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POLITICAL TELEVISION IN 1976: A USES AND
GRATIFICATIONS LOOK AT THE NATIONAL
NOMINATING CONVENTIONS AND PRESIDENTIAL
DEBATES.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, PH.D., 1978

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Cliff Zukin
1978
POLITICAL TELEVISION IN 1976:
A Uses and Gratifications Look at the National Nominating Conventions and Presidential Debates

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Cliff Zukin, B.S., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1978

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With Love To My Parents,

Who Provided Me the Opportunities
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between communication and politics. From our first contact years ago I have never known him to be anything other than a sensitive, positive person with an intellectual curiosity that I have great respect for. A central theme of this thesis is one I was introduced to, and excited with, by Thom.

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investigate my own insights and imagination. My pro-
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and the high standards he sets for himself and lives up
to. One could not have asked for a better teacher. I
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I have a shorter and somewhat less serious list of
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months earlier than I wanted, but allowed me to teach the
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VITA

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"A Reconsideration of the Effects of Information on Parti­

"Political Imagery and Information in an Age of Television,"
Journalism Quarterly, Autumn, 1978, with C. Richard Hof­
stetter and Terry Buss.

"The 1972 Election Through the Eyes of Television: Network
News and Advertising in the Nixon and McGovern Campaigns,"
Journalism Quarterly, Spring, 1979, with C. Richard Hof­
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<td>3. Schematic Representation of the Uses and Gratifications and Direct Effects Models of Mass Communication</td>
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"Communication" is an essential element in the study of politics. In fact, it is so essential that it is often taken for granted. A central question of democratic theory—how public preferences are transmitted to decision makers, is at heart an exercise in communication. At the other extreme, of micro political behavior, communication is inherent in such analytic tools as the "normal vote," (Converse, 1966) where some communication in the form of information must penetrate the shield of every voter who defects from the long term force of partisanship.

"Communication" in present day politics means the mass media. The decline of the central city and with it the urban party organizations coupled with the saturation of television and radio receivers and the print media have reduced the dependency on interpersonal communications for following politics. It is through the media that citizens monitor their political process, gaining information and insights on the functioning of government, its leaders, and the problems confronting the nation in both international and domestic spheres. Officials monitor the media (and public opinion polls) as a microcosm or sampling of public concerns,
searching for the elusive "mood" of the country and seeking the limits to which their actions shall be constrained by the scrutiny and parameters of public opinion. While elections provide one linkage mechanism between public opinion and public policy it is worth remembering that elections are quadrennial or biennial events. Issues on which citizens demand input or on which decision-makers seek guidance do not allow themselves to be so neatly scheduled in two or four year intervals. While political parties and pressure groups to some degree serve as opinion-to-policy linkage mechanisms it is clear that the media also serve this function in contemporary politics. Moreover, it is clear that television is more and more becoming the dominant medium of politics.

Mentioning "television" opens up a Pandora's box of incomparable dimensions. For perhaps no other subject is surrounded by such an ocean of controversy. Television has been praised for expanding peoples' worlds and field of experience while it is blamed for the breakup of the family unit and for creating a "paranoid" society. Television has been honored for its ability to communicate information to children in innovative ways, such as Sesame Street, even while it is accused of producing non-creative individuals and teaching children violent responses. Some believe television to be responsible for the earlier maturation of children in modern society, while others attribute the
gradual lowering of college entrance examination scores to television.

The question of "television effects" on politics is in a similar state. Social commentators and "pop culture" writers credit the medium with a massive reshaping of the political terrain, while empirically oriented social scientists chronicle a legacy of "non-effects." Political scientists have been especially prominent in their contributions to the "no effects" doctrine. This is partially attributable to the confinement of most political "TV effects" studies to the arena of electoral behavior, where it is difficult to partial out television influences from the variegated array of stimuli that envelop political campaigns.

Yet it is important to study the role of television in electoral behavior--for television has the starring role, as far as the public is concerned. Television is the medium of politics, and has been since widespread usage began with the first Eisenhower--Stevenson campaign. More Americans reported getting their information about the 1952 election from television than from any other source (Campbell, 1962-1963)--even though only one of every two American households owned a television receiver at that time (DeFleur and Ball-Rockeach, 1975:101). The superiority of television in providing information to the public has become a static finding, recurring as a
companion to every national election since 1952. The
preeminence of TV is not simply grounded in its ability to
provide more (or easier) information, but "better" informa-
tion as well. Television is not only seen as less biased
(Robinson, 1969) and more credible than other media (Roper,
1973), but is also viewed as more personal (Sargent, 1965)
more dynamic, colorful and even more complete than newspa-
papers (Jacobsen, 1969). Although likened to an "electronic
front page" (Harney, 1968; Clarke, 1970) television is per-
ceived by the public as a medium which gives the clearest
understanding of candidates and issues in elections (Bower,
1973).

But while election TV has demonstrated a capacity to
better inform the citizenry it seems to do little else.
Conclusions about television's influences drawn from the
early 1950s remain largely true today. Campbell, (1962-
1963) for example, found that television did not affect
voter turnout or stimulate interest in the election. Glaser
(1965) also found the influence of television in getting
voters to the polls to be negligible. Simon and Stern (1955),
comparing areas of high and low television density in Iowa
in 1952, found the presence of television made no difference
in turnout or partisan division of the vote. Hofstetter
et al.(1976) found little variation in candidate imagery to
be attributable to television in the 1972 election.
Patterson and McClure (1976) in a widely cited, even if
overwritten, study found little television influences in a myriad of areas in a study of the 1972 election.

The failure of empirical studies to uncover television effects is most often attributed to a "reinforcement effect" of mass communication in general. Mediating factors such as selective exposure, perception, attention and retention reinforce predispositions and thus retard shifts in opinion and behavior (Klapper, 1960).

This explanation led to a revised model of mass (or persuasive or political) communications. Mediating variables (often "partisanship" in studies of voting behavior) were included as intervening between an "exposure" and some "effect" whose cause might be attributable to the exposure. This revision corrected what is now an obviously glaring deficiency in the approach to studying mass communication.

However it is now time to note and admit that studies employing this revised model, such as the last two referenced, have also failed to demonstrate any "television effects." It may in fact be that there are no "pure" television effects, or that the effects are so intermixed with the unique characteristics of the individual audience member that they appear to be random. But the conventional wisdom of pervasive effects is so at odds with the empirical studies of minimal effects that other explanations should continue to be ventured and tested. There are two tracks that may be taken. One could argue that the model directing the method
of study was deficient and propose a revision. Or, one could argue that the model was adequate but the studies done were in some way deficient. This dissertation believes both these arguments to be true and offers a study design that is but a primitive effort of looking at some alternatives.

In specific it will be argued that most of the studies in this area have been done at a time when television effects would be least and reinforcement effects would be most likely to occur. As a consequence these studies have made but a limited contribution to knowledge of individual political behavior and to an understanding of the role of television in the political system. Secondly, it is believed that the dominant model of mass communication may be improved by the inclusion of an additional element. This element is the consideration of a qualitative dimension to the concept of "exposure." The typical "quantitative" operationalization focuses on "how much" or "how often" an individual was exposed to a particular medium. In an extended conceptualization of exposure reasons why one viewed or read becomes a qualitatively operationalized variable further defining those individuals who were exposed to a given program on television.

Returning to the argument that the timing of studies has been inhibitory, most studies have focused on electoral behavior in the narrow time frame immediately before and
after national elections. As citizens have often formed evaluations of the parties, candidates and the dynamic issues of the campaign prior to this time it is little wonder that reinforcement effects appear so prominently in the literature. To more fully understand the role of television one needs to study the electorate at an earlier point in time.

The national nominating conventions suggest themselves as a potentially fruitful area of study. Television coverage and exposure are massive and national attention is riveted on the two major political parties as each selects its representatives. Indeed this is perhaps the only event where the parties are shown to the American people as central actors. Yet we know little about what viewers of the conventions see, remember or think about the conventions. There are but few studies that have concentrated on public impressions of the national nominating conventions.¹ Many partisans are introduced via the conventions for the first time to the ticket they are asked to support. For many it is not only an opportunity to learn the character and policy of the parties, but also the record, qualifications and personalities of the candidates running for the Presidency. One of the goals of this dissertation is to describe what viewers of the 1976 national nominating convention saw, and how they reacted to what they saw. It seems intuitively

¹A review of this literature is presented in Chapter 3.
reasonable to argue that the impressions and imagery convention viewers nurture have some consequence for the receptivity of future information (a reinforcement effect?) and future behaviors. Thus the political conventions are a primary focus of this study.

Many of these same reasons justify the selection of the series of Presidential debates between Carter and Ford as a topic of study. The debates offer a second pre-election vantage point from which the role and impact of political television may be scrutinized. Much as in the case of convention viewing the analysis of the Presidential debates will focus on what viewers remembered from the debates. In an era of growing influence and use of media advisors and specialists has style taken over from substance? Do viewers recall what the candidates said in various policy areas; or is it general imagery that is retained about how the candidates acted and appeared. McLuhan-type arguments that the medium dwarfs the message have tremendous implications for understanding the role of television. For if, in the opinion -- (media) -- policy linkage model, the media should have properties of their own of sufficient strength to act as a distortive element in the transmission process there may be radical changes in store for the relationship between governors and governed. Thus it is necessary to investigate political programming as seen on television. Focusing on the conventions and debates it is hoped will add to our knowledge not
only of how people view and think of these major political events, but of the preeminent role played by television as an intermediary in the political process.

Beyond this first goal of adding knowledge in these areas, the second central aim of this study is to suggest a revised model for studying political communications. The need for such a model becomes apparent in light of the following discussion of reasons for the disparity between the "conventional wisdom" school of television effects and the failure of empirical studies to document those effects.
REASONS FOR MINIMAL EFFECTS

The disparity between the "pervasive effects" and "minimal effects" schools of thought about the impact of television may be due to a number of factors. Five possible reasons, which are not mutually exclusive, may be singled out for discussion. First, television programming has usually been considered as a whole, without a serious consideration of the many forms of programming.

Programming on television from which information or impressions may be gleaned by viewers may be in the form of short 30 second advertisements by candidates, longer special programs paid for by the candidates' election committees, both local and national news programming, election "specials" produced by the networks or from entertainment television in general. When these forms of programming are decomposed from "general exposure" into discrete elements independent properties emerge. Hofstetter et al. (1976) for example, found variation in traits ascribed to candidates and political information according to the type of programming under consideration. Thus a general "TV exposure" variable in some cases masks differential television effects. Few investigators have pursued this avenue of inquiry.
A second reason for the controversy over the impact of television lies in a failure to make a distinction between "direct" and "indirect" effects. In the former case exposure is said to cause an X to occur, such as watching a candidate's advertisement leading a viewer to be more or less likely to be interested, vote in the election, or support a particular candidate. As noted above, it is the searching for this type of effect that has characterized the bulk of political science research on the effect of television.

"Indirect effects" take a more insidious form and are harder to unearth. In this model, exposure causes X to occur, which make Y more or less likely to occur. Robinson and Zukin (1976), for example, found dependency on television for information on politics to be positively associated with support for George Wallace in the 1968 Presidential election. The two-step explanation offered was that television, by so vividly bringing home the urban unrest and social malaise of the 1960s, fostered a climate of social conservatism. Wallace, by most effectively tapping the mood of the country, became the beneficiary of support in rough proportion to individuals' dependency on television. Thus by confining studies principally to seeking direct television effects, which are more clear-cut in research design, investigators adopted an imprudently narrow focus on the research question. This contributed to empirical findings of the minimal consequences variety.
As noted earlier, a third explanation for the controversy over effects argues that research designs have been too cumbersome, in a temporal sense, to capture television effects. Most designs have centered around the time of the national elections, with even pre-election waves of interviewing conducted subsequent to the national nominating conventions. The argument against this mode of study is that whatever effects television has occur long before the period in which studies are done. For example, Patterson and McClure (1976) find little evidence that television acted as an agenda-setting mechanism in the 1972 election. If, however, images of candidates and parties are influenced by television or the media in general, it is most likely to occur in the primary election season or at the time of the national nominating conventions when information is relatively low and non-incumbent candidates relatively unknown. Thus their conclusion of "no agenda-setting power of the media," based on little variation in candidate imagery by exposure to media, is not warranted given the time difference between when the phenomenon is expected to be most powerful and the design of their study. This "television effect" then, should be placed under a category of "not adequately investigated" rather than "minimal effects."

