute to *we*, and they signal their membership in the group who is responsible for legislative action. On the other hand, candidates can distance themselves slightly by being part of a group rather than taking action on their own, so *we* also permits candidates a modicum of distance from the responsibility. If the listeners do not favor particular actions or legislation, or if the proposals do not turn out as candidates have presented them, the candidates have created a group responsibility rather than individual responsibility.

Incumbents tend to use *we* such that there is an overlap or a shift in referents. Consequently, can expand the referent to include citizens or particular groups or contract the referent to exclude member of the opposing political party. Overlapping and shifting of referents for *we* means that hearers can conceptualize the speaker's meaning in several ways. The most obvious function for expanding the referent is to include as many audiences as possible. Conversely, narrowing the referent for *we* allows candidates to criticize or blame others indirectly. Candidates often present a segment of talk with numerous tokens of *we* grouped together which suggests that the pronoun, *we*, has the same referent, but in fact, the referents shift or overlap, and increase the ambiguity. Excerpt (49) illustrates how candidates use shifting and overlapping referents for *we* to criticize their opponent or their opponent's party.

(49) Grassley (R, IA) lines 444-455

Remember that we have an environment..where we have set aside 43 billion dollars..not subject to the political whims of Washington..so that farmers can farm..according to the marketplace. We have..uh..uh..promised..to get barriers down..and when we get fast track trading for the president..which the Democratic..uh..doesn't want to give to a Democratic president..uh..we will be able to do this.

At first glance, (or first heard by the listener), the initial token of *we* in this excerpt is ambiguous, and plausible referents could be the speaker, Congress and the audience. Since the first word, *remember* is an imperative, the speaker has assumed authority to tell the listeners what to do. The imperative also presents the information as though the listeners already know, though they may have forgotten, and establishes a context for *we*, so that the most likely referent is audience. The second token of *we* seems to refer to Congress, but the information which follows, *not subject to the political whims of Washington*, indicates that the speaker has separated those who are *we* from those who are politically capricious. The speaker has assumed the truth and existence of people who use money for *political whims*, but he has excluded himself and others from this group. Since Grassley is a Republican, and an incumbent



candidate, we can reasonably infer that he is a member of *we*, and Democratic Senators are those who act on *political* whims. The hearer has to infer this information in these clauses until the speaker names Democrats several clauses later.

All of the candidates name legislators as the subject of their clauses, and often attribute action to legislators. In many cases, candidates use *we* as the pronoun replacement for legislators, and thereby ambiguate the agents; they can include the audience, criticize their opponent and opponent's party, claim credit for action and distance themselves from blame simply by shifting the referent for *we*.

### 5.3.2.3 Assigning Action to People and Groups of People

Candidates talk about people in general terms, and place people as subjects and as recipients of actions. As noted in section 5.1 and shown in tables 29 and 30, candidates in contested races name people in general more often as the subject of their clauses than candidates in open races, and winning candidates have a higher percentage of clauses with people as the subject than losing candidates do.

Candidates tend to begin their references to people in general with the formal noun *people*, then shift to an informal, and seemingly more personal *you*, a non-referential pronoun usage common to informal conversation. In example (50) Graham's (FL, D) reference to people in general as the subject of clauses is typical of all candidates when they are addressing social issues such as education and health care.

#### (50) Graham (lines 343-345; 361-367)

Right now we are going in the opposite direction..with many people who are already on a Medicare HMO.. seeing their benefits terminated. [The patient's bill of rights provides] protections that will allow them to access..uh..specialists..protections in the emergency rooms..so that if you go to the emergency room..with a pain in your left chest..and you come out with a diagnosis..you don't get a second heart attack..by the enormous bill that you would receive later. <laughter>

Graham employs an informality with listeners, what Fairclough (1992:216) calls a “simulation of aspects of interpersonal meaning,” by his use of *you* and his humorous reference to medical bills that are so high they give patients another heart attack. The speaker simulates informal conversation, speaking to each *you* and referring to any *you*, which is people in general. Incumbent candidates and winning candidates adopt the strategy of using *you* to signal informality slightly more often than challenger and losing candidates.

Candidates also adopt an informal stance by making *you* the recipient of legislative action. Example (51) shows how candidates promote the object *you* to the subject by using a passive structure and deleting the agent, the government. Although there is a possibility that in this example the candidate, Crist (FL, R), is addressing the moderator, the audience listeners probably would believe that Crist is addressing them as the ones whose money is taxed.

(51) Crist (lines 230-255)

I wouldn't raise taxes. That's a big part of the program and one of the reasons I'm running for the U.S. Senate. I think that our citizens are taxed to death..and in fact they are..when you think about it. You are taxed when you make your money... you're taxed when you spend your money...and you're taxed when you save your money...and in fact..in America..we are taxed when we die.

The passive structure provides candidates with a means for suggesting that events such as *being taxed* are agentless happenings, akin to natural phenomena such as an earthquake, and omitting the government's responsibility or action of taxing. The passive structure also provides candidates a means for placing the listeners in the subject position of the clause. In (50), people have agency in only two instances, when they *spend* money, and when they *save* money. Examples (50) and (51) illustrate that candidates mask their authority<sup>23</sup> and the government's authority. The candidates clearly mark, in the syntax and verb structures, who

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<sup>23</sup>cf., Fowler's (1986: 13-26) analysis of the subtle ways in which newspaper reports convey and construct responsibility.

has agency for activities. In (50), people act agentively when they *go* into the hospital and *come* out again, but others are responsible when people *get* heart attacks and *receive* bills. Moreover, people *see* their benefits terminated, and legislation provides *protections*, and *will allow* them access to specialists. In each case, the agent is invisible. Someone is responsible for the actions of terminating, legislating, protecting and allowing, but they are not named. Similarly, in (51), people are agents who *spend* and *save money*, but someone else is responsible, though unnamed, when people are *taxed*. The syntax and verb structures in which the agent is not named provide speakers with a way to talk about event when the agent is not known or when the speaker prefers to omit the agent responsible for the action. Since most listeners and the speakers know the agent who legislates and taxes, we can assume that the candidates have chosen to omit the responsible agent, particularly concerning taxing which is generally an unpopular topic.

#### 5.3.2.4 Assigning Action to Non-human Subjects

Candidates place inanimate items or concepts, for example money, legislation, and education as the subject of about six percent of their clauses. The majority of the non-human subjects are nominalizations, which are verbs transformed to nouns. For example, the noun *legislation* comes from the verb *to legislate*. Table 46 shows the percentage of inanimate items named as subjects in open race candidates' clauses.

Table 46. Percentage of Non-human Subjects in Open Race Candidates' Clauses

State	Winner	non-human subjects	Loser	non-human subjects
AR	Lincoln (D)	05	Boozman (R)	07
ID	Crapo (R)	07	Mauk (D)	07
IN	Bayh (D)	06	Helmke (R)	07
OH	Voinovich (R)	06	Boyle (D)	06

Open race candidates tend to name non-human subjects that relate to enduring problems, such as social security. Candidates also tend to group these items together, as Mauk (IN, D) does in example (52).

(52) Mauk 586 -595

Let's be clear about this. Privatization will not solve the solvency problem of social security. The solvency problem of Social Security may be..in part..based upon return on investment..where /it/ could have gotten a better /return/...but the principle problem in the solvency of Social Security..as will happen 30 years in the future.. is we will not have enough..when the babyboomers begin to draw money out.