A fourth explanation seeks to reconcile the pervasive and minimal effects doctrines. Researchers have found no effects because television has a pervasive effect -- a
saturation effect. The medium is so dominant that everyone is touched by it, even that small percentage who do not own television receivers or watch much television. The frame of reference and common experiences provided by television reach us all either through direct exposure or indirect exposure through discussions with other people or absorbing other media content. A logical consequence of this is that studies attempting to attribute variation in attitudes or behavior to television exposure bequeath null findings as there is little or no variation in the population to be explained. An investigative strategy of correlating the extent to which some effect is present with the extent of exposure to the medium is futile in this view, as the key difference is not how much exposure an individual had to the medium, but whether the individual was exposed at all. Moreover, in an era of electronic campaigning, with 30 and 60 second "spot" advertisements interspersed between prime time entertainment programming, the proportion of the population receiving no exposure is sufficiently small as to accurately consider exposure as universal (Zukin, 1977).

The final explanation to be considered, and the one that this thesis is primarily concerned with, is that the model used to investigate television effects is in need of refinement and further development. Initial effects models posited a one-to-one relationship between exposure and effects. The audience member was envisioned as a passive
receptor to be mercilessly manipulated by the producers of TV content. When pervasive effects failed to demonstrate themselves communication scholars concluded that the model was overly simple. Such a model was flawed by the failure to take the attitudinal predispositions of those in the viewing audience into account. By including mediating properties such as selective exposure, attention, perception and retention, the strength of ego-involved and salient attitudes investigators were able to explain the only clear-cut media effect they had observed—a reinforcement effect (Klapper, 1960). This approach characterizes much of the current research on media and television effects to date.

The singular feature shared by most studies in this research tradition is a concern with the "effects" of media on the political attitudes and behaviors of individuals. The common means for investigating such effects is to correlate the amount of exposure an individual reports to a particular medium with a dependent variable concerned with some effect, such as the amount of information an individual possesses, or his or her vote in an election. The strength of the association is then taken as an indicator of media effects. It is the contention of this thesis that such an approach guarantees that as much information about how people behave politically will be obscured as is revealed. Put simply, the concern with effects is premature; as implicit in the approach is the assumption that all exposure
is purposive, or is motivated by a desire to acquire information. As noted earlier, exposure is treated as a unidimensional concept employing a quantitative operationalization of "how much."

A growing body of literature (summarized in Chapter 5) indicates this assumption rests on a precarious foundation. Individuals view political programming for a variety of reasons—to pass the time, to be entertained, to be able to engage in social discourse with others, and to acquire information. One might well hypothesize different effects of the media, or television, depending on the uses to which the individual puts the communication. For example, one might hypothesize a strong relationship between exposure and information reception for individuals who viewed political programming for the purpose of receiving information. And one might expect a null relationship between exposure and information for those who watched the same programming because they wanted to pass the time. The mapping of some of the uses people make of political programming is one of the principal objectives of this thesis.

Beyond mapping the "functions" communication plays for individuals, a primarily descriptive enterprise, these functions will be considered as a set of "specifying conditions" in an investigation of media effects. Individuals who viewed political programming for one reason (or one set of reasons) will be juxtaposed against individuals
who watched for different reasons in a search for media effects. While this line of reasoning is explained in greater detail in subsequent chapters this approach should be noted as treating exposure in a qualitative rather than quantitative manner. The key question regarding exposure focuses on "why," rather than on "how much."

In terms of a revised model two sets of mediating elements are considered. The selective factors referred to earlier still intervene between exposure and effects. However a second set of mediating factors is operationalized with regards to exposure. Rather than being dichotomous (yes/no) or an ordinal scale of how much, a set of reasons for exposure (yes: reason a, b, c ... n) is considered. This revised model is applied to viewers recollections of the conventions and debates in order to investigate whether this treatment of "kinds of exposure" has consequences for what viewers recalled. It is thought to be the case that "reasons for exposure" will act as a set of specifying conditions that serve to elaborate or unmask relationships. Should this hypothesis be supported many of the empirical works finding "minimal effects" should be reconsidered as the model used in those studies would have been found to be deficient.
THE CHAPTER OUTLINE

To re-state, there are two principal aims of this study: to investigate political television in the 1976 election as it relates to coverage and viewers of the national nominating conventions and debates; and to operationalize and test a "Uses and Gratifications" model of research into political communications. The next chapter describes the data base and design of the study. Chapters 3 and 4 focus respectively on the national nominating conventions and political debates, paying particular attention to the impressions viewers carried away with them from these two events and considering the role of television in the political process in broad terms.

The fifth chapter begins by giving an overview of the Uses and Gratifications approach and commenting on studies that have utilized this approach. The various reasons that people gave for watching the conventions and debates are analyzed as individual variables, and inferences are made from these reasons about the character of citizen engagement with the political process.

The individual reasons for viewing are factor analyzed into "dimensions of viewing" in the sixth chapter. The
structure of viewing dimensions is analyzed and the structures for convention viewing and debate viewing are compared. A demographic profile of the convention and debate viewing dimensions is presented at the conclusion of the chapter.

Chapter 7 begins to address the question of the model's utility. The individual dimensions found in Chapter 6 are treated as independent variables with viewer impressions of the conventions and debates (chapters 3 and 4) treated as dependent variables. The viewing dimensions are treated as a set of specifying conditions with hypotheses being formulated and tested regarding their relationship to the dependent variables. The final chapter considers some of the implications of this research both for the social science study of political communication and for actors in the political process, such as political parties, and candidates.
CHAPTER II: METHODS AND DATA

All data used in this dissertation come from a series of four telephone interviews conducted with a panel of San Francisco residents during the summer and fall of 1976. The first wave of the panel was conducted in the week following the 1976 Republican national nominating convention and yielded 397 completed interviews out of a targeted 400. The second wave (n = 197) was engineered in the week following the first Presidential debate. Wave 3 (n = 170) went into the field after the final debate and wave 4 (n = 182) was completed in the week following the November election.¹

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

The set of all residential listings in the San Francisco telephone book comprised the sampling frame for the first wave. Some 1300 phone numbers were selected by

¹A consortium of benefactors at the Ohio State University provided support for this enterprise. Waves 2, 3 and 4 were jointly underwritten by the Graduate School, the College of Social Behavior Sciences and the Department of Political Science of the Ohio State University. None of these entities are responsible for any errors of data or analysis presented in this dissertation.
means of a random serial sample. When it became clear, for reasons discussed below, the 1300 numbers would not yield 400 interviews, a second 1200 numbers were selected by the same procedure.

A number of factors conspired to make necessary the glut of 2500 numbers. Foremost among them was the fact that the phone book was 11 months old at the time the sample was being drawn. This yielded a staggering number of 620 "disconnects." It also points out that San Franciscans are more mobile than the U.S. population. This mobility, and the cosmopolitan nature of the city's residents, are undoubtedly factors in the failure to reach people at 566 of the selected numbers. Each number was allotted the original call and two callbacks before being replaced. The fate of

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2 The serial procedure used had the following features. Twenty numbers were chosen from each page in the phone book that was selected for inclusion. The starting page was selected at random and a skip interval of 10 pages was established. The column and the direction (from the "top" or "bottom" of the column) from which numbers were selected were cyclically ordered. For example, 20 numbers were selected from the first column of page X reading from the top. At the next sample point, X + 10, 20 numbers were selected from column two, reading from the bottom. When multiple listing occurred, where two different numbers for different households members were listed for one dwelling unit, the first number was selected for inclusion in the sample while the second was passed by. Interviewers were instructed to stratify on six to yield roughly the same proportion of women and men.
each number drawn for the sample can be seen in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused</td>
<td>769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Answer</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business #</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Barrier</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconnected</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2512</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high refusal rate follows a national trend of a growing reluctance on the part of the public to be interviewed. California pollster Melvin Field observed that, "twenty years ago we could figure on getting 85 percent with reasonable effort; now we're hard-pressed to get 60 percent." (Lipset, 1976) This growing problem compounds the problem of sampling error beyond a simple computational equation based on sample size.

The completed interviews from wave 1 comprised the sample frame for wave 2. Respondents who had volunteered their name to interviews upon the completion of the first wave were asked for by name in subsequent interviews, while those insisted on maintaining their anonymity were asked for on the basis of demographic variables, e.g., "a male between
22

20 and 30" in subsequent waves. The third and fourth waves were drawn from those who either completed a second wave interview or were not found at home during the second interview period. Only those who refused to participate in the second wave were deleted from the pool of potential respondents for the later surveys.

While the telephone book sampling frame was "cheap and quick," it was not without its costs. Twin criticisms commonly accompanying such studies are the inability to reach those without phone service, said to bias against the full inclusion of those at the bottom of the socioeconomic status ladder; and the inability to reach unlisted numbers, generally thought to bias against full representation of those of substantial means.

While accurate most of the time, this method of finding the original respondent will clearly produce some errors. For example, a household may have two males in the 20 to 30 age range, one of whom responded to the first survey while the other responds to a later date. Interview schedules were carefully scrutinized for matches over partisanship, age and education. All questionable matches were severely judged with suspicious matches being expunged from analysis.

The refusal rate between wave 1 and wave 2 is probably higher than one would expect, and certainly higher than one would like. This is in part due to length of the first interview schedule. The design was planned as a single shot survey, which averaged about 25 minutes—a long time for a phone interview. When resources made the panel design feasible the good will of some respondents had doubtlessly been used up.
A 1972 Gallup poll estimated that 90 percent of the population enjoyed phone service. This figure drops to 84 percent of those with a grade school education and 78 percent of those with a family income of under $5,000 (Roll and Cantril, 1972:90). More precise data is available on phone service to San Francisco residents. It is estimated that about 97 percent of the city's population has phone service available.\(^4\) Given almost universal diffusion of the telephone the lower status bias effects should be negligible.

The problem of reaching unlisted number is more pressing. While a random digit dialing procedure would have alleviated the problem (Weisberg and Bowen, 1977), the high proportion of business to residential phone numbers made this economically unfeasible. While this bias is then present, one must be less than sanguine about dubbing in an "upper status bias." The phone company reports the proportion of unlisted numbers has been consistently and rapidly growing. About 30 percent of the residential phones in San Francisco are unlisted numbers. Clearly the phone

\(^4\)The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce estimates the 1977 population of San Francisco at 773,000. Statistics compiled by the phone company serving the area show 315,101 residential phones. The City-County Data Book estimates 2.4 residents per San Francisco household, yielding a "guess" of 756,242 people, or 97.8% of the population with phone service. Two caveats accompany the guess. First, the fact that some households have multiple lines is not incorporated into the equation. Second, the people per household figure is from 1972 and the city has been shrinking in size in recent years. Thus, the 97.8% estimate should be slightly higher than the true figure, although not severely so.
book can not be that great of a proletarian scripture, with the upper third of society removed. It is quite likely that the rise in unlisted numbers has been caused by a different segment of the society. Single women living in the city may not want to have their number listed, as well as those who are tired of bill collectors, salesmen and pollsters. Thus, while the bias is greater it is also probably more evenly distributed across the various strata of society. The exact character of this bias needs to yet be fully explicated.

THE INTERVIEW PATHS

A complete enumeration of response paths of all respondents over the four waves is displayed in Table 2.

One hundred and sixteen individuals participated in all four waves. Another 64 people participated in three interviews, 10 people responding to waves 1, 2 and 3, 20 people responding to waves 1, 2 and 4, and 34 people responding to waves 1, 3, and 4.

Seventy-seven people responded to two of the four surveys, of which 51 people answered waves 1 and 2, nine people waves 1 and 3, and 17 people answered to waves 1 and 4. Of the 138 individuals who received only the wave 1 treatment, 47 refused to participate further and a variety of circumstances, principally the inability to catch up with the respondent despite two callbacks, led to non-participation by the rest.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAVE ONE</th>
<th>WAVE TWO</th>
<th>WAVE THREE</th>
<th>WAVE FOUR</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C/M</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>R</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Communication Problem - Terminated 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Lack of Memory - Terminated 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>WN/P</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NA</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td>C(WP)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>QM/X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>WP/NM</td>
<td>WP/NM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| WP/NM | WP/NM | C   | 1   |

*Total includes unmatched cases, which were built as independent cases.
SAN FRANCISCO AND THE NATION

Indeed, the problem of finding respondents at home plagued all aspects of the design. As a group, San Franciscans are both more mobile and more active than the national population. The idealic climate and diversity of recreational opportunities the bay-area offers its inhabitants combine to yield a much larger "not home" block than would be expected in other localities or in a national setting. The first wave, conducted in the latter stages of summer, was also doubtlessly a victim of vacation plans.

The data appearing in this dissertation should not be construed as anything other than a survey of San Francisco residents. Conclusions drawn from these data are not generalizable in a statistical sense. San Francisco is clearly unrepresentative of the nation in both demographic and partisan-ideological terms. The city is somewhat schizophrenic with respect to age, as the young and elderly are somewhat overrepresented as compared with the general population of the United States. The city's residents are "overly-Democratic" in their partisan preference and "overly liberal" in their ideological bent.

Given the purposes of this study, and as it makes no claims of generalizability, the unrepresentativeness of San Franciscans is not of great concern. The respondents are viewed as a preliminary test group to investigate convention and debate television and to test the Uses and
Gratifications approach. If some variation appears in the reasons for exposure, and these are in turn linked to variation in perceptions of the conventions and debates in the homogeneous San Francisco population, it would be "common sense evidence" that some variation lies waiting to be explained at the more heterogeneous national level. Thus the key to this data base is simply that people used political television for different reasons and saw different things. This would furnish evidence to warrant continued research in this area and operationalization of the model in a more diffuse setting where claims of external validity could be made.
THE SAMPLE AS REPRESENTATIVE OF SAN FRANCISCANS

Despite the high refusal rate and the high proportion of "no answers" the sample appears to be an accurate one. When sample means are juxtaposed against known population means there is close correspondence on most demographic variables. Table 3 highlights the comparison sample and population values over income, education, age and sex.

TABLE 3 COMPARISON OF SAMPLE AND POPULATION VALUES ON DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample, Wave 1</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mean income, thousands</td>
<td>13.4 (n = 318)</td>
<td>13.1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean education, grades completed</td>
<td>14.3 (n = 388)</td>
<td>12.4&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sex, % female</td>
<td>50.6 (n = 397)</td>
<td>51.7&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age: % of those 21 and older</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-44</td>
<td>54.9%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 +</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0% (n = 380)</td>
<td>100.0%&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a, c. Source: Figure supplied by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce.</sup>
<sup>a. These data are from 1973. c. These data are from 1975.</sup>
<sup>b. Source: City and County Data Book. These data are from 1970.</sup>

The income figure for the sample is slightly higher than the population figure. As the population estimate is based on 1973 data, and household incomes have appreciated in the last three years, the 13.4 thousand dollar sample figure is probably quite close to the true value. It is
clearly within a $650, or five percent error margin. The educational statistics are more comparable when the six year time interval is taken into consideration. If biased, the sample may have a slightly "over educated" lean to it.

While the educational level of the society in general, including San Franciscans, has increased in recent years, the 1.9 year difference may be too high to entirely attribute to real change in the population. This difference must also be due in part to sampling error.

As the data in Table 3 show, the sample is biased at both extremes on the characteristic of ages. Both the young and the elderly are overrepresented to the deprivation of those between the ages of 45 and 64. Those between 21 and 44 are overrepresented by about seven percent and those over 65 are overrepresented by about six percent.

The bias of older respondents is probably explained by the reality that senior citizens are more likely to be included in the 11 month old sampling frame. Moreover, they are less likely to engage in activities outside the home environment and are thus more likely to be available to persistent interviewers. While this undoubtedly accounts for some of the discrepancy between sample and population estimates, it is unfortunately true that this same logic would lead to the expectation that those under 45, being the most mobile and active would be undersampled rather oversampled. As no "logical" explanation can be found to
account for this, the bias must be attributed to unspecified sampling error.

The sample reflects the "political demographic" of partisan allegiance with a high degree of accuracy. The sample yielded 70 percent Democrats, 23 percent Republicans and seven percent Independent. 5

Close correspondence between sample and population on partisan attachment is significant in itself, as one would want accuracy on such a central concept in political science, but also as a sort of an intuitive validity check. The concept of partisan identification has been linked with so many other concepts such as income, educational status, some sort of ideology (Campbell, et al., 1960), that an accurate measurement of identification may serve as a small, external source of comfort about the accuracy of other variables.

THE WAVES OF REPRESENTATIVE SUB­SAMPLES

Each of the four waves is of course, a unique sub-sample of respondents who participated in the initial

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5 The population figure includes those San Franciscans registered to vote in the 1976 Presidential election. This data was supplied by the Office of the Registrar for the City and County of San Francisco. Independents leaning to one party were classified with strong and weak identifiers in the sample data to achieve comparability with the population, where independent leaners are "prodded" to identify with a party in order to participate in the primary selection process of candidates.
interview. At various points in the following analyses changes in opinions will be looked at across time. Given that twice as many respondents participated in the first wave as in the others, the character of each of the three latter samples should be tested against the first sample for representativeness; much as data from the first wave was compared with population values. For example, assume that the dropoff rate between the first two samples is twice as high for Republicans or younger people, than for their respective counterparts. A comparison between \( t_1 \) and \( t_2 \) has (at least) two hazards. First, the statement of change could no longer be generalized to even the San Francisco population, as it might if comparison of the two samples revealed no apparent biases. There is also the possibility that the particular change one is investigating is related to the same characteristic(s) that "caused" the differential dropoff rate. Thus a biased sub-sample may result in an underestimation, or in some cases an overestimation, of the amount and type of change occurring.

The data presented in Table 4 argue that the three sub-samples are indeed reflective of the larger sample. The median age ranges only from 35.8 to 38.9. Moreover, the 45 to 64 age group, while still underrepresented with regard to the population, does not become further disenfranchised with each successive wave. This can be taken as evidence that sampling error is principally responsible
for the initial deviations from the population value, rather than some sort of systematic error.

TABLE 4 COMPARISONS BETWEEN SAMPLE WAVES ON AGE, EDUCATION, SEX AND PARTISANSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Wave 3</th>
<th>Wave 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(380)</td>
<td>(190)</td>
<td>(154)</td>
<td>(178)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median Age 38.0 36.7 35.8 36.7
Mean Education (years) 14.3 14.5 14.5 14.5
Sex, % Female 50.6 48.0 45.1 a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Wave 1</th>
<th>Wave 2</th>
<th>Wave 3</th>
<th>Wave 4</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(374)</td>
<td>(153)</td>
<td>(153)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(153)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Not measured.

The educational level of respondents also maintained a high degree of uniformity throughout the interview process. The mean educational level was 14.3 years for the first wave respondents and 14.5 years for respondents to the second, third and fourth waves. There does seem to be, however, a small sex problem. While the differences between waves one and three is only about five percent, the proportion of female respondents drops three percent between the first and second waves and between the second and third waves. Given
the sample sizes this difference is clearly within the parameters of sampling error. However, the repetition of the three percent drop could also argue for some sort of systematic error; although no explanation comes readily to mind. (Except—perhaps for the interviewer who reported one husband who said we had enough information about his wife and refused to let her answer any more questions.)

Partisanship was measured on only two of the four waves. The measurements came out virtually identical. About 70 percent of wave 1 and 69 percent of wave 2 respondents classified themselves as democrats, while seven (wave 1) and nine percent (wave 3) refused to identify with one of the major parties, and 23 percent (wave 1) and 21 percent (wave 3) allied themselves with the GOP. The stability of partisanship, which is associated with a host of status variables (Campbell, et al., 1960) gives further evidence supporting the independence of the sub samples. Of all characteristics tested, demographic and attitudinal, the secondary waves more than adequately resemble the initial wave, which had proved to be an accurate sample of San Franciscans. Thus,

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6 Those who initially described themselves as Independents but said they leaned towards one of the parties have been treated as partisans in this thesis in order to bolster the size of respondent groupings. "Independent leaners" historically have had turnout and loyalty rates in party voting comparable to those who identify "weakly" with one of the parties.
one can have a fair amount of confidence in the data base relied upon in this dissertation.

This is not to absolve the data of error, however. Sampling error is always present. For the initial wave (n about 400) there is about five percent of tolerated error at a 95 percent confidence interval. The other three samples (n = 193, 170, 182) have a tolerated error of just over seven percent at the 95 percent confidence level (Backstrom and Hursh, 1963). When making comparisons between groups in a sample, the probability of error is of course increased.

SUMMATION

The purpose of this chapter has been to acquaint the reader with the data used in this dissertation. The sampling procedure has been explicated, and the paths of respondents over the four waves have been traced. The sample was then compared with known population parameters and was found to accurately represent San Franciscans on education, income, sex, partisanship and age to a somewhat lesser degree. Finally, each wave was compared against the others over these same characteristics. Except for a slight dropoff of female respondents, each of waves two, three and four exhibits an impressive correspondence with the initial wave and the population. All differences found were within the range of allowable sampling error.
CHAPTER III: THE 1976 NATIONAL NOMINATING CONVENTIONS

With the advent of full television coverage in 1952 came a new era of political conventions. While the selection of a standard-bearer and adoption of a set of policies still sounds the call that brings party representatives together, this rallying cry may at times be more perfunctory than real. The ratifications of Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and Richard Nixon in 1972 certainly caused some to wonder whether the tremendous outlay of money, time and manpower was worth whatever symbolic gratifications was afforded by holding the convention.

But the parties' quadrennial get-togethers are of immense value even situations of "confirmation-nominations." The conventions have become:

an unparalleled opportunity for the party to obtain a maximum of free, national, and it is hoped favorable public exposure. Indeed, it is in the convention that the national party has its only opportunity to display itself as a functioning national political institution. Therefore it would likely not only to conduct its party business, but also to stage a convention that will reach and hold a large television audience, and project and produce a favorable image of the party, its candidates, program, and claim to govern. (Waltzer, 1966:43)
Television offers the party a chance to put forth its best propaganda, a chance to tug on the heartstrings of partisans to cinch tighter the vows of partisan fidelity. Viewers are able to see, and more importantly to identify with their party, their favorite party stars—be they George Wallace, Richard Nixon, or for almost two decades the reliable Hubert Humphrey. The convention is a test market for new stars as well. Jim Thompson, the Governor of Illinois, was introduced to Republicans via the convention. Barbara Jordan put forth a masterful performance to assure her of a bright future in the Democratic party should she have wanted it, while John Glenn may have doomed his chances for the Vice-Presidential nomination with a leaden speech before a rowdy audience. Convention television has become a resource in the war of politics.

But television is not simply a benign conduit for party propaganda. Convention managers have little control of television coverage once the convention opens its doors for business. Televised coverage of the 1968 convention may well have cost Hubert Humphrey a real chance for victory in his battle with Richard Nixon. Nor did the factional divisions characterizing the 1972 Democratic convention, as exacerbated by television, aid George McGovern in uniting a badly splintered party. Two companion considerations are necessary to understand the potential risks of convention television: 1) the red light of the TV camera attracts
conflict like a moth to a flame; and 2) the television networks seek out and amplify conflict that is present and create conflict when it is absent.

While perhaps never so explicitly labeled, few would argue against the "moth theory" of television. Simply stated, television cameras attract conflict and people. There are three kinds of moths—Insurgents, Discordants and Flitters—of which the first two are of more major concern in the study of the effects of television on convention politics. The Insurgent moth is the outsider attempting to bring down or cause major change in the established order. The basic strategy is enunciated by Schattschneider (1960): When one is losing a conflict one should attempt to expand the scope of the conflict; when one is winning, the ideal strategy is to contract the scope.

It was through no accidental process that "The Whole World is Watching," became the rallying cry at the 1968 Democratic convention. The slogan was a pronouncement that the scope of the conflict was widening. Insurgents are outside the mainstream, with neither a power base nor public visibility. To change the established order dissenters must inject themselves into public consciousness as a prelude to expanding the scope of legitimate discussion on an issue to include their policy alternative.

The media is the mechanism most used by those outside the mainstream to expand the scope of conflict in society
today. As television is the medium most people turn to for news and information about politics (Roper, 1972; Bower, 1973). The insurgent—television relationship is a marriage of mutual dependence. Television news and dissenters feed each other. TV news (and convention) coverage searches for stories with a dramatic quality. Economic realities place value on attracting and holding an audience not just for the political parties but for the networks as well. To this end stories are selected that are fast paced, exciting, and have easily identifiable pro and antagonists (Epstein, 1973). Stories of conflict fill all the necessary requirements. And this fact is not lost on the insurgents.

Television news over the 1960's, increasingly became an important tool in the strategy of protest. Sensing the need of television for visual, dramatic news, protest has increasingly taken to the streets where dramatic action has been staged. Radical dissenters have effectively met the needs of television for highly visual, dramatic events—events often involving confrontations. Television news in turn has provided national exposure for relatively small, powerless groups. (Gwyn, 1969:62)

The 1968 Democratic convention was used as a forum by insurgents. The call to come to Chicago was effect in part because of guaranteed claims of TV coverage—giving sympathizers reason to come and emotional reward for both real and vicarious participation. That people did come in fact guaranteed TV coverage. The insurgent leaders realized if they could make what was happening on the streets of Chicago
a bigger show, and hence bigger story, than what was taking place inside the convention hall, they could profoundly upset the status quo and change the focus of public discussion. The Walker Committee report, submitted to the National Convention on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, concluded that more than anything else the Chicago confrontation was a finely staged piece of television theater:

This theatrical concept was a primary ingredient of their (the Yippies') approach. The audience would be the American public, the means of communication would be the mass media, manipulated to create distorted images of themselves. The stage would be the streets and the message would be a demonstration of disrespect, irreverence, and ridicule. (Walker, 1968)

But insurgent moths are rare. They need a unique environment (a product of many singular factors) in order to flourish. They have a short lifespan and political pesticides, such as absorption, can be developed for them. And once the hard core insurgents are disposed of, the flitters attracted to them generally fly off to something else or nonparticipation. To better cope with the possibility of insurgents, among other reasons, both parties moved to the armed fortress of Miami in 1972 (White, 1973).