When candidates place non-human items in the subject slot of their clauses, they create an impersonal effect and a formal tone, quite the opposite from the informality created when they refer to people. In part, the impersonal effect and formal tone occur because of the nominalizations (e.g., *privatization* and *investment*). In terms of transitivity, these nominalizations lack agents and subsume the process in a technical term (Martin 1991); the people who are investing or managing Social Security money are absent. Another factor which creates a formal tone and a vagueness which distances the speaker from the listener is the vocabulary (van Dijk 1988a). In this example, the vocabulary comes from economic jargon (*solvency* and *return*) which suggests that the speaker has "expert" knowledge).

Candidates in contested races tend to have non-human subjects in their clauses more often than open race candidates. Incumbents and challengers have an identical mean of seven percent (table 47). Political party and gender do not test as significant. We might conclude that contested race candidates' use of non-human subjects is a result of incumbent candidates' experience in naming things rather than people as agents of action. However, only three of the incumbent candidates' amounts exceed their opponent's amount, so this is a weak trend, at best.

Table 47. Percentage of Non-human Subjects in Contested Race Candidates' Clauses (Percentage of Clauses)

State	Incumbent	Non-human subjects	Challenger	Non-human subjects
CA	Boxer (D)	08	Fong (R)	06
CO	Campbell (R)	08	Lamm (D)	07
FL	Graham (D)	08	Crist (R)	07
IA	Grassley (R)	07	Osterberg (D)	07
ND	Dorgan (D)	06	Naleweja (R)	07
WA	Murray (D)	06	Smith (R)	09

A closer examination reveals that candidates use non-human subjects to talk about difficult or unpleasant problems, and follow these clauses with one or more clauses in which *legislation* is the subject, also a non-human subject. When candidates in contested races name the "problem" in the subject slot of their clauses, they usually follow "problem" clauses with at least one clause which references legislation as the solution to the problem. Example (53) is typical of the candidates' response to a problem. The majority of the subjects of the clauses are non-human. The "problem," in this case *violence in the schools*, is the subject of the clauses in the first part of the response, and the "solution" follows in subsequent clauses. In (53) Smith presents the "solution" as already existing (*There have been some laws*), and agentive ([laws] *return the power to the local school districts*).

(53) Smith (WA, R) (lines 670 -681)

Violence in the schools is something that I was just lookin' at some of the statistics. And fortunately..in some areas of the country..it's dropped a little bit..which is a good sign. But it's a very very serious ...There have been some laws..that we have worked on...that I think we need to pass..and they return the power to the local school districts..to be able to remove children.

This example has many of the same features as the previous example. The nominalization (*violence*) avoids more personalized, and presumably undesirable alternatives such as "students

shooting other students.” The vocabulary is legislative (*statistics, laws, and power*). The final two clauses have only one human referent—*children*. The agents are *laws* and *school districts*. The clauses contain an implication that the laws have taken the power from the school districts.

A statistical analysis of the individual non-human items as the subject reveals that among the male candidates, Republican male candidates place words such as *problem, situation, or circumstance* as the subjects of their main clauses (.0598 +/- .0007; N=8) more often than Democratic male candidates (.0340 +/- .0003; N=5) (t-test,  $t=2.224$ , 11 d.f.,  $p=.04$ ). Moreover, Republican male candidates name *taxes* and *money* as the subject more often in main clauses (.0031 +/- .0005; N=8) than Democratic male candidates (.0013 +/- .0005; N=8) (t-test,  $t=1.863$ , 11 d.f.,  $p=.05$ ). This finding reflects the Republican position in the 1998 election that the budget surplus should be used for tax cuts.

#### 5.4 Being Polite and Being Tough

Candidates are expected to be polite to the moderator, the participants and questioners, and both the seen and unseen audience. They must show deference to others' opinions, sincerely, or by convincing pretense. They must promote themselves as the best people for the job, but not at the cost of the voters' or citizens' esteem, assert their authority to take action and establish their initiative to solve problems, but not without regard for the opinions, needs or wishes of their constituents, and explain their actions and plans without sounding defensive or offering self-justification.

It was hypothesized that there is a correlation between the gender of the candidate and the amount of positive politeness (features which address the speakers' and interlocutors' need to be like and respected) the candidate used. Previous studies have shown that on a continuum which ranges from observations of positive politeness to violations of positive politeness, female speakers tend to have more observations of positive politeness and fewer violations

(Herring 1994). In the candidates' debates, the candidates display a limited amount of positive politeness, regardless of gender, and all of the candidates display a higher proportion of violations of positive politeness than observations of positive politeness. The percentages of observations and violations of positive politeness are shown in table 48.

Table 48. Percentages of Clauses of Observances and Violations of Positive Politeness

Race Type	Candidate	Percentage of Observations	Percentage of Violations
Open Race	Lincoln * D/F	2.8	6.3
	Boozman R/M	1.6	6.5
	Crapo* R/M	1.6	5.5
	Mauk D/M	3.2	12.4
	Bayh* D/M	1.8	3.4
	Helmke R/M	2.2	3.3
	Voinovich * R/M	2.2	3.0
	Boyle D/F	3.3	4.0
Contested Race	Boxer * D/F	3.4	7.2
	Fong R/M	3.4	6.5
	Campbell * R/M	2.6	7.7
	Lamm D/F	2.6	7.6
	Graham * D/M	2.9	5.5
	Crist R/M	2.9	4.9
	Grassley * R/M	1.6	4.3
	Osterberg D/M	0.7	6.7
	Dorgan * D/M	1.9	8.9
	Naleweja R/F	1.3	1.8
	Murray * D/F	2.0	2.8
Smith R/F	1.4	5.5	

Each candidate's political party and gender is included. Although candidates are expected to be amiable and polite, the instances of positive politeness in each debate are limited in number and kind. The candidates have positive politeness speech acts from as little as one percent of their clauses and no more than three and a half percent of their clauses. Moreover, the candidates blame, criticize, and fault their opponents, which are violations of positive politeness, and do so in amounts ranging from three to twelve percent. A few politeness features are common to all of the candidates. An obvious observance of positive politeness is thanking. Nearly every candidate thanks the hosts and issues a general, all-inclusive thanks to the audience. The thanks may be perfunctory, such as occurs in the first lines of the opening remarks or the last few lines of the closing remarks. In the Colorado debate, Campbell (R) offers the traditional thanks to the moderator and the hosts of the debate.

(54) Campbell (lines 101-102)

Bill..thank you..and I appreciate everyone for being here for the club 20 yearly debate forum

A few candidates are more profuse in their thanks. However, when the thanks are greater than what is expected within the formal framework of the debate, the speaker's words seem excessive and suggest either insincerity or insecurity. For example, Lamm (D), also in the Colorado debate, seems excessively thankful in her opening remarks.

(55) Lamm (lines 62-67)

thank you...thank you..this is really what democracy is all about...thank you all for being here..you know..I love the state of Colorado...as I campaign around every corner of this state..I am more convinced than when I started..this is a great state

Although there are no statistically significant difference between the candidates' amount of thanks or praise, there is a relationship between the format of the debate and these features. When the candidates are asked questions by a press panel or a moderator, they rarely thank the questioners for asking the question. Conversely, when audience members ask the questions,



candidates regularly thank the questioner and/or comment on the importance of the question. In the example below, Graham (FL, D) speaks after his opponent, Crist (R), and he is responding to a question about reducing the size of the federal government, one of Crist's issues. Despite the length of time that has elapsed since the questioner posed his question, and the unfavorable topic, Graham still thanks the questioner.