But with the parties came the TV cameras and the Discordant moths. The discordant moths are those on the losing end of intra-party struggles. The primary attraction television offers discordants is a soapbox—a chance to make their voice(s) heard. Discordants are nothing new to
political conventions. However, the televising of conventions has given them the forum to *instantaneously* express their positions and dissatisfactions. And because this capacity exists, it is a powerful weapon. Minor coalition leaders, by threatening to make a statement that will be covered by television, or by making a televised statement that signals a warning to convention controllers, can extract concessions and compromises from party leaders and victorious candidates who value either a united party or the image of a party in agreement. The potential for expanding the scope of conflict that television affords disgruntled factions means that party leaders must give minorities their say and must bargain with them under the law of anticipated consequences. To lose control over the scope of conflict is to risk increased changes for electoral defeat.

So television, and TV time, are precious resources in the intrigues of politics—and have been ever since television was invited to the convention. Over a decade ago, Waltzer commented,

> To party factions, contenders for nomination, and those with planks to nail into or rip out of the platform, the convention is an arena of battle, and television coverage is a weapon of political warfare. It can be employed to obtain national coverage, threaten a nationally televised intra-party "family squabble," or deny prime television time to one's enemies. (Waltzer, 1966:43-44)

One of Robert Strauss' headaches at the 1976 Democratic convention was how to keep Jerry Brown off TV (as he feared
losing control over the convention) yet extract a personal
display of party unity from him. One of Jerry Brown's main
concerns was how to get permission to address the convention
(i.e. how to get TV time). The compromise had Brown making
a short speech from the California delegation rather than
from the podium (Reeves, 1977). It was the mismanagement
of conflict brought by the discordants that introduced
George McGovern and his acceptance speech to the American
public at 2:30 a.m. in 1972.

As much as convention managers try to minimize or
suppress conflict, the television networks try to exacerbate
or create conflict. This, of course, is not the networks'
official position. On the record the networks are engaged
in the altruistic act of informing the citizenry. CBS'
Dr. Frank Stanton has commented,

Television has made the convention more than an
organizational device to select candidates and
frame a platform. It has become a major forum
through which voters all across the land come
to know the personality of the party and its
leaders, to get a sense of their values, to
judge them, their characters and their capacity
for leadership. (Stanton, 1964:16)

This is undoubtedly true. But is is only the sketch
outline of a more complex picture. Two questions are begged.
First, does a focus on "personalities" and "character" come
at the expense of all else—including the dissection and
explanation of policy debate? Second, are the situations,
or context, in which occurs the glimpse into values, per-
sonality, character, and leadership, real? That is, is the
learning situation "staged" either by TV or by the candidates? And if so, 1) how does this mitigate or bias the value received by this selected focus; and 2) what are the consequences for citizen perceptions and understanding of the convention.

The first question deals with how TV covers conventions. The literature on convention coverage is sparse, but two emphases of TV news content emerge virtually as consensus picks: a focus on conflict; and a focus on personality. Three interrelated propositions hold: 1) The successful news show is one that brings in the largest audience. 2) To attract and hold an audience TV news must be dramatic and/or exciting. 3) Drama and excitement come from stories of conflict, highly visible (important) people and outgoing personalities. (Those propositions hold not because they are innately or empirically true, but because they characterize the assumptions held by network decision makers and producers) (Epstein, 1973).

The Langs, after studying the first television conventions found that television tried to find the intrigues and conflicts in the 1952 conventions—and then created some of their own when they had exhausted what the delegates had to offer. Pennsylvania's Governor Fine was made out to be the "mystery man" of the Republican convention when in reality there was not much mystery to the Governor's role, candidate preference or actions. This did not prevent the
networks from attempting to keep viewers on the edge of their seats wondering "What's he going to do next." In the 1952 Republican convention, television attributed the role of "Kingpin" to Thomas Dewey--less because of his role than their need for a central figure, or star (Lang and Lang, 1968).

More recent studies have failed to exonerate network coverage. In 1966 Waltzer wrote that with television the national convention is not only a major political news event, but a "marathon human spectacle--it is politics as news and politics as entertainment." (166:44 emphasis added). In 1968 Paltez found, "nearly all respondents" (Democratic Convention Delegates from North Carolina) disagreed with the statement, "television coverage showed mainly formal events such as speeches and the platform debate." Comments of delegates in 1968 were heavily critical of television coverage. Said one delegate, "They wanted to sell their products by showing an exciting show in the streets of Chicago, and we suffered for it." Another said, "It wasn't staged for the delegates, it was a big show for the boob tube." (Paletz, 1972:446-447).

In 1972 Edwin Dale chastised his journalistic colleagues in the Columbia Journalism Review, under the title of, "But We Wanted to See the Convention." Dale relived how he was unable to watch or listen to the convention as TV focused on interviews and personalities to the
deprivation of substance. He concluded, "Gabble by reporters and commentators is...no substitute for knowing what the vote and debate were." (Dale, 1972) While Dale found personality and controversial interviews to be supreme at the 1972 conventions, Paletz and Elson (1976) found conflict predominate at the 1972 Democratic meeting. Viewers thought the convention was far more disorderly, more conflictual, and more populated by "kooks," than did the delegates.

The dominant impression emerging from the 1972 Democratic convention was one of factional division. This itself was "primarily a function of the journalistic and production norms and techniques which television departments use to depict a national Presidential convention." These structural factors are not without their substantive effects. Peletz and Elson concluded "The media's emphasis on party division was a prime cause of the division by the time of the election." (1976:114)

Television cannot, of course, show all that is happening at a convention. They must select. And the same rules that apply to the selection of news items (Buckalew, 1969-70; Epstein, 1973; Hofstetter, 1976) are applied to this form of news coverage. The end product of this type of formula coverage is a set of themes, each familiar and reinforcing because of the coupling of repeated exposure to TV news and the cyclical routines which produce the themes. The
"corrupt politician" or the "confused delegate" Motifs are all familiar. And there are confused delegates and corrupt politicians. But over time behaviors become associated with a motif, and the image and behaviors accompanying it are linked in individuals' minds. A single act or behavior engaged in by a political actor, however, may be unrelated to the classification of the group of behaviors subsumed under the name or concept "corrupt politician." But because of the repeated linkage over time, it is the image commonly related to the behavior, rather than the act itself that is cognized and retained. In simpler terms, formula journalism breeds stereotypes, which shape perceptions. As Singer concluded after his study of violence and television:

Such a medium (television) has enormous power to affect the perceived environment of viewers through repeated emphasis of certain categories of events. This process, by reporting the social reality perceived by individuals in a society, alters their standard of judgment and hence frame of reference toward what is normal and expected in such a society. (Singer, 1970-71:616)

Reporters try to make conventions more dramatic than they really are. Accordingly, a disproportionate share of time is given over to famous figures, fictional fights, and frivolity. "Exciting trivia" such as a phone being ripped from the New York delegation, or comparing Betty Ford and Nancy Reagan on the "applause-meter" become mainstays of convention coverage. What a convention is about becomes
changed as episodic adventures become symbolic, taking on a meaning beyond their intrinsic value. The problem is not simply that the irrelevant gets as much time as the important, but that time accorded is a measure and signal of status and importance. Thus the frame of reference for what is important may present major and minor actions as equally important (Parris, 1972).

From the above discussion come two circular assertions that may be treated and tested as working hypotheses: 1) The audience for convention television dines on personalities and images of conflict to the deprivation of policy-related concerns; and 2) Given that the "formula" for convention coverage has endured from the outset of televised conventions, viewers expectations of convention happenings will be tuned to images of conflict and personalities. The orientation will be more "convention-as-theater," rather than "convention-as-politics." This can be considered a form of agenda-setting in its broadest context.

Two types of data are necessary to test the assertions. The first proposition may be tested by asking people who watched the convention(s) what they saw—or what they remembered about the convention(s). The second proposition requires data on what people expected to see and why they watched. Adequate, but imperfect measures for both of these propositions are available from the San Francisco study.
Respondents were asked if they remembered anything that stood out from the Democratic/Republican convention. The period of recall for the Democratic convention is slightly over one month, while the bulk of interviewing was completed in the week following the Republican convention.

Hazards with this measure are the reliance on recall (Weir, 1975) and on a single response. The recall reliance also has strengths. While fewer people are likely to recall a convention instance as time passes, there is more confidence in measuring something "real" for those recalling a convention happening, as the response is an indication that something penetrated consciousness with sufficient force to be stored. The single response confoundment is that what the respondent remembers most is being measured, not all that the respondent actually saw and remembered about the convention(s).

In order to test the second proposition, as well as to address some of the concerns outlined in the introductory chapter, respondents who viewed the convention were presented with statements in Likert-scale fashion centering on motivations for exposure to the conventions. As the survey was administered subsequent to the conventions the items may be tapping gratifications received rather than motivations for exposure or expectations. While these are no doubt highly related, there is apt to be some slippage nonetheless. This is discussed in Chapter 5.
As evidenced in the brief literature review earlier, few studies of convention television or political conventions have focused on mass perceptions. Most studies focus on delegate behavior (Paletz, 1972; Paletz and Elson, 1976) coalition formation among delegates (Zais and Kessel, 1970), candidate strategies (Witcover, 1977; Pomper, 1966), or on TV content (Lang & Lang, 1968). In the remainder of this chapter data are presented bearing on citizen behavior related to the conventions. The amount and type of media exposure are described initially, followed by "effects" of convention exposure and motivations for following the convention via television.
MEDIA EXPOSURE TO THE CONVENTIONS

The 1976 Democratic convention, devoid as it was of the conflict that became the hallmark of the 1968 and 1972 conventions, may not have been good theater; but it was the only show in town*, and people watched it. About two-thirds of the sample reported seeing at least some of the 20-plus hours of what has been called "the televised love-in." At least some of the Republican convention, which promised more fireworks by a head-to-head Ford-Reagan battle, was watched by about three-quarters of San Franciscans. Californians might have been more inclined to tune in the two conventions as each had native sons in highly visible participant roles, Governor Jerry Brown for the Democrats and former Governor Reagan for the Republicans.

But while almost everybody watched some of the convention, the majority did not watch much. The mean number of hours viewed were 5.0 for the Democrats and 5.5 for the Republicans. The respective medians of 2.2 and 2.4 hours indicate that a few political zealots glued themselves to the television for most of all of the conventions. A more detailed breakdown of convention viewing is given in Table 5.

*The convention had opposition one night from ABC—the All Star Game—and got clobbered in the ratings.
TABLE 5  AMOUNT OF CONVENTION TELEVISION VIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Viewed</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-7</th>
<th>8+</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic convention</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(396)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican convention</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>(396)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As these data indicate, less than half of the sample watched more than two hours of either convention. Between one-fifth and one-quarter watched only an hour or two, just to "check up on what was going on." There was but a slight tendency for selective exposure. Self-identified Republicans watched a mean of seven and a half hours of their party's meeting, compared to 5.1 for Democrats and 5.0 for Independents. However, Republicans also watched slightly more of the Democratic convention (mean=5.6) than did Democrats (5.3) or Independents (4.5). These figures are perhaps a bit deceiving, as the median Republican figure for hours of Democratic convention viewing is 1.7, compared to 2.4 for Democrats. Thus most Republican viewers tuned in but briefly to monitor the opposition and to see what Jimmy Carter had to say. A few members of the loyal opposition demonstrated masochistic tendencies, sitting through days of Democratic smiles. Not surprisingly, the best predictor of convention viewing was interest in the election campaign.

*The correlation coefficients (tau-beta) between interest and viewing were .37 for the Republican convention and .33 for the Democratic convention.*
The acceptance speeches of the two candidates received the most attention of all convention activity except for the nomination voting at the Republican convention. Forty-two percent of the sample, and 52 percent of those viewing any of the Republican convention said they saw part or all of Gerald Ford's acceptance speech— a speech generally acknowledged as one of the best of his public life. About 37 percent of the respondents and 59 percent of those who viewed at least some of the Democratic convention heard the Democratic nominee announce, "Hi, I'm Jimmy Carter and I'm running for President," after Gerald Rafshoon's movie had warmed them up. Here again, there was little evidence of selective exposure, with interest being the primary determinant of viewing.

Respondents followed the conventions through newspapers at a slightly lower level than television. About 35 percent read nothing about the convention, 22 percent read "little," 20 percent read "some," and 23 percent said they read "a good deal" about the convention. The closeness of television and newspaper exposure figures flies in the fact of conventional wisdom. Television is an "easier" medium to use (Neuman, 1976:115-117) and one would expect a larger difference than 10 percent in the "none" and "little" categories. Moreover, since part of television use is habitual

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2 Figures for the Republican and Democratic conventions are identical.
and the convention was the only programming offered most of the time, convention viewing should have attracted more individuals with a peripheral or passive dedication to politics, while newspaper coverage of the convention would not be expected to attract a "fringe element."

In probing a bit farther, one finds that interest correlates with convention viewing (.33 Democratic, .37 Republican) at the same level as it correlates with reading about the convention (.32, .32). Education, however, used as a measure of socio-economic status (Key, 1967) is associated very differently with convention viewing and reading. Education is not related to amount of time spent viewing the conventions—coefficients of .04 for both the Democratic and Republican conventions, but is modestly related to reading about the conventions (.17, .18). Thus television indeed appears to be somewhat of a "democratizing medium," as its auditory and visual qualities require less skills on the part of the perceiver (Hofstetter, et al., 1976).

In addition to attracting a larger audience, the Republican convention was more memorable than the Democratic convention. About 70 percent of those viewing any of the Republican convention responded affirmatively when asked if anything stood out about the convention, compared to only

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3 All coefficients used are tau-b unless otherwise noted.
55 percent of those viewing any of the Democratic convention. The difference in recall is doubtlessly increased by the closer proximity of the survey to the end of the Republican convention, but it is not possible to partial out the amount of the difference which is "real" and which is due to measurement artifact.

One indication that a good deal of the difference may be artifactual appears when partisans are segregated for analysis. Little partisan difference occurs among viewers of the Republican convention. Seventy percent of the Republicans and 63 percent of the Democrats recalled something from the Republican convention. However, only 39 percent of the Republicans, compared to 53 percent of the Democrats recalled something from the Democratic convention. The larger difference between partisan viewers of the Democratic party couples nicely with theories of selective retention of media content (Klapper, 1960). Republicans, for whom there was less supportive information for their pre-existing attitudes in the smoothly orchestrated Democratic showpiece, took advantage of the time between convention and survey to forget that which they did not want to remember.

Paradoxically, the smaller difference between partisans viewing the Republican convention may also argue for selective retention. While partisans may be expected to remember more of their own convention, this is true only when the content of the convention is relatively "constant"—that is when there
is no greater amount of conflict or acridity in one than the other. Selective retention postulates not that individuals simply remember "more," but more of that which fits existing predispositions. Gleeful Democrats, seeing the shoe fitting someone else's foot, may remember more of a squabbling Republican conglomeration than Republicans who may want to forget the convention and turn their attention to the future with more rapidity.⁴

In order to investigate this case more fully it is helpful to consider the affective dimension of viewers recall. Moreover, given that most people do not see politics as a central concern in their lives, it may be more important to note the general feeling the convention leaves with viewers than the specific cognitions retained by convention viewers. Affect towards an object may well provide the impetus to search for and retain "harder" information and organize incoming information (Manheim, 1976). If, for example, one received predominantly negative impressions from the 1968 Democratic convention it would be easier to denigrate the nominee, Hubert Humphrey, his stand on an issue such as Viet Nam, or Humphrey as a representative of the party.

Open-ended responses to the question, "Is there any one thing you saw or read about the convention that stands out

⁴Some of the factors in addition to partisanship which covaried with remembering a convention instance were: amount of viewing time (.13 Republican, .12 Democratic), Education (.19 Democrat, .13 Republican) and Interest (.11 Democrat, .44 Republican).
in your mind," were coded for the affective direction of
the response (positive, neutral, negative) as well as the
more specific referents. About 30 percent of those recalling
something of the Republican convention spoke in negative
terms, while 25 percent recalled something positive and 45
percent responded in neutral terms.

Respondents were clearly more favorably inclined towards
the Democratic convention. While about the same percentage
gave neutral responses (41 percent) the focus of recall was
negative for only 18 percent who remembered something about
the Democratic convention, while about 40 percent commented
favorably about what they recalled. (Table 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6 AFFECT OF CONVENTION REMEMBERANCE WITH CONTROL FOR PARTISANSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affect of Recollection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Partisanship

| | Democratic Convention | Republican Convention |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| **Democrats** | **Republicans** | **Democrats** | **Republicans** |
| negative       | 13%                   | 23%       | 31%                   | 24%       |
| neutral        | 46                    | 31        | 50                    | 31        |
| positive       | 41                    | 46        | 18                    | 45        |
| total          | 100%                  | 100%      | 99%                   | 100%      |
| (n)            | (73)                  | (26)      | (125)                 | (55)      |
Republicans were certainly more generous in their recollection of their conventions than were Democrats. Forty-five percent of the Republicans spoke in flattering terms, compared to 18 percent of Democrats. Despite this difference it is worth noting that one-quarter of the Republicans recalled something they would probably just as soon have forgotten. Moreover, to the extent selective retention is operating, the negative figures are inhibited as partisans are less likely to consciously retain non-consonant impressions and probably less likely to volunteer them to interviewers as well.

There is a very different pattern in the case of the Democratic convention, where Republicans were actually slightly more positive about the Democratic convention than were Democrats.

Efforts were made to determine if other factors co-varied with favorable or unfavorable rememberences of the convention. Interest in the Presidential election and the amount of time spent viewing the conventions were found to be only marginally associated with effect. There was a slight tendency of those who were more interested and who watched more to record more positive and less negative impressions. In order to consider the possibility that impressions may be reflective not so much of actual convention content but instead of the predispositions viewers brought
with them to the communicative experience a "cynicism" scale was correlated with the affect of the recollection. There was no difference between levels of cynicism and negative affect towards the Republican convention (.03) and little influence of cynical predispositions on recall in the Democratic case (.13).

Thus the data offer support for the commonly accepted notion that Democrats staged a better show than their adversary. Viewers' impressions of the Republican party were more numerous—and more contrary—than were impressions of the Democrats' meeting. While the difference in elapsed time between the conventions and measurement has been noted as a possible explanation for greater amount of imagery viewers held about Republican convention happenings, a second explanation is suggested by the consideration of affect. If a major cause of negative recollections is conflict, as there is reason to suspect, the greater amount of imagery may also be due to this.

The scale was composed of the following indicators: a) Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what people think when it decides what to do: a good deal, some, or not much?; and b) How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right: just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or none of the time?
IMAGES OF THE CONVENTIONS

THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

The focus of respondents' recollections of the Republican and Democratic Conventions were coded into eight main categories, and a residual "other" category. The classifications were:

1) Responses about TV coverage, or the TV medium
   Examples: "There was good TV coverage by the networks."
   "A finely staged piece of television theatre."

2) Responses about the style of the convention or responses about the social behavior of the delegates
   Examples: "The convention was boring."
   "The delegates were well behaved."

3) Responses about the condition of the party holding the convention
   Examples: "There was a lot of division."
   "Ford tried to reconcile the party after he won."

4) Responses about issues or the party platform
   Examples: "The debate over the Panama Canal."
   "The platform is very conservative."

5) Responses about Convention Speakers
   This includes speeches by candidates
   Examples: "Ford's acceptance speech, the best of his political life."
   "Barbara Jordan-I had never seen her before-she's very powerful."

All references to respondents in this section includes only those individuals who watched some part of the Republican Convention and recalled something about the Convention.

58
6) Responses about selections, decisions, and outcomes of the convention of Presidential nominee
Examples: "I had no idea the voting would be that close."
"Carter's selection of Mondale for Vice-President."

7) Personal characteristics of Candidates
Examples: "Jimmy Carter's smile."
"Jerry Brown looked sincere."

8) Candidate Families and Celebrities
Examples: "Betty Ford dancing with Tony Orlando."
"Amy Carter—the most disgusting little child I've ever seen."

Figure 1 details the distribution by response categories, and sub-divides the categories by their affective coloration. The largest group of responses given referred to the party. The large neutral bloc is inhabited by those who commented on the intensity of the Reagan faction of the Republican party in large part. In fact this was the modal response among observations, tendered by about 11 percent of those who recalled anything about the convention. The other sub-category worth note are those who mentioned division in the Republican party (six percent of the total sample responding) or the "intense" fighting among actions of the party (five percent). The cries of "factional division" come mainly from Republican viewers and take on a negative character, as partisans witnessed the inability of their party to come together.

7A complete enumeration of codes may be found in Appendix 2.
FIGURE 1: SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

LEGEND: Shaded = Percent of negative comments within column category. White = Percent of neutral comments within column category. Lined = Percent of positive comments within column category. (xx) = Total number of respondents in category. (209) = Total n
In light of the above discussion of the "moth" theory of television coverage it is interesting to note that viewers recalled not so much the issues of the conflict—but the intensity of the conflict—and of the participants of the conflict. The conflict between Reagan and Ford, with the candidates' hopes and tensions vicariously displayed on the faces of their supporters, was put in personal, rather than ideological terms by the visual qualities of the medium.

The second-mentioned group of responses is immensely personal. The largest contributor to the 23 percent mentioning the convention style or behavior of delegates is nine percent who commented specifically on the behavior of the delegates. Overwhelmingly, viewers thought Republican delegates had comported themselves badly. About 90 percent of those commenting on delegate behavior spoke negatively, often remarking the delegates were childish or discourteous. Positive comments come from viewers who thought the convention was "exciting" or "well organized." Only two percent felt the Republican wrangling was "dull."

Thus viewers here, too, focused on the convention in personal terms. Moreover, this was a millstone for the Republican party, as the image of a divided party unable to control its members' behaviors seared into the public memory. As the data in Table 7 indicate, Republicans were no less likely than Democrats to be influenced by, or recall the behavior of delegates. Twenty-seven percent of the
Republicans and 22 percent of the Democrats gave responses about convention style or delegate behavior. While Democrats were almost universally negative in their comments, Republicans were evenly divided.8

TABLE 7 SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION BY PARTISANSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Style-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegate Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conv. Selection</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families &amp; Celebrities</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform-Issues</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Personal Charac.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(124)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The speeches delivered at the Republican National Convention were the most positively regarded aspect of the convention. Indeed, only in this category does the volume of positive comments outnumber negative remarks—by 62 to 23 percent. The speeches of Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford

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8A simultaneous control for both partisanship and "affect of the recall" reduces the respondent base too severely for reliable measurement. Accordingly, these data are not formally presented and should be considered "suggestive" when used to further define a relationship. In this case there are 27 Democratic and 15 Republican respondents. Of the Democrats' comments, 19 were negative, five neutral and three positive. Six of the Republican comments were negative, two neutral and seven positive.
each accounted for about 10 percent of the total imagery retained by convention viewers. Republicans, perhaps searching to find or remember something favorable, mentioned "speakers" more than Democrats by a 26 to 18 percent margin. Moreover, no Republican recalled any speech or speaker in negative terms.

Gerald Ford's acceptance speech was clearly a convention high point for many, and for Republican viewers in particular. Of the nine percent of respondents mentioning the acceptance speech, only five percent were negative and 32 percent (mostly Democrats) commented in neutral terms. The remaining 63 percent spontaneously recalled being impressed as their central recollection of the Republican convention.

That Ford chose the National Convention to give, as one respondent put it, "the speech of his life" was probably instrumental in helping Ford to close the gap on Carter. Gerald Ford's speech gave Republicans a battle cry to rally around. It was not the speech of a factional victor, but the leader of a united party - and doubtlessly worked to unite the party. Republicans—both delegates and viewers—could have come away from the convention pessimistically, with little enthusiasm generated for the candidate already waging an uphill battle. Clearly this was a principal aftermath of the Humphrey and McGovern victories in 1968 and 1972. The amount of Republicans recalling the speech and the positive impression it left on them are indicators
both of the symbolic and emotional nature of the conventions, as well as general politics.

The selection of the ticket, the major item of business at the convention was mentioned in some context by about 15 percent. About one-third of these people referred to the actual selection of Ford, while another third commented on the closeness of the Reagan-Ford fight for the nomination. Other mentioned the selection of Robert Dole, or the short-lived drive to offer the Vice-Presidential nomination to Ronald Reagan. As Figure 1 depicts, the great bulk of the comments were neutral in character (two-thirds), with the remainder being evenly divided among critical and favorable.

It is interesting to consider that the group commenting on the actual outcome is considerably smaller than the group commenting on the intensity of the outcome -- the reciprocal animosity of the candidates' supporters. This triumph of style over content may be explained on the grounds that those who were impressed by the intensity of the conflict rather than the outcome already know what the outcome would be. Those who were impressed with Ford's victory or the closeness of the Reagan challenge were comparatively ignorant of knowledge that "Ford had the nomination locked up." However this group does not differ significantly from those commenting on the style of victory in education, interest, or political
knowledge—hardly what one would expect if it was the informed status of "style" respondents that separated them from the others.