(56) Graham (line 554)

David..thank you for that question..and I think you deserve some specific answers

Graham mentions the questioner's name, as well as thanking him. Graham's behavior is not unusual. Most of the candidates mention the audience questioners' names, if the questioner is introduced. Candidates may be presenting a persona that the questioners are socially superior to themselves, which Brown (1980:117) asserts is another reason people observe positive politeness, since such a persona which might be consistent with public service. However, this explanation seems unlikely, since candidates devote a great deal of their talk to promoting themselves. A more plausible explanation is that the candidates are simply trying to be likable.

Another kind of positive politeness which was observed in the data are speech acts in which candidates signal their affiliation with an individual, group, or concept. In example (57), Bayh (IN, D) compliments the other Indiana Senator to the state, Dick Lugar, and at the same time signals his affiliation with the individual and with the concept of stopping the spread of weapons.

(57) Bayh (lines 721-725)

I want to compliment Dick Lugar on this..I think he has been one of the foremost spokesmen..in the need to continue to be more aggressive and doing what it takes to stop the spread of the weapons of mass destruction.

When candidates indicate affiliation, they tend to name historically famous political figures, such as Abraham Lincoln, or U.S. Senators who have known positions on an issue, such as

Russ Feingold and his position on campaign finance reform. However, candidates do not express affiliation very often. In fact, the total number of instances of positive politeness is small and differences by party or gender are not statistically significant. The most relevant finding concerning observations of positive politeness is that both candidates in each debate have nearly matching amounts. This finding suggests that a particular range of positive politeness is expected during debates, and the candidates operate within that range, regardless of their gender.

The more interesting findings involve the candidates' violations of positive politeness. Violations of positive politeness most often occur as criticisms and insults directed at the candidates' opponents' actions or positions on an issue. The candidates use similar amounts of criticisms and insults, but they have different strategies for doing so.

Some of the candidates criticize their opponents with elaborate, pseudo-logical chains of reasoning or direct put-downs. Often these types of criticism take place between male candidates and seem to be point-counter-point displays rather than sincere disagreement. This type of criticism is illustrated in example (58) which begins with Crapo's (ID, R) rebuttal of his opponent's prior attack and presents a "reasonable" counter attack.

(58) Crapo (lines 894-907)

And yes..you can find an isolated vote..here or there..where something like that can be picked out. But I know that here's what's happening..I think a week or two ago. You sent a letter to the president..asking him to veto the ag bill. Well..Bill..the ag bill contains the funding for the school nutrition program..in this state. I know you asked the president to veto the ag bill.. because of the concerns you have about the ag provisions in that bill.

Mauk (line 908)

It was inadequate.

Crapo (lines 909-916)

But you asked him..to kill that bill that had the school nutrition funding in it..and I could have said..well..you don't support school nutrition funding..because you asked the president to veto the ag bill. But I don't play those kinds of tricks. And you..and you are doing the same kind of thing with the votes that I have cast in Congress

Crapo admits that his some of his votes seem to be against the Head Start program. However, the concession is soon dispensed with as Crapo establishes a context for his vote and implies that Mauk's accusation is a trick. Crapo accomplishes both by claiming that he does not *play those kinds of tricks*. Yet the entire sequence does exactly that. Crapo's certainty in *I know you asked the president to veto the ag bill* is signaled by *know*, and he places this information in the main clause, a more prominent grammatical position, and places the explanation which justifies Mauk's request, *because of the concerns you have about the ag provisions in that bill* in a subordinate clause. Moreover, the final criticism, *you are doing the same kind of thing* is also in a main clause.

This attack and counter-attack style of debate is what some people consider a "good" debate and others consider "usual." It is understood to be the way candidates "discuss" the issues. Although few candidates are as adversarial as Crapo and Mauk, all of the male candidates tend to adopt this pattern when their opponent is also male, and both candidates have a similar position on the issue. The attack and counter-attack style gives the appearance of difference where there is little or no difference. Fully a third of the male candidates' violations of positive politeness occur in these kinds pseudo-attacks.

Female candidates rarely employ the attack and counter-attack strategy. They do, however criticize their opponents. The analysis reveals that female candidates employ some features of "men's language" which are manifest as violations of positive politeness, such requiring others to justify their behavior (McElhinney 1998:322) and evaluating others' actions, and contradicting, criticizing or reproaching others (Troemel-Ploetz 1998:447). These kinds of violations of positive politeness are necessarily included in a candidate's language if the candidates are to participate in conflicts of political debate. In addition, female candidates employ some features which are associated with "women's language, such as apologizing, accommodating, and being indirect (Troemel-Ploetz 1998: 447). These kinds of speech acts

also appear in the female candidates violations of positive politeness, and they, too, are necessarily included in female candidates' language if they want to be considered courteous.

The example below (59) illustrates a female candidate's approach for criticizing her opponent. Female candidates choose indirect criticism, assigning negative assessments to others, and drawing on shared knowledge to imply criticism.

(59) Lincoln 366-374

I have to say...some have noticed that my opponent has a very different view of rape and incest...I think it is a very serious issue..I think it's a woman's worst nightmare...and I think insensitivity to that from our elected officials..from our medical professionals..and anyone else..is really unacceptable

Lincoln criticizes her opponent indirectly. She assigns the *noticing* to others. She does not name her opponent, and instead makes *insensitivity* the subject of the clause, and extends the range of people who might be insensitive to any elected or medical professional, which implicitly includes her opponent, a medical professional. However, the audience is very aware of her opponent's view of rape and incest, and his claim that women are protected by a hormonal shield when they are in a stressful situation such as a rape, and therefore will not get pregnant, and his view has been termed "insensitive" by the press. Moreover, her opponent, Boozman, seems to accept the presses' assessment and behaves as though Lincoln's criticism is directed at him because it is the first topic of his next turn.

(60) Boozman (lines 412-416)

Blanche..I've got three daughters...and I've been married 30 years..I'm totally sensitive..to the...of ladies..and I did not..in any way..present myself as insensitive.

Boozman does not extricate himself with his comment, and in fact reinforces his *insensitivity*. He calls his opponent by her first name, Blanche, a breach of the formal environment,<sup>24</sup> and

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<sup>24</sup>The moderator and questioners consistently address both candidates formally as Ms. Lincoln and Mr. Boozman.

in the manner of a superior addressing a subordinate. Boozman also adds a strengthener, *totally*, suggesting that his claim that he is sensitive needs to be bolstered to be believed. Moreover, his choice of *totally* is somewhat ironic since if here was sensitive, chances are he would not have made the statement that in the first place. And to address women as *ladies* suggests his own view of women.

Seventy percent of the instances of denial, similar to Boozman's denial in example (60), occur in losing candidate's speech. Another strategy, predominately used by male candidates, is to belittle and delegitimize the female candidates' comments. In example (61), Lamm begins by addressing the audience, which could be considered rude, since she is talking about her opponent as though he is not present. She immediately shifts her comments directly to her opponent, and mitigates her criticism by apologizing, a feature of "women's language." In this sequence she implies that he is a liar.

(61) Lamm (lines 883-890)

When he talks about he missed...because he was in the hospital...whatever. I'm sorry Ben...second the last..or last..nine out of twelve years..you were not in the hospital the whole time. That is not good enough for Colorado.

Campbell turns Lamm's attack into a joke, and then counterattacks using the same strategy, in reverse, of speaking first to Lamm, and then criticizing her, and ultimately excluding her entirely (*I and you*).

(62) Campbell (lines 892 -897)

I'm lucky I wasn't in the hospital...you might have unplugged me..<laughter>..first of all..first of all..I don't remember Dottie being anywhere in sight...yet I..and you were here in Grand Junction..trying to straighten out that mess with Mesa Airlines

Candidates are polite in similar amounts, but the ways in which candidates criticize each other differ, depending on their gender. Male candidates criticize each other in nearly matching amounts, and in most cases, the attacks are similar in intensity. In mixed-sex debates, female

and male candidates criticize each other in nearly equal amounts, but their strategies for doing so differ. Female candidates soften their criticisms, by being indirect or by apologizing. Male candidates employ humor to deflect and discount their opponent's criticisms.

### 5.5 Results Summary

Five items test to be significant (table 49). Race type and winning are the salient factors related to the subjects candidates refer to most often. Open race winners referring to themselves more than open race losers. Contested race winners refer to legislators more often than challengers.

Table 49. Significant Findings

Significant Item	Higher Group	Race Type
self reference	winners	open
legislators as subject	incumbents (winners)	contested
refer to taxes and money	Republican male	both
refer to problems	Republican male	both
use mental cognition verbs	Democratic female	both

Although we might expect all candidates to promote themselves and winning candidates to do so more often and more successfully, these findings suggest that incumbent candidates emphasize their position and role as a legislator. Political party and gender are the relevant factors associated with a few of the issue-related subjects; Republican males name as subjects *taxes*, *money*, and *problems* more often than Democratic males. None of the other topics tested significant. The factor which correlates with the candidates' use of mental process verbs is gender; Democratic females have higher amounts than Democratic males. In short, the number of statistically significant differences is small.

Despite the few differences, the analysis of the data revealed several trends in the candidates' discourse. More than half of the trends are features which correlate with winning and losing candidates, regardless of the candidates' party affiliation, incumbency status, or gender. Although these features co-occur with winning and losing, these is a *post-hoc* finding and does not suggest a causal or predictive relationship. We can, however, construct a composite of the features which co-occurred with all winning candidates and use this information as a basis for further research. The list of trends which are indicated by these data are presented in table 50.

Table 50. Trends Related to Winning and Losing Candidates

Trend Item	Higher Group	Racetype
higher number of clauses	winner	open
references to people in general	winner	open
material process in self-reference clauses	winner	both
material process related to legislating in self-reference clauses	winner	both
mental process in self- reference clauses	winner	open
number of clauses	losers	contested
reference to groups	losers	open
refer to opponent	losers	both
material process verbs in self-reference clauses refer to gender stereotypical activity	losers	both
mental process verbs in self reference clauses	losers	contested

Winning candidates have a higher proportion of material process verbs and mental process verbs than the losing candidates. Moreover, winning candidates refer to the activity of legislating more often than losing candidates. The composite of losing candidates is the

opposite of the winning candidates, with one exception—all losing candidates have a higher proportion of clauses in which they name their opponent as the subject of the clause.

In addition to trends related to winning and losing, the analysis revealed that there are trends which indicate differences between female and male candidates. The differences which occur in conjunction with the candidates' gender are subtle difference in the placement of a particular feature, such as material process verbs, or there are slight changes in style, notably in the way female and male candidates present their violations of positive politeness. These trends are not indicated by the amount or percentage of the tokens present in the candidates' discourse. Table 51 summarizes the gender-related trends.

Table 51. Trends Related to Gender

Trend Item	Higher Group	Status
material action verbs in self-reference clauses only on campaign issues	male	winner
material action verbs in self-reference clauses on every issue	female	winner
violations of positive politeness are mitigated by apology or indirectness	female	winners and losers
deflect opponent's criticism through humor or belittlement	male	winners and losers

Of the 134 dependent variables examined in this study, few were found to be statistically significant, and relatively few were found indicative of a trend. In most cases, the null hypothesis, could not be rejected. This result challenges a general assumption that the candidates are different. Moreover, our expectation that candidates would emphasize their differences is supported in a very few features. The general conclusion we can draw from these results is that the candidates are alike more than they are different. The results show that political party, incumbency, and gender have a limited influence on what the candidates say.



Nonetheless, the trends found in this research indicate areas which require closer examination and further study with additional samples of candidate debates.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.0 Summary of the research

This study has investigated the debate discourse of twenty United States senatorial candidates in the 1998 election. The initial selection criteria for including particular candidates, as outlined in chapter 4, provided a population as representative of televised senate debates as possible: both contested and open races are represented; in contested races, the incumbents were the winners and only the major party candidates were included, so that an equal number of Democrats and Republicans were included. In addition, whenever possible, female and male candidates from each of the other categories were included. Each debate was transcribed and the content of each clause for each candidate's talk in the debate was coded for transitivity, level of embeddedness, subject and object nouns (referents), and positive politeness. These features were examined in a series of quantitative and qualitative analyses. The objective of this study was to discern if candidates differentiated themselves from one another by varying their discourse in these areas. The results reveal a specific pattern of features shared by all of the candidates and a few features which varied.

#### 6.1 Summary of significant findings

This study considers differences between winning and losing candidates, open and contested race candidates, Democratic and Republican candidates, incumbent and challenger candidates, and female and male candidates. Because some candidates win, and others lose, I hypothesized that the winning candidates would use language which would persuade voters to select them. The results indicate that winning candidates in open and in contested races use

*I* as the subject of their clauses more than losing candidates. This finding supports previous research that claims that candidate debates are campaign commercials. Candidates promote themselves, partly by claiming action for themselves, and winning candidates do so more than losing candidates.

Because candidates are from different political parties, and ascribe to different political philosophies, I hypothesized that Democratic and Republican candidates would differ in the way they addressed issues. Results show that Republicans name money and taxes in the subject of their clauses more often than the Democrats. Since a major campaign issue for Republicans was to use the budget surplus for tax cuts, this finding confirms that Republican candidates were promoting this topic during their debates. No corollary finding for Democratic candidates was found, which suggests that Democratic candidates did not have a campaign issue which all candidates promoted.

Third, because incumbent candidates have more experience and a voting record to draw upon, I hypothesized that incumbent and challenger candidates would differ in the way they presented their qualifications. The results show that incumbent candidates use more direct action verbs than challengers. Not only do incumbents have more activity, particularly legislative activity to present, but they also have more experience presenting themselves to their constituents.

Because candidates have nearly equal chances to win in open races, I hypothesized that both candidates in open races would have language usage similar to challenger candidates in contested races. Although open race candidates do not have experience as U.S. Senators, as incumbents do, open race candidates, surprisingly, claim direct action for themselves in amounts higher than either incumbents or challenger candidates in contested races. This finding suggests that when both candidates are relatively unknown, as is so in open races, the candidates who win are those who present themselves as taking action to solve problems.

The political arena is a power-based environment and previous studies have suggested that women are uncomfortable with adversarial situations, especially public discourse such as campaign debates. I hypothesized that female candidates would have more instances of positive politeness and fewer instances of violations of positive politeness than male candidates. The results indicate that female and male candidates observe and violate positive politeness in nearly equal amounts, and violations of positive politeness occur more often than observance of positive politeness. In debates with two male candidates, both criticize their opponent directly, and when the candidates' positions are similar, male candidates engage in a pseudo attack and counter-attack sequence. Female candidates, however, usually do not level a direct attack at their male opponents. Instead, they criticize their opponent indirectly. The analysis further indicates that female candidates face gender-biased reactions by male candidates, notably by male candidates' attempt to discount female candidates' knowledge and ability. Male candidates present their female opponents as irrational and uninformed, and sometimes "soften" the criticism with humor, which implies that the female candidate should not (or cannot) be attacked directly.