About six percent of respondents were strictly into style, recalling the candidates families or "special-guest-star" appearances from celebrities such as Tony Orlando or Sonny Bono. The largest segment of this group, and two percent of all responses given, found the most impressive feature of the 1976 Republican convention to be the Battle of the Wives—Betty Ford versus Nancy Reagan on the applause-o-meter. While these convention theatrics were mentioned by only six percent, and TV coverage itself mentioned by two percent, in combination this was twice as many as the only four percent commenting on issues, the platform, or the ideological makeup of the Republican party.

We may consider four possible explanations for the lack of policy references. These are by no means exclusive, and are complimentary in some cases. First, people simply aren't interested in policy. The average viewer does not think in

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9 The political knowledge scale focused on factual knowledge about national politics and included three indicators all focusing on the Senate. They are:

1. Length of a Senator's term of office.
2. Knowledge of the number of seats in the Senate.
3. Knowledge of which Party held a majority of seats in the Senate.

These measures are designed to measure only factual knowledge, and may be criticized on grounds they measure information which may be largely irrelevant to most individual's lives.
ideological terms, is not informed on all except those issues that are particularly salient to her. Individuals are skeptical of parties' desire and ability to carry out platform pledges. Moreover, one could argue there were no "hot" issues to be discussed. The intensity with which racial disorders, "law and order", and the Viet Nam policy was debated within the parties was lacking in 1976. With no "natural" issue cleavage the best that could be done was to raise a "candidate-issue" - the Panama Canal. This issue, raised by Reagan in the later stages of the primary process, was unlike the issues above in that different ideological positions on these issues spawned candidates; rather than candidates spawning the issue. With candidates staked to positions before the issue becomes salient and a source of polarization, a good deal of projection and identification takes place. Voters choose their position on the issue by the candidate they are supporting instead of vice-versa.

Thus one view is that policy concerns did not stand out in people's minds because they weren't all that interested in it. A second view is that the networks didn't think people would be interested and so didn't show much of it to begin with. This was Dale's (1972) criticism of his colleagues' coverage of the 1972 conventions. Instead of covering platform or policy debate, television directors and producers would switch to an insipid interview, babbling commentary or "filler." Dale argues it would be desirable
to have platform debate covered like rating or acceptance speeches - with anchor-person silence (for the most part) and attention on the convention floor. As television has grown with politics it has evolved roles from unobtrusive observer to gracious host and participant-observer. Clearly this is one possible explanation for the lack of policy reference, but studies of convention content are needed to test this.

An "organizational" explanation is that platform debate is so complex, or that so much background would need to be given to viewers, that television a) does not like to present it, b) has difficulty presenting it, c) is not equipped to present it, or any combination of these. Television has difficulty presenting material that is complex, has more than two sides, is not amenable to pictoral presentation, or that requires a contextual base (Epstein, 1973). Thus platform and policy discussion may be disenfranchised from full coverage as they are not well suited to television's structural requirements.

Finally, it may be that television could and did cover platform and policy concerns, that people were interested in at least issues of personal concern, but that platform and policy coverage stand out less because they appeared "dull" in comparison with other aspects of the televised convention. Television is a "personalizing" medium. Convention viewers remembered the intensity of delegates - the
style of decisions, rather than the actual decisions. It is harder to develop issues, platform or ideology in terms of personalities (Hofstetter, 1976; Patterson & McClure, 1976). Thus these elements attract less coverage, and not in the coverage they do receive, and pale by comparison with other aspects of the convention better suited to the unique properties of the television medium. Moreover, given something "exciting" to see, people are more apt to remember it than something "dull." Yet there is no inherent reason why discussions of policy must be dull. If the networks invested as much time in explaining the cast of characters, history and plot of platform resolutions as they do in searching for excitement (of trying to create it) policy concerns would doubtlessly come to mind with more prevalence than these data show.
THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

The coding scheme described above was also used to classify open-ended responses to "what stood out" about the Democratic convention. Figure 2 describes this distribution, with each category again further decomposed into its evaluative character. In the grossest of terms, the distribution is quite similar to that observed among respondents to the Republican counter-question. References to party, convention style or delegate behavior, and speakers dominated viewers' recall. Convention selection was mentioned less frequently, and again a further drop-off to the remaining categories. Two slight exceptions are noteworthy. First there were more references to issues among Democratic convention viewers (five percentage points). Also, seven percent of those witnessing the Democratic convention commented on personal qualities of the candidates, where no viewers of the Republican convention were so inclined. Similarity, rather than difference characterizes the comparison, with observed deviations easily falling within the purview or sampling error.

About one-quarter of those responding were most impressed with delegate behavior or convention style. The

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10 All references to respondents in this section include only those individuals who watched some part of the Democratic convention and recalled something about the convention.
FIGURE 2: SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

LEGEND: Shaded=Percent of negative comments within column category.  
White= Percent of neutral comments within column category.  
Lined= Percent of positive comments within column category.  

(xx)=Total number of respondents in category.  
(143)=Total n
most frequently given response here was the "behavior of the delegates"—given by seven percent. Seven of these respondents spoke positively and three negatively about the delegates conduct. Among other responses given in this category, some simply responded that they liked or disliked the convention (five percent), that it was well organized (four percent), and four percent remarked that the convention was dull or boring—music to the Democrat's ears, if not the networks.

Republicans were more likely than Democrats to single out the convention or behavior of delegates, by a 31 to 22 percent margin. They were also more negative than were Democratic respondents, as one might expect. Responses are broken down by partisanship in Table 8. (Responses for the Republican convention are also re-presented to facilitate reader comparison.)

A majority of those falling into this category (51 percent) spoke in favorable terms of what they had seen—a dramatic turnabout from the Republican convention, where over 60 percent recalled delegate behavior or convention style in negative terms. Clearly then, viewers felt the Democratic convention smoother, the delegates more well-behaved—on the whole a much more positive impression than viewers of the Republican convention came away with.

While the general category "party" subsumed a variety of responses concerning the Republican convention, a single
reference characterized all Democratic convention viewers' "party" responses: party unity. This single "non-element" of the convention was recalled as the singular feature of the 1976 Democratic convention by 19 percent of those responding.

TABLE 8 SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION BY PARTISANSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democratic Convention</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Style-Delegate Behavior</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convention Selection</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families &amp; Celebrities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform - Issues</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cand. Personal Charac.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(99)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Republican Convention                 | Democrats | Republicans |
|                                       | 27%       | 24%         |
| Reference                             | 22        | Republicans |
| Convention Style-Delegate Behavior    | 22        | 47%         |
| Speakers                              | 18        | 26          |
| Convention Selection                  | 15        | 13          |
| Families & Celebrities                 | 7         | 2           |
| Platform - Issues                     | 6         | 2           |
| Television                            | 3         | 0           |
| Cand. Personal Charac.                 | 0         | 0           |
| Other                                 | 2         | 7           |
| Total                                 | 100%      | 101%        |
| (n)                                   | (124)     | (55)        |

a. The small number of respondents in this group should be noted.
However, of even greater interest than this summary quantification is the qualitative richness of the responses. A good number of respondents commented in terms of surprise rather than a valenced description. Two-thirds spoke of party unity in neutral terms, while the remainder viewed the united party positively. Twice as many Democrats as Republicans (22 versus 11 percent) mentioned unity, furnishing evidence for selective retention. Democrats were obviously happy to recall this aspect of the convention, while Republicans wanted to forget about it.

As mentioned earlier, an interesting facet of these responses was the element of surprise that the Democrats had "gotten themselves together." Respondents recalled how frequently network anchor-people and reporters commented on the display of unity, how "uncharacteristic" it was of the Democrats to have a united party going into the general election. Granted the delegates were at least resigned to Jimmy Carter, even if not enthusiastic supporters -- but what of Democrats in the electorate. Much as Paletz and Elson (1976) concluded that the media's emphasis on party division was a prime cause of actual division by the time of the election, the media's emphasis on party unity may have been a cause of unity for party members, as the Democrats recovered from their worst electoral defeat in recent history. It is ironic that the problems plaguing the Democrats in 1968 and 1972 were partially responsible for its
success in 1976. The conduct of convention '76 clashed so radically with expectations based on prior television viewing as to make a clean break from the past.

Data on the recall of "speakers" at the Democratic convention parallels that of Republicans in three ways. First, there was the same relative amount—about 19 percent of those recalling some aspect of the Democratic convention mentioned speakers. Second, the speakers were remembered as positive parts of the convention. As in the Republican gathering a majority of those mentioning speakers did so in favorable ways, while the bulk of the remainder were neutral, with few negative remarks. Finally, party members were more likely to recall speakers when discussing their own convention. Only eight percent of the Republicans interviewed mentioned speakers at the Democratic convention, compared to 23 percent of the Democrats.

The star that shone brightest at the Democratic convention was Barbara Jordan. Eight percent of the sample remarked upon Barbara Jordan's speech. And her speech was meant to be remembered. Barbara Jordan was a gamble that paid off—a gamble that the American viewing public would be impressed by something that is rarely seen on television, a forcefully articulate black woman (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1977). She was Robert Strauss' project in public relations, with Strauss saying to her as she walked to the speaker's platform, "Honey, I've bet every chip I've got on you."
Drawing upon his years of experience in politics, Strauss also gave Jordan some advice:

"Barbara, there'll be no one out in the hall listening to you. Forget them. Let them talk to each other. You're talking to millions of people on television."

(Reeves, 1977:75)

Another thing TV viewers rarely see (except on HEE-HAW) is Southerners. When asked what stood out about the convention one elderly woman immediately volunteered, "Carter's acceptance speech. I didn't know he was from the South."

Most respondents were more impressed with the speech itself. Of the ten people who recalled Carter's speech (seven percent) six commented favorably, and four in neutral terms.

One or two people recalled other speakers such as Jerry Brown, Morris Udall, John Glenn, and the soulful benediction of Rev. Martin Luther King Sr.

As with the Republican convention, speakers appeared to have contributed positively to the overall convention. They specifically gave partisans something "good" they could point to and remember about their convention. As such they are an important resource for the party. They provide the party with an opportunity to solidify support by allowing people to feel good about, and thus reinforce, their partisan attitudes. The more salient or intense the attitude the greater the likelihood of the individual engaging in complimentary behavior.
Only 10 percent recalled something having to do with convention outcomes or selections. This was slightly less than the Republican convention. Certainly Carter's victory was no surprise to the bulk of viewers. And initial exposure to television coverage would remedy the situation of those who were uninformed before the convention started. About half of the responses falling into this category referred to Carter's nomination victory, while the other half recalled either the secrecy surrounding Carter's choice as a running mate, or the selection of Mondale for the ticket.

Issues, the platform, or ideological leanings of the party were also mentioned by about 10 percent. There was no dominant style of recall; with positive, neutral and negative remarks occurring in equal proportions. Republicans were slightly more likely than Democrats to give this response (15 percent of Republican and eight percent of Democratic respondents), although this difference may be due to sampling error. As in the Republican case, discussions of party policy was not something that stood out in viewers' minds after witnessing the convention.

Four percent of respondents' comments were directed towards "family matters" (Rosalynn, Lillian and Amy), and another four percent were directed specifically at the presence of television or evaluations of TV coverage. An equal number of comments (eight percent) focused on personal
characteristics of the candidates. Jimmy Carter was the focus of general comments ("he seems nice") as well as more specific comments such as his smile or religious training. The only other candidate mentioned - by one respondent, was Jerry Brown.

In sum, the Democrats came out of the convention in better shape than the Republicans - Gerald Ford's acceptance speech notwithstanding. Democratic partisans had a smorgasbord of positive images to retain - especially as the absence of factional division took on a euphoric character when set in the context of recent history. This general effect, or image is important, as viewers who participate vicariously come away more with general impressions rather than concrete bits of knowledge. It is interesting to note the relative contributions of each of the categories of responses already considered. Turning these same data on their head, responses are classified by their affective direction in Table 9.