The transitivity analysis of the candidate's use of various verbs structures and the subjects associated with the verbs revealed significant findings and strong trends. As we might expect to find in candidate debates, candidates talk about their political activities. Candidates tend to herald their actions using one of two strategies; they announce one or two actions they have taken concerning each issue that questioners introduce, or they report several actions they have taken which relate to their campaign agenda, usually only two or three issues. Both strategies allow candidates to promote themselves as doers of action, and as the results show, the action that winning candidates take is predominancy legislative. A related finding is winning candidates in both contested and open races are similar. Incumbents, the winning candidates in contested races, emphasize their sponsorship, votes, and support for legislation. Winning

candidates in open races do also, even though they have no U.S. Senate voting record to talk about. This strategy allows the candidates to sound senatorial. Losing candidates, on the other hand, tend to present their activities along gender-based stereotypical lines. Male candidates talk about their actions in military-like terms of protecting and defending the electorate. Female candidates talk about their actions in domestic terms of caring for and about people. Losing candidates may have less legislative experience to draw upon, and thereby talk about the activities they have done. Alternatively, losing candidates may be presenting their actions in ways which imply the candidates have strength (a stereotypically male trait) or are caring (a stereotypically female trait).

Candidates use mental cognition verbs even more than they use direct action verbs. The results indicate that candidates predominately use *think* and *believe* to introduce their position on an issue. Interestingly, winning candidates in open races have high amounts of mental cognition verbs, but winning candidates in contested races (incumbents) have low amounts of mental cognition verbs. The losing candidates have amounts in the middle. This finding suggests that the winning candidates distinguish themselves by moving to the extreme ends of an implied "acceptable" range.

Another finding associated with the use of mental cognition verbs was identified in debates between female and male candidates. Female candidates use more mental cognition verbs than their male opponents. The additional clauses are frequently evaluative, meaning female candidates note the importance of the issue or the seriousness of the problem. This finding is consistent with previous research findings on women's language.

The analysis of the subjects which candidates use reveals that candidates not only talk about themselves, but also talk about their opponents. Since candidates are competing with each other, they have to find ways to discount or diminish their opponent's claims. One of the ways that candidates accomplish this is by placing their opponents in subordinate grammatical

positions while placing themselves as the subjects of main clauses. In addition, candidates choose verbs which suggest that their opponent is less agentive, less active.

Candidates name legislators, people, and things as subjects of their clauses. Many of the references to people are inclusive pronouns such as *everyone* or the second person pronoun *you*. When candidates use *you*, they also tend to make lexical choices for the remainder of the clause that are less formal. The candidates' informality is not consistent throughout, however, because they also employ nominalizations and have lexical choices which are formal and distancing. The topics of the questions correlate with the instances when candidates opt for informality. When candidates discuss social issues, such as education or health care, they tend to present most of their response informally. When candidates discuss unpleasant issues, such as violence in schools, or topics which voters may view unfavorably, such as the government regulating or taxing them, candidates adopt a formal stance. In sum, candidate's language use is a blend of the informal and the formal, the private and the public.

## 6.2 Significance of research

Numerous authors have written on individual features within one or two candidate debates, but to date, there has been no comprehensive description of a large number of debates in the same election which deals with the relationship between the information candidates provide, the transitivity of clauses, and the candidates' view of who has agency and who is the recipient of actions. The results of this research provide information which can be used to evaluate claims about debates that other researchers have made, as well as providing a base from which other debates can be compared.

Taking the claims of previous scholars as questions, we can turn to the results of this study for some answers. Are debates informative? Perhaps, depending on the audience. Most of the information candidates present is not new information, so most voters who view debates probably will not increase their knowledge if they have been following the campaign.

However, if the voters have not been following the campaign, but watch the debate(s), they will learn what legislation the candidates have supported or will support. Candidates do talk about what they have done and what they think should be done. Are candidate debates glorified press conferences? Yes, in that most of the questions come from members of the press. Candidates generally know the gist if not the actual text of the questions, and their answers are often planned or partially planned in advance. Are candidate debates artificial, scripted conflict? Sometimes. In some debates, the candidates disagree on government policy, and even though the disagreement is genuine, the amount of conflict in the debate is minimal. In other debates, however, the candidates' positions on the issues are similar. One notable finding of this research is that when male candidates who hold similar positions debate one another, they tend to increase their vociferousness and the amount of conflict between the candidates increases. A similar effect was not found for female candidates. Are candidate debates extended campaign commercials? Yes. Candidates place themselves and their actions in prominent grammatical positions and place the issues they are asked about in less prominent grammatical positions. The present research strongly supports that the focus of the debate is the candidates themselves. Do political parties make a difference in the candidates' discourse? Sometimes. This analysis reveals that some of the information that candidates use in their debate discourse parallels the information in their party's platform. Do female candidates have a difficult time participating in adversarial debates? It appears that some female candidates do, and most female challenger candidates do, if their opponent is a male incumbent. This study finds that many female candidates apologize and choose indirectness when criticizing their male opponents. In addition, their male opponents belittle and devalue their contributions more than they do with male opponents. Both findings suggest that female candidates have some barriers to overcome in adversarial debates. However, female candidates violate positive politeness as often as their male opponents, criticizing and blaming as often as their opponents.

Thus female candidates use some of the same strategies that male candidates use. The difference between female and male candidates is a difference in style rather than in the amount of adversariality.

At the same time, none of these answers is a wholly accurate description of candidate debates. The present research reveals that each candidate debate is a complex phenomenon, entailing many factors all at once, and that these factors interact in complex relationships. Because political debates are complex sociological phenomena, they call for an analysis which is more than simply a description of particular variables: research on political debates must also consider the interrelationships among variables. In the present study, numerous variables were examined, and many of them were found to be related. Yet, in order to interpret the findings responsibly, we must take into consideration an important caveat of empirical research. Simply because two variables are related does not necessarily indicate that the two variables are causally related. For example, one finding in the present research is that variable A, self-reference, positively correlates with variable B, winning, in the environment of variable C, open race. Yet we cannot conclude that variable A causes B, or that variable B causes A, or that variable C causes either A or B. In other words, the association between "self-reference" and "winning" and "open race," though statistically significant, does not mean that an increase in an "open race" candidate's "self-reference" necessarily causes "winning," or that "winning" causes an "open race" candidate to increase the amount of "self-reference." That is, there is no practical guarantee that if an open-race candidate were to engage in large amounts of self-reference, she would win the race. At the same time, we gain valuable information about the interrelationship of these variables through statistical analysis. First, we learn the direction of the relationship; in this case, the analysis indicates a positive relationship, meaning that as "self-reference" increases, the chance of "winning" also increases. In addition, we learn the



strength of the relationship, and when the relationship is statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level, we can have a high degree of confidence that the relationship is not due to chance.

The results of the present study motivate us to ask another fundamental question. To what extent is the candidates' speech really their own? Because the candidates address not only the voters, but numerous secondary audiences comprised of people who can help or hinder each candidate's campaign, what candidates say seems to be influenced by these secondary audiences. The candidate's political party provides a platform that candidates can, and perhaps even must, include in some parts of the debate. If candidates do not convey their party affiliation, they risk losing their party's support. Consequently, candidates often use phrases and sound bites from their party's platform and advertisements to convey their consonance with the party. Another important secondary audience candidates have to consider is the media. The media provide the venue for candidates to reach large audiences, but also expect the candidates to provide entertaining programs. Since argument and criticism are seen by many as entertaining, candidates tend to argue and criticize their opponents, even when the candidates have similar positions. Scripted arguments, thus, may be a response to media expectations. The third audience which has an influence on what candidates say during debates consists of special interest groups, PAC contributors and individual contributors. Because candidates need a great deal of money to conduct their campaigns, they accept financial support from groups and individuals who expect the candidate to address the donors' concerns and present positions on issues which support their interests. If candidates do not assure contributors that they can get the legislative job done, they may not receive additional funding from these sources. The findings that candidates present themselves as active doers of legislation and talk about local issues indicate that candidates attempt to persuade their supporters that they are able politicians, capable of talking about and acting on myriad issues. Last but not least, candidates have to consider other legislators. Other politicians expect the

candidate to be a member of the legislative group, which means candidates are required to speak and act within the established norms for legislators. In short, many of the findings in this study indicate that candidates are trying to meet the demands of their secondary audiences at the same time as they are attempting to persuade voters to vote for them.

If all of the candidates are addressing the same secondary audiences and at least some of the same voters, how different, then, can we expect the candidates' discourse styles to be? In general, the present study shows that candidate debates are remarkably similar: candidates promote themselves and their legislative agenda, and criticize their opponents. The differences in discourse style among candidates are subtle, rather than conspicuous. Of the differences identified in this study, most are related to the candidates' gender rather than their political party or incumbency status. For example, male and female candidates present themselves as agents of legislative action, and do so in similar amounts. However, male candidates tend to cluster these references in their responses to a few issues, while female candidates tend to distribute these references across their responses to each issue. Similarly, all of the candidates criticize their opponents, but male and female candidates do so differently. Male candidates tend to match their opponent in degree and kind of criticism, with losing male candidates criticizing more than winning male candidates, whereas, female candidates tend to frame their criticism with an apology. These findings indicate that candidate debates are a well-defined discourse genre, meaning that participants must do particular things in their discourse for it to "count" as a candidate debate. If candidates do not claim legislative action for themselves and do not criticize their opponents, they are not "doing" a pre-election debate. At the same time, however, the candidates have to "do" claiming and criticizing in a manner that is consistent with the social expectations of their gender. If male candidates apologize when they criticize their opponents, they violate the conventional social expectations for male discourse. If female candidates match their opponents' criticisms in degree and kind without apology, they violate

the social expectations for female discourse. Thus subtle gender differences are found among candidates in all of the debates.

Another notable finding of this research is that the candidates in the same debate have discourse features which are more like their opponents than like other candidates in other debates who are of the same political party. One explanation for this might be that the candidates in the same debate address the same issues, some of which are not discussed in other debates, and so the candidates will talk about the same things, and talk about them in similar ways. Most of the debates, however, also had topics, such as social security, which every candidate addressed. Even on these issues, candidates in the same debate were more like each other than like candidates of the same party in the other debates. This finding suggests that candidates tend to modify their discourse to match the discourse of their interlocutor, a finding consistent with Giles' (1977) concept of sociolinguistic accommodation.

If much that candidates say during a debate is intentional, conscious manipulation of language, either to address their secondary audiences, or to accommodate their interlocutor, to what extent is it possible to examine the candidates' unconscious ideological positions from their discourse, consistent with the goals of Critical Discourse Analysis? We might assume that the candidates and their handlers anticipate some of the debate questions and plan appropriate responses. However, it is unlikely that the candidates' responses are wholly prepared and memorized, because verbatim answers can be stilted or seem insincere, effects which undermine the candidates' goal of speaking from the heart and speaking honestly. Moreover, the possibility of unexpected events during a live, televised interaction among candidates and questioners argues against the effective use of memorized sequences. Instead, the majority of the candidates' responses are probably semi-planned speech: answers based on personal reflection and notes prepared in advance by the candidates or their handlers, but not answers that are memorized verbatim. When candidates give semi-planned responses, they choose most

if not all of the words at the time they make the utterance. At the times when candidates are producing language, the limits of short-term memory, the temporal demands of live production and the cognitive demands of producing grammatically complete utterances and finding the appropriate words to express their ideas mean unconscious forces come into play as the candidates speak (cf. Chafe 1980). Some of these unconscious forces include force of habit, degree of nervousness, alertness, emotional state, attitude, individual and social group style and personal values. Force of habit includes gender socialization. For example, the present research shows that female candidates use "I think" more than male candidates. Female candidates use this feature because they have been socialized to talk as women, and use it automatically when their attention is focused elsewhere, such as in forming the answer to a question. Similarly, when candidates give responses which are similar to but not identical with a segment of their party's platform, their word order and word choices may reflect their own social group style and personal values. Therefore, even if the candidates have made a conscious choice to say things in a particular way, their unconscious ideologies surface through their grammar choices. As Goffman (1959) points out, people present themselves and signal information about themselves unconsciously through their body language, behavior and their linguistic behavior. When candidates' speech is semi-spontaneous, how they express themselves, including their transitivity choices, can reveal patterns that index their gender and ideological position.

Finally, from a practical point of view, we might ask whether what candidates say and how they say it makes a difference to the outcome of the elections. Undoubtedly candidates must meet the requirements of those who support them; they must get funding from donors and the backing of their party. Moreover, candidates must adopt a style which meets the voters' expectations. However, whether or not voters are persuaded by candidates' style is uncertain. A case can be made that incumbents or highly funded candidates who are from the party that is dominant in the state will win, regardless of their discourse style during the debates. At the

same time, a case can also be made that what candidates say does make a difference. Even if voters cannot name or identify particular features in candidates' discourse which resonate with their own ideological positions, they may sense that one candidate "sounds" better than the other. Further research into voter's opinions of candidates' discourse is needed to investigate this possibility.

### 6.3 Further Research

The results of this study indicate that the candidates are more alike than they are different. Two factors, however, may have had an effect on the data and the findings. First, candidates seldom addressed the same topics, and this diversity of topics precluded a sufficiently large sample on a single topic even though the sample set of ten debates provided a large number of clauses from each candidate. As a result, comparisons of issue-related subjects and objects among candidates were confined to the candidates' talk about the enduring campaign issues of taxes and Social Security. In addition, during mid-term elections, such as the 1998 election, candidates' rely on a two-year-old party platform, and that platform may not reflect the current political situation or address current issues very well. Mid-term elections also tend to have a greater focus on local issues unless one or both of the political parties successfully advance an issue or several issues which resonate with voters. In the 1998 elections, neither the conflict in Bosnia nor the impeachment of President Clinton were felicitous issues. By the time the candidates were debating, these issues had elicited such unfavorable responses from voters that the candidates from both parties avoided or downplayed these issues. The second factor which had an impact on the results of this study is the under-representation of female candidates. There are few female incumbent Senators who ran for re-election in 1998. Moreover, there were no incumbent Republican female candidates. Therefore, the data in this research has a limited number of female candidates which, in turn, limited the extent of comparative observations that could be made between female and male candidates. Data from the 2000

election may provide more comparable data. Both parties will hold their conventions and develop a new or updated platform, and advance several issues around which their presidential candidate and their senatorial candidates will rally. In addition, three incumbent female candidates are slated for re-election races in 2000 — Dianne Feinstein (D, CA) Kay Bailey Hutchison (R, TX) and Olympia Snowe (R, ME). At the time of this writing, one female candidate has announced her candidacy as a challenger—Hillary Clinton (D, NY). Therefore, further research, particularly an analysis similar to this one, is needed. An analysis of the United States Senate candidates' pre-election debates in 2000 may provide additional insight of all candidates' discourse and reveal additional party or gender distinctions.