The major contributors to the Republican convention's campaign for a good image came from its speakers. About half of all positive comments made were about the speeches of Reagan and Ford. About one-fifth of the positive reactions to the convention came from people who remarked about the behavior of the delegates or the "style" of the convention. The same was true in the case of the Democrats as 31 percent of the positive responses came from responses about delegate behavior, and 25 percent from those who mentioned speakers.
TABLE 9  AFFECT OF SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE DEMOCRATIC 
AND REPUBLICAN CONVENTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>REPUBLICAN CONVENTION</th>
<th>AFFECT OF RECALL</th>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention Style-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegate Behavior</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Speakers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention Selection</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Families &amp; Celebrities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform - Issues</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cand. Personal Charac.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(60)</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td>(53)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Reference                   | DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION | AFFECT OF RECALL |          |          |          |
|-----------------------------|                       |                  |          |          |          |
|                             | negative              | neutral          | positive |
| Party                       | 0%                    | 32%              | 15%      |
| Convention Style-           |                       |                  |          |          |          |
| Delegate Behavior           | 44                    | 10               | 31       |
| Speakers                    | 8                     | 19               | 25       |
| Convention Selection        | 8                     | 15               | 5        |
| Families & Celebrities      | 4                     | 2                | 7        |
| Platform - Issues           | 16                    | 8                | 7        |
| Television                  | 8                     | 3                | 2        |
| Cand. Personal Charac.      | 8                     | 8                | 8        |
| Other                       | 4                     | 2                | 0        |
| Total                       | 100%                  | 99%              | 100%     |
| (n)                         | (25)                  | (59)             | (50)     |

However, speakers accounted for a larger share of positive responses among Republican convention responses; and the behavior of delegates accounted for a comparatively larger share of positive remarks among the Democratic responses.

People who responded to the convention by viewing it in terms of the political party contributed heavily to the
Republican malady. One-quarter of all those who were critical were unhappy with how the party had conducted its business. In comparison, "party" contributed absolutely nothing to unhappiness with the Democratic convention. Party also contributed in about an equal amount to neutral and positive comments of both conventions.

But if viewers thought the Republican party had behaved badly, they thought the delegates had behaved even worse. The "poor," "childish," and "obnoxious" behavior of delegates contributed close to half of all negative images of the Republican convention. And despite the Democrats having an orderly, well managed, well organized, well run convention, almost half of the negative imagery toward the Democratic convention focused on the behavior of delegates as well.

Television is doubtless a contributor to the low esteem in which delegates are held. Television coverage is more than just mere "reporting" of the convention. Producers and directors are trying to tell the story of the convention, as it unfolds. And television is a visual medium. It tells its stories by pictures. And pictures are representations. Excitement is represented by a shouting delegate or a waving banner. The representations passed from the convention floor via the medium to the viewer are distorted towards the extreme. It is the extreme delegates--the one sleeping, or the one ripping the phone out of the New York delegation--that television shows to the public. Thus viewers of the
1976 conventions expressed their disappointment over the behavior of delegates, much as they had in 1972. Paletz and Elson (1976) found a good deal of difference between delegates' and viewers' impressions of the 1972 Democratic convention. Viewers thought the behavior of the delegates and the style of the convention to be more conflictual and disorderly than did delegates.

The emphasis on extremes is empirically supported by the low proportion of neutral responses (for both conventions) when people focused their concern on the behavior of delegates. Eight-five percent of both these Democratic and Republican convention viewers gave a response where a favorable or unfavorable affective judgment was given unambiguously enough to be so coded. The selection of extremes is a carry-over of news production values and accompanying organizational routines. As the procedures that result in extreme cases (or deviants) being initially selected are repeated by the cyclical nature of decision-making the image is built-up and reinforced. As more extreme (and thus less socially acceptable) behaviors of delegates are presented in disproportionate amount, it may be that the structural characteristics of the news organization contribute to a disaffection between voter and party.
THE CONVENTIONS AND CANDIDATE IMAGERY

If the prior discussion described what viewers saw, and came away with, it is reasonable to pose a "so what" question. That is: Did the political conventions of 1976 change people's views of the two candidates; and if so, how?

While it is true that a healthy proportion of the citizenry has its mind made up who to vote for, or to not vote, prior to the conventions it is equally true that others make their decision at the time of the convention. Studies indicate that less than a majority of those participating in elections decide on a candidate after the conventions. (Swanson, 1973: 133)

The conventions allow people to see non-incumbents in a new role—as head of a political party. For many the conventions offer a first glimpse into the makeup of the candidate, his family, staff, style of operation and decision making ability in choosing a running mate. Moreover, the candidates' acceptance speeches are emotional rallying points, where partisans are affectively engaged with their party and their party's candidates. The

See also the national election studies conducted by the University of Michigan from 1952 through 1976
acceptance speech marks the end of intra-party squabbling, as attention is turned from the nomination stage to the arena of two-party competition.

While stability rather than change characterized public perception toward Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, each candidate aided his own cause by his performance at the convention. Respondents were asked if anything they saw or read about the conventions caused them to change their views of Carter and Ford. Those replying in the affirmative were then asked an open-ended question on how their views had changed as a result of media exposure to the convention. These data are presented in Table 10.

While radical changes did not result as a consequence of exposure to the conventions, one-quarter of those who followed the Democratic and almost a fifth of those who followed the Republican convention said they had changed their views about the candidates. And this is not an inconsiderable proportion.

In the future the verbs "saw" or "followed" will be used to relieve cumbersome wording. This is not altogether inaccurate as the great majority of responses was based on television exposure to the conventions rather than on reading.

Responses were coded according to whether the change in view was favorable neutral or unfavorable to the respective candidates. Any more specific coding of responses may have been misleading, as coupled with the small initial sample size those who did not follow a convention were excluded from the analysis.
TABLE 10  MEDIA EXPOSURE TO CONVENTIONS AND CANDIDATE IMAGERY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of Views</th>
<th>Carter&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Ford&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>by Partisanship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorable</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(319)</td>
<td>(343)</td>
<td>(204)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> This was asked only of those who followed the Democratic convention.

<sup>b</sup> This was asked only of those who followed the Republican convention.

In the case of both conventions Democratic and Republican partisans were more likely to change views of their own candidate than of the opposing candidate. Twenty-eight percent of the Democrats changed their feelings (in either direction or intensity) towards Carter, as did 17 percent of the Republicans. One-quarter of the Republicans had their impression of Gerald Ford changed, as did 14 percent of the Democrats who viewed the Republican convention.

Both candidates manifested impressive "change ratios," as the proportion of favorable to unfavorable changes of views was about three-to-one for the entire sample. Ford's performance garnered him support from both Republicans and Democrats alike. Ten percent of the Democrats looked more kindly on Ford as a result of exposure to the convention, while only two percent reported their views changing in the opposite direction. The figures for Republican viewers
were 16 percent positive and six percent negative. Jimmy Carter's gains were more limited in a partisan sense. While he enjoyed a five-to-one positive change in ratio among Democrats (20 percent positive to four percent negative), Republicans were fairly evenly divided. Seven percent became more, and six percent less impressed with the candidate as a result of something they had seen.

**TABLE 11** MEDIA EXPOSURE AND CHANGE IN CANDIDATE IMAGERY BY EDUCATION, INTEREST, AND KNOWLEDGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed view</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Carter</td>
<td>(n) (79)</td>
<td>(103)</td>
<td>(126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed view</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Ford</td>
<td>(n) (91)</td>
<td>(107)</td>
<td>(133)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Education: Low=completed high school; Med.=some college; High=completed college
b. Interest: Low=a little or some interest in the election for President; High=a good deal of interest
c. Knowledge: See Footnote 9

It is interesting to note differences in attitude change according to the background variables of education, involvement, and factual information, (as is displayed in Table 11) as these variables have long been theoretically linked with cognitive skills and ability. (Converse, 1964) It was those with the deeper educational background, the

---

14 This relationship is not monotonic in the Republican case.
more passionate interest in politics, and the firmer foundation of factual information among whom the most change occurred. This certainly runs contrary to the expectations of Converse (1966) and Dreyer (1971-72) who argued that attitude change (in the case of partisan stability) should vary inversely with the individuals informational base, all of which co-vary with the background variables presented above.

However, it should also be noted that in this situation respondents "change of views" were primarily positive in partisan terms. That is, people used the convention fare to reinforce their predispositions—to find reasons why they could like the candidate they wanted to like. Thus it is clear that political conventions in fact play an instrumental role in the sewing in of partisan fidelity, of crystallizing liquid support.

So people, or a significant number of people, use the content they receive from television, and to a lesser extent, other media. If nothing else it allows them to rationalize their vote choice. However, the manner in which this is done—through a television focus on personalities and conflict—may have a multitude of indirect consequence that are only beginning to be investigated. This, and other contentions discussed in this chapter, are of tremendous import in potential consequences and should be given prominent stature on future research agendas. Other ways in which
citizens use political communications will be considered in subsequent chapters.
CHAPTER IV: THE 1976 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

It is not the purpose of this chapter to provide a comprehensive overview of the content and effects of the 1976 Presidential debates. That responsibility has been taken up by others with better samples and data bases than the 200 San Franciscans who participated in the post-convention wave of this panel study. After presenting some basic background information on the debates (exposure, involvement, expectations) this chapter will present a microscopic view of the imagery that viewers of the first debate were left with. The uses to which the debates were put—the question of "WHY" people watched the debates—will be considered along with motivations for exposure to the conventions in the next chapter.

The series of confrontations between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter in 1976 were perhaps more placid than the first televised debates between Presidential aspirants 16 years earlier. The Nixon--Kennedy debates were characterized more

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frequently by sharp and often acerbic exchanges between the candidates, and seemed to produce a clear-cut winner, with most studies finding Kennedy advantaged by the series of meetings (Gilbert, 1976; Lang and Lang, 1961; Katz and Feldman, 1962). The 1976 results were anything but clear-cut in terms of "who won." National telephone surveys conducted with 1700 respondents by the Associated Press found viewers severely divided over who got the better of the contests. One-third felt Carter won the first debate while another third thought Ford had won. The remainder were undecided. The AP survey conducted after the second debate found that 38 percent felt Carter had won and 35 percent believed Ford was victorious.

Despite these differences the two sets of debates were also characterized by a goodly number of similarities. The Democratic bridge between 1960 and 1976 is shorter than 16 years. In both cases the candidates were relatively unknown. Much as Kennedy needed to reassure uncertain Democrats that he was not too young, too inexperienced or too Catholic (Lang and Lang, 1968) Jimmy Carter also set out to demonstrate that he was not too Southern, too inexperienced or too Baptist. 'In short, both men needed to convince predisposed partisan identifiers that they were "Regular "Democrats."

Similarities also characterized their Republican opponents—perhaps a bit unexpectedly given the difference
in incumbency-status at the time of the debates. Yet Gerald Ford was appointed without the legitimizing mandate of sanction by popular election and majority rule. A different lens reveals an even sharper picture of similarities. Both Nixon and Ford were running for the Presidency for the first time. Relative to their opponents both were in a pseudo-incumbent posture, defending a record compiled over eight years of Republican Presidential residence, with each candidate claiming a hand in recording that record.

Both Nixon and Ford attempted to maximize the advantages of incumbency, with the role and characteristic of "leadership" that accompanies it in the minds of the culture. Each attempted to make "experience" a central theme of his campaign in debates against an "inexperienced" unknown challenger. And while each made inroads against the expectations of a normal vote, (Converse, 1964) both fell one state short of the Presidency.²

DEBATE INTEREST, EXPOSURE AND EXPECTATIONS

Similarities rather than differences between 1960 and 1976 also characterized public attention to, and political effects of, the debates. Exposure to the first debate was

²There were of course some major differences between the Republican candidates of 1960 and 1976 that should not be overlooked. First, Nixon started with a healthy advantage moving from the convention to the general election while the reverse is true for Ford. Gerald Ford's problems, ironically, may be due to Richard Nixon and his utterance, "Pardon me."
massive. Nielsen ratings estimated that 89 percent of all households tuned into at least one of the debates (Robinson, 1978). As in 1960, the first debate drew the largest audience. In their review of 43 studies on the debates Sears and Chaffee (1979) found the median percentage claiming exposure to the first debate to be 75 percent. The San Francisco sample yields an exposure figure of 76 percent. Those who did not watch gave as reasons either that they were "too busy" or "just not interested." About half of this sample, 49 percent reported viewing all three Presidential close encounters, while Nielsen data indicate that 42 percent of all households followed all chapters of the 1976 edition. The pervasive exposure and exposure patterns shadow 1960 debate findings.

But while exposure was high it is clear that viewers were neither breathless in anticipation of the debates nor speculative about the outcome. About one-fifth of those interviewed in the week after the first debate recalled themselves as being "very excited." A third were "somewhat excited," and the remainder, about half of those interviewed were "not very excited." Moreover, most viewers went into the debates without expectations of the candidates' performances. A majority (53 percent) felt that the candidates would do about the same, while 16 percent either hadn't thought about it or offered no opinion. Despite the preference for Carter expressed in the pre-debate candidate
preference question (45 percent Carter, 25 percent Ford and 30 percent undecided) only 22 percent expected him to beat his opponent in the first encounter; while only nine percent were Ford boosters.³

In fact there was little relationship between partisanship or pre-debate vote intention and expectations. About 30 percent of both Democrats and those predisposed to vote for Carter expected him to win, while nine percent felt Ford would do better. The great majority felt both would do the same or weren't sure who would win. Those intending to vote for Ford felt their champion would beat Carter by a 23 to seven percent margin with most here also uncommitted. However, in this case Republican partisans were as likely to feel Carter would win the first debate (20 percent) as Ford (17 percent).