This research provides a starting point for a diachronic comparison of Senate debates, using debates that took place in the years before 1998 and those that follow in 2000 and beyond. This kind of research can indicate whether candidates change their strategies as the issues change, and reveal any shift in the views of political leaders over time. Moreover, a diachronous study is necessary to consider the discourse style of candidates when they are first elected (as challengers in open races or as challengers against an incumbent) and when they subsequently run as incumbents.

In addition, this research contributes to a broader comparison between debate discourse and other forms of political discourse. The Senate candidates' debate discourse can be compared with their formal, prepared speech, such as stump speeches, speeches and debate on the Senate floor, and party convention speeches and with their less-prepared talk on news interviews and on political and non-political talk-show style television programs. Furthermore, the Senate candidates' discourse can be compared with the debate discourse of other high-office legislators such as members of the House of Representatives, Governors, and Presidents.

There also needs to be a comparison between the televisual debates and the newest campaign communication tool—computer mediated communication. The presidential

candidates in the 2000 race have used CMC to reach a broad population of voters. As candidates use CMC to communicate with their constituents, and voters participate in on-line discussions with the candidates, will the candidates' modify or change the way they present themselves and their opponents? The method of analysis used in this research (outlined in chapter 4) is equally applicable to CMC and other fora of political communication.

APPENDIX A

1998 ELECTION SUMMARY: CANDIDATES, FUNDS, AND  
PERCENTAGE OF VOTES



## 1998 Election Summary: Candidates, Funds, and Percentage of Votes

Candidates in this research sample are shaded.

# indicates incumbent

\* indicates winner

State	Candidate	Party	Funds Raised	Votes Received	Percent Votes <sup>1</sup>
AL	Richard Shelby * #	R	\$5,705,869	805337	63%
AL	Clayton Suddith	D	\$15,334	471408	37%
AK	Frank Murkowski * #	R	\$1,748,382	141116	75%
AK	Joseph Sonneman	D	\$22,991	39944	20%
AR	Blanche Lincoln *	D	\$3,056,184	386819	55%
AR	Fay Boozman	R	\$1,099,108	294138	42%
AZ	John McCain * #	R	\$4,736,870	622710	68%
AZ	Edward Ranger Jr.	D	\$375,463	250890	28%
CA	Barbara Boxer * #	D	\$15,605,334	3910987	53%
CA	Matt Fong	R	\$10,788,279	3154036	43%
CO	Ben Campbell * #	R	\$3,355,190	802125	62%
CO	Dottie Lamm	D	\$1,836,621	451680	35%
CT	Christopher Dodd * #	D	\$6,047,848	605583	65%
CT	Gary Franks	R	\$2,695,508	300339	32%
FL	Bob Graham * #	D	\$5,416,004	2428840	63%
FL	Charlie Crist	R	\$1,504,487	1455621	37%
GA	Paul Coverdell * #	R	\$8,705,805	911940	52%
GA	Michael Coles	D	\$8,425,530	790786	45%
HA	Daniel Inouye * #	D	\$2,304,381	305410	79%
HA	Crystal Young	R	\$0 <sup>2</sup>	68371	18%
IA	Charles Grassley * #	R	\$3,663,023	642176	68%
IA	David Osterberg	D	\$165,655	292460	31%
ID	Mike Crapo *	R	\$2,908,229	251458	69%
ID	Bill Mauk	D	\$243,284	102420	28%

State	Candidate	Party	Funds Raised	Votes Received	Percent Votes <sup>1</sup>
IL	Peter Fitzgerald *	R	\$16,591,938	1697310	51%
IL	Carol Moseley-Braun #	D	\$9,262,961	1575900	47%
IN	Evan Bayh *	D	5891771	1009660	64%
IN	Paul Helmke	R	\$645,270	550311	35%
KS	Sam Brownback * #	R	\$4,787,493	470022	65%
KS	Paul Feleciano	D	\$39,450	227735	32%
KY	Jim Bunning *	R	\$3,597,398	567951	50%
KY	Scotty Baesler	D	\$4,581,718	560888	49%
LA <sup>3</sup>	John Breaux * #	D	\$4,580,804	619219	64%
LA	Jim Donelon	R	\$364,056	306081	32%
MD	Barbara Mikulski * #	D	\$3,828,135	1034814	71%
MD	Ross Pierpont	R	\$297,633	426499	29%
MO	Christopher Bond * #	R	\$6,686,117	830800	53%
MO	Jeremiah (Jay) Nixon	D	\$2,573,843	690687	44%
NC	John Edwards *	D	\$8,420,983	1008889	51%
NC	Launch Faircloth #	R	\$11,708,055	925274	47%
ND	Byron Dorgon * #	D	\$1,924,786	134293	63%
ND	Donna Naleweja	R	\$151,448	74695	35%
NH	Judd Gregg * #	R	\$1,343,774	213456	68%
NH	George Conodemetraky	D	\$34,827	88835	28%
NV	Harry Reid * #	D	\$5,141,673	208579	48%
NV	John Ensign	R	\$3,454,820	208120	48%
NY	Charles Schumer *	D	\$15,533,742	2383865	54%
NY	Alfonse D'Amato #	R	\$27,415,905	1960419	45%
OH	George Voinovich *	R	\$7,780,850	1887303	56%
OH	Mary Boyle	D	\$2,230,820	1458392	44%
OK	Don Nickles * #	R	\$2,973,292	570682	66%
OK	Don Carroll	D	\$8,619	268898	31%

State	Candidate	Party	Funds Raised	Votes Received	Percent Votes <sup>1</sup>
OR	Ronald Wyden * #	D	\$8,355,340	264918	59%
OR	John Lim	R	\$411,449	160764	36%
PA	Arlen Specter * #	R	\$12,088,223	1807232	61%
PA	William Lloyd	D	\$188,384	1024275	35%
SC	Ernest Hollings * #	D	\$5,598,915	541283	52%
SC	Bob Inglis	R	\$2,544,438	475245	46%
SD	Thomas Daschle * #	D	\$7,279,031	162880	62%
SD	Ron Schmidt	R	\$525,728	95537	36%
UT	Robert Bennett * #	R	\$2,792,676	315385	64%
UT	Scott Leckman	D	\$274,075	162496	33%
VT	Patrick Leahy * #	D	\$1,579,027	151261	72 %
VT	Fred Tuttle	R	\$0	49202	23%
WA	Patty Murray * #	D	\$6,374,320	807499	58%
WA	Linda Smith	R	\$5,234,596	576674	42%
WI	Russ Feingold * #	D	\$3,319,376,	892643	50%
WI	Mark Neuman	R	\$4,373,053	857351	48%

Votes received source: Washington Post.com: <http://elections98.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/results/ohsn.htm> (each state has a different ending) Visited 08/15/99

Funding source: The Center for Responsive Politics, [http://www.opensecrets.org/1998elect/dist\\_total.98ARS8total.htm](http://www.opensecrets.org/1998elect/dist_total.98ARS8total.htm). (Each state has a different ending) Visited 08/15/99.

**APPENDIX B**

**1998 U.S. SENATE CANDIDATES WHO HAD DEBATES: CLASSIFIED BY  
PARTY, INCUMBANCY, AND GENDER**

1998 U.S. Senate candidates who had debates:  
classified by party, gender, and incumbancy

Party and Gender	State	Incumbent	State	Challenger	State	Open		
Democrat female	CA	Boxer	CO	Lamm	AR OH	Lincoln Boyle		
	MD	Mikulski						
	WA	Murray						
	IL	Mosley-Braun						
Democrat male	CT	Dodd	GA	Coles	IN	Bayh Mauk Baesler		
	FL	Graham	IA	Osterberg	ID			
	NV	Reid	KS	Feliciano	KY			
	ND	Dorgan	MO	Nixon				
	SC	Hollings	NY	Schumer				
	SD	Daschle	UT	Leckman				
	WI	Feingold						
	Republican female			WA ND	Smith Nalewaja			
	Republican male	CO	Campbell	CA	Fong		AR	Boozman Helmke Voinovich Crapo Bunning
		KS	Brownback	CT	Franks		IN	
GA		Coverdale	MD	Pierpont	OH			
IA		Grassley	FL	Crist	ID			
MO		Bond	NV	Ensign	KY			
NY		D'Amato	SC	Inglis				
UT		Bennett	SD	Schmidt				
			WI	Neuman				
			IL	Fitzgerald				

46 Total  
Participants

23 Democrats  
23 Republicans

9 Females  
37 Males

18 Incumbents  
18 Challengers  
10 Open Seat Candidates

APPENDIX C

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

### Transcription Conventions

Symbol	Function
:	Separates the speaker's name from the spoken text
..	Pause or minimal break
...	Pause longer than 1 second
...(N)	Pause for the amount of time in seconds
.	Terminal pitch
<>	extra prosodic features, such as sighs, cough
uh, um	non-word sounds
/?/	unclear word
@	laughter by the speaker
[ ]	researcher's comments to aid in reading the text and add context information

adapted from DuBois et al. 1991

APPENDIX D

CODES FOR ISSUE TOPICS, CLAUSE SUBJECTS  
AND PREDICATE NOUNS



### Codes for Issue Topics, Clause Subjects, and Predicate Nouns

- 10 **general reference to domestic issues:** today's issues
- 20 **population and birth control:** research on birth control, partial birth abortion, morning after pill, pro choice, Roe v Wade, pro life, definition of life, abortion factors (rape, incest, parental consent) not a government decision
- 30 **employment:** unemployment, jobs, minimum wage, full, self sufficiency, economic stability
- 40 **education:** new schools technology, education funding, scholarships, education tax-credit, high school, college, class size, teacher ratio, curriculum, education quality
- 50 **social security:** save, protect, alternative retirement investment plans social security- fraud, (steal funds, waste funds, Medicare, health insurance for seniors
- 60 **social welfare:** ADC, welfare to work
- 70 **crime and violence:** safe streets, gun control, trigger locks, prisons, death penalty, school violence, hate crimes (race and homosexual directed violence)
- 80 **affirmative action:** equal opportunity, employment and wage discrimination, quotas, equality barriers
- 100 **environment:** land preservation, preserve forests, parks, regulated growth, land development, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act
- 140 **natural resources:** protect salmon, wildlife, species, protect lakes, aquifer, local water sources, develop dams, alternative energy
- 170 **transportation:** roads, federal role, mass transit; airline funding, airline regulation, rail-bus funding, bridges
- 210 **balanced budget:** achieved, worked for, voted for, not real, deficit, repay social security, surplus for social security, use for tax credit, tax cuts, other uses
- 215 **government spending:** economic reform, monetary control; interest rates, money supply fed
- 220 **U.S. economy**
- 230 **taxes:** tax reform, flat tax nat. Sales tax, surcharges, not related to budget tax cuts or tax credits

- 240 **US industries:** protection from foreign industry, cartel, protect small farms, outsourcing, moving jobs abroad, corporate farms
- 250 **international trade:** balance of trade, export, tariff free trade, fast track, world economy, IMF, NAFTA, GATT, human rights related to trade
- 310 **international role of the US:** moral leader, economic leader, police, military enforcer, superpower
- 420 **impeachment:** high crimes, charges, precedents, trial, juror, a process, a problem, an embarrassment, a disgrace, high cost, resignation, censure, sex scandal, immoral act
- 430 **partisan politics:** stop progress, attack president
- 440 **campaign finance:** reform, McCain-Feingold, violation, PAC money, soft money, level playing field
- 460 **general reference to a law:** bill, agreement, program, particular legislation, legislative provisions or parts of legislative provisions
- 490 **legislative action:** form caucus, committee assignment, sponsor legislation, support or vote for legislation, oppose legislation
- 500 **campaign related topics:** ads, false information, misrepresent position, distort facts, provide information, information sources, contribution sources, support from groups
- 550 **candidate credentials:** voting record, works for a particular district, or group, loyalty to state, bipartisan collaboration, works hard, visits districts, experience, seniority,
- 600 **abstract concepts:** justice, equality, freedom, liberty democracy, honesty, opportunity, undefined or unidentified problem
- 700 **undefined solution:** way, direction, chance, change
- 800 **medical not related to Medicare or abortion:** heart attacks, Alshaimers disease, strokes
- 900 **unique words:** items named which appear less than four times in the data, for example, heart attacks, a teddy bear, Varsity coach
- 1000 **emphatic:** there, it
- 1100 **self reference:** self, I, me

- 1110 **opponent**
- 1120 **own party**
- 1130 **opponent's party**
- 1140 **state/local legislators: Mayor, governor**
- 1150 **individual political figures: Nixon, Perot, Feinstein**
- 1160 **particular countries: China,**
- 1170 **particular U.S. locations: cities, areas, valleys**
- 1200 **politicians (general): congress, members of congress, senate**
- 1300 **the U.S. government**
- 1320 **unclear referent: we, us,**
- 1400 **people in general: one, anyone, nobody, everyone, you**
- 1410 **specific group: men, women, seniors, parents, farmers, doctors, teachers**
- 1412 **specific organizations: AMA, NRA**
- 1420 **Americans**
- 1430 **State citizens: Californians, Floridians**
- 1500 **the media**
- 1600 **money: income, salary expenses**

APPENDIX E

STRENGTHENERS AND WEAKENERS CODES

## Strengtheners and Weakeners Codes

Code	Strengtheners
01	absolutely
02	a lot
03	completely
04	definitely
05	extremely
06	fully
07	lots
08	quite
09	really
10	so
11	such
12	very

Code	Weakeners
20	fairly
21	kind of
22	may
23	maybe
24	might
25	pretty much
26	probably
27	possibly
28	think

APPENDIX F

SUMMARY OF DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

## Dependent Variables

<b>Variable Classification</b>	<b>Type of Variable</b>	<b>Number of Types</b>
Clauses	Clause Types (e.g. subordinate clause, or relative clause )	6
Embeddedness	Level of the clause in relation to the main clause	7
Verbal Process	Verb type (following Halliday's categories)	20
Subject	Topic placed in the subject of the clause	29
Object/Complement	Topic placed in the object or complement	44
Politeness	Observances and violations of positive politeness (e.g. thanks or insults) [Number includes 4 observance types, 7 violation types, total observance, and total violation]	13
Amount	Number of intonation units for each observance and violation of politeness	13
Mitigation	Strengtheners and weakeners	2
Total Variables		134

## Independent Variables

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
Gender	Female	Male
Incumbency	Challenger	Incumbent
Political Party	Democrat	Republican
Race Type	Open Race	Contested Race
Status	Winner	Loser

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