Thus the 1976 debates were met with mild interest, few expectations, and massive exposure. These are the conditions - low involvement coupled with extensive exposure to new information - in which the possibilities for perceptual change may be advantaged. In discussing the "floating voter" Converse (1966) has argued that the potential for

³Both of these questions may be subject to severe distortions. Asking if they had been excited and if they thought one candidate would do better, after an unspectacular debate where neither was a clear winner could certainly depress enthusiasm and "expectations."
attitude change varies inversely with the amount of stored information. To the extent that low involvement and low levels of information are associated, the debates might be expected to produce substantial changes in respondents' perceptions of the candidates. The remainder of this chapter will consider this question and more narrowly focus on: 1) changes in how the candidates were viewed as a result of exposure to the debates; and 2) general imagery retained by viewers of the debates.

**CHANGES IN PERCEPTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES**

Respondents interviewed after the first debate (second wave of the panel) were asked whether exposure to the debate had changed their views of Jimmy Carter or Gerald Ford, as were those who were reinterviewed during the third wave of the panel, after the series of debates had been concluded. 4

The initial confrontation between Ford and Carter in fact produced some shifting of views, or "general impressions" of the two contestants. One-fifth of those viewing the first debate indicated their view of Carter had changed and 23 percent had come to view Gerald Ford in a different light. While there was certainly more stability than change in candidate perceptions, these shifts of 20 and 23 percent are

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4 The following discussion is based only on those who were exposed to the debate(s). This includes 152 people who were exposed to the first debate (wave 2). The wave 3 figure is 141, where 24 people reported viewing only one of the debates, 37 people said they had watched two, and 80 individuals reported being exposed to all three Presidential debates.
not inconsequential. This is a substantial portion of the electorate.

The limited sample size precluded coding and presenting the specific changes mentioned by respondents. Interviewers were, however, instructed to probe for responses that could be categorized in terms of "direction of change" (favorable or unfavorable) relative to each candidate. These data are presented in Table 12.

Gerald Ford fared the better of the two candidates among viewers of the first debate. Fifteen percent of the audience changed their views toward Ford in a favorable manner while half that many, seven percent, were less favorably inclined towards him. Democrats and Republicans were equally likely to have changed their views as a result of exposure to the debate. Moreover, both Democrats and Republicans became more favorably predisposed towards Ford. Both of these partisan "non-differences" suggest an absence of overriding selective perceptions. Even as the level of centrality is increased, and initial perceptions used to test for selectivity are the voters' candidate preference rather than party preference, there is an absence of compelling evidence attesting to the efficacy of mediating forces.

Jimmy Carter suffered in comparison with Gerald Ford. While about the same number (20 percent) had their views change about Carter, there was no consensus on how Carter did. About eight percent became more favorable to Carter
### Table 12: Change in Views of Candidates and Exposure to the First Debate, with Controls for Partisanship, Interest and Vote Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jimmy Carter</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Positive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Neutral</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Negative</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(149)</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerald Ford</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Positive</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Neutral</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Negative</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(150)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. This is the vote intention expressed in the first wave, thus occurring before this set of questions was asked.

b. Those who said they were "very" interested in the election were coded as "high." All others were grouped together to bolster the n-size.
while 11 percent became less so. Republicans adjusted their views more than Democrats, while one might expect the reverse if there were strong selectivity mechanisms operative. Less was known about Carter than Ford, and partisans knew less about this standard-bearer than others back to the time of John Kennedy. Thus the potential for changing views among Democrats should have been high in the theories of mediating attitudes. Clearly Democrats did not go out of their perceptual way to find things to like about Jimmy Carter. As these data indicate, there was little difference between Democratic and Republican viewers, or between those predisposed towards Carter and Ford, in positive/negative changes of mind.

As Harry Truman would say: "It's not where you start that's important, but where you finish." By the end of the debate series Jimmy Carter had somewhere reversed the impressions left from the first debate—perhaps in Eastern Europe. Fully one-third of those viewing any of the debates said they had changed their views about Carter in the interview following the last debate. About one-fifth said their views about Ford had changed—the same as after the first debate.

By the time the mediocre debates had reached their conclusion Jimmy Carter's balance of change was entered on the "assets" side of the ledger, while Gerald Ford was in the red. There was slightly more positive than negative
Table 13 Change in Views of Candidates and Total Exposure to the Debates, with Controls for Partisanship, Interest and Vote Intention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jimmy Carter</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(141)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerald Ford</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Vote Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dem.</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Positive</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(141)</td>
<td>(90)</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. This is the vote intention expressed in the first wave, thus occurring before this set of questions was asked.
- b. Those who said they were "very" interested in the election were coded as "high." All others were grouped together to bolster the n-size.
shifts of opinion concerning Carter (18 to 13 percentage points;) while only seven percent of those viewing became more positive towards Ford and 13 percent became less so.

Only among those who expressed a preference for Jimmy Carter in the pre-debate survey was there significant evidence of selectivity. Ford partisans were more likely to change their views in a negative direction towards Carter, but only marginally so. There were not strong perceptual biases, or strains for consistency, by the respondents' party affiliation.

Voters seemed to have reacted to the debates "rationally" rather than "emotionally." While they did not see, hear or perceive what they may have wanted, they did hear what the candidates said—or at least what Gerald Ford said about Soviet non-domination of Eastern Europe. As the only "mistake" in the series of debates the press jumped on Gerald Ford like lions on raw meat at feeding time. Only five percent said they had heard nothing about Ford's Eastern Europe remarks while almost 70 percent reported having heard "a good deal."

This may account for the preponderance of impressions of Ford in an unfavorable direction. While 87 percent of those who had heard of the Ford gaff said it did not have any effect on who they planned to vote for, 12 percent—not an inconsiderable amount in a two-person election—said
they had become less inclined to support Ford as a result either of his actual remark or the attending media coverage and Democratic criticism.
GENERAL IMAGERY RETAINED BY DEBATE VIEWERS

In addition to being asked if their views of the candidates had changed, viewers of the first debate were asked if there was "any one thing from the debate that stands out in your mind?" Interviewers then probed for specific responses to this open-ended question. This parallels the open-ended question centering on imagery retained from the Democratic and Republican conventions discussed in the last chapter. Evidently the most memorable happening in the first debate was provided not by either candidate, but by ABC. When viewers were asked if they could recall anything other than the power failure 35 percent responded there had been nothing that particularly impressed or depressed them. 5

Responses were first coded according to the object of the recollection—Carter, Ford, comparisons between candidates, or the debate itself. Rememberences focusing on Carter or Ford were subdivided according to whether their focus was one of "style" or one of "substance." Style rememberences focused on how the candidates looked, how he

5 Those individuals who neither watched the debate or recalled anything from the debate have been excluded from the following analysis.
comported himself during the debate, or softer "image" traits, such as "He seemed sincere." Stylistic responses have also been classified according to positive or negative affect. Substance recollections focused on specific issues, questions of policy, candidate promises, or "what the candidate said." The classifications are:

1) Pro-Carter-Style

Examples: "Carter gave a strong performance."
"Jimmy Carter didn't lose his cool."
"He gave quick answers."

2) Anti-Carter-Style

Examples: "Carter was flubbing, nervous."
"He (Carter) got off to a slow start."
"I expected Carter to be more aggressive."

3) Carter -- Substance

Examples: "Carter's position on tax reform."
"(Carter's Plan to reorganize government agencies."
"He (Carter) didn't give specifics about programs."

4) Pro-Ford-Style

Examples: "He (Ford) seemed natural."
"Ford had control."
"He (Ford) was a better speaker than usual."

5) Anti-Ford-Style

Examples: "Ford did a poor job."
"He (Ford) seemed nervous, ill at ease."

6) Ford -- Substance

Examples: (Ford's view) "The idea that all depends on profit."
"Ford went into details about his vetoes."
"Ford's statement that Nixon suffered enough."
7) Candidates Comparisons

Examples: "Both of them seemed nervous."
"There was a great difference in personalities."
"Neither one was good—they both lost."
"I thought both were well-prepared."

8) Debate Referents

Examples: "It wasn't a real debate."
"It was dull, real boring."
"I thought the format was bad. They should have allowed them to make opening statements."

9) Other

Examples: "Jimmy Carter smiling as Ford talked about the budget."
"I wish they hadn't criticized each other."

While the small number of respondents distributed over a large range of codes precluded extended analysis as unwise, the response distribution is shown in Table 14. One-third of all spontaneous comments were referents to the debate itself—the format, the length, the placidity. In effect, the debate was viewed largely in terms of a television program rather than a debate between two candidates for the office of President of the United States. In fact the medium so dwarfed the message that of a second most often mentioned category of response—candidate comparisons, mentioned by 21 percent—not a single response compared the two candidates on any issues. Responses were stylistic (both were nervous or stiff, they have different personalities) or "non-responses" usually of a cynical nature (both were lying, both were bad, nobody won).
TABLE 14 SPECIFIC RECALL OF THE FIRST DEBATE BY INTEREST AND VOTE INTENTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Carter</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Ford</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Carter--Style</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Carter--Style</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter--Substance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Ford--Style</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Ford--Style</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford--Substance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate Comparisons</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate Referents</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See notes for Table 12

The next most often mentioned response groups focused either positively or negatively on one of the candidate's style. Eighteen percent made stylistic comments about Carter and 12 percent about Ford. The candidates were "nervous," gave "a strong performance," or didn't lose their "cool." Finally came responses that could be considered "Substantive." Those had to do with issues, defense of or attack on the incumbents record, congressional-executive relations and the like. Combining the substantive comments made concerning Ford and Carter yields nine percent of all responses given.

The domination of debate referents added to both the absence of candidate comparisons on issues and the heavy weighting of candidate statements toward style rather than
substance leads inexorably to the conclusion that viewers participated less as an electorate than as a television audience. This finding is hardly startling in light of the conclusions drawn in the previous chapter about the personality-focus. But it suggests a somewhat different explanation than one focusing on structural imperatives of the networks.

For the networks had little hand in the debates. They transmitted the proceedings rather than transformed them (in an active sense). Nor can "blame" be attributed to the candidates. Both were relatively specific, prepared, and relied extensively on figures to buttress their contentions (Indeed, one respondent complained that there were "too many statistics.") Thus if the cause is not with the message from the candidates, or transmission process via the networks, we must look to the viewers.

With less than one in ten commenting on the debate in a substantive manner, the totality of candidate comparisons being made in terms of style, and fully one-third recalling the mechanics of the debate itself, it becomes increasingly evident that there must be a distinction drawn between "televised politics" and "political television." In the first case the operative word is politics. It is the subject and focus of attention, with "televised" simply the means of conveyance of information. In the latter case the operative word is "television," with "political" used as an adjective
to describe the type of programming in much the same vein as distinctions might be made between situation-comedies, mysteries, westerns, crime-drama and the news. And this latter case is the more accurate description of how television and politics have come to interface in American society.

To widen this avenue of inquiry responses have been collapsed into a more focused set of categories. The general categories are: 1) Debate Performance; 2) Personal Image; and 3) Substance. As readers may want to come to their own conclusions about coding judgments, summary wording for each response is given under the appropriate heading on page 106.

The "Debate Performance" category involves judgments about candidates on the basis of their television performance: "whether or not the way he performs is appropriate for television and whether his performance is effective" (Lang and Lang, 1968:191). The criteria of evaluation here are those of a TV critic--less a demonstration of presidential capabilities than a demonstration of mastery of the medium. Viewer standards of judgment are less professional politician than professional actor. "Personal Image" focuses on the human qualities of the two actors, either as individuals ("I just like Ford"), or as they may relate to job performance as President ("Ford appeared decisive"). Finally, remarks about specific issues, or comments faulting the candidates for lack of detail and specifics were classified
as "Issue Comments."

When the assignment of specific responses to general categories was somewhat duplex, the bias of judgment went to what might be considered more "useful" or desirable information in terms of democratic theory. Briefly, in a voting decision information about policy would be the most desirable, information about the candidates next most desirable, and finally information about performers the least desirable. Thus, as a gleaning of the coding frame may suggest, to the extent distortion is present it should be slanted against the "political television" doctrine enunciated earlier. The data in Table 15 describe the invariate distribution and some bivariate distributions concerning the "tri-focus" variable.

^Ambiguous responses have been deleted.
DEBATE PERFORMANCE

didn't lose cool
strong performance
quick answers
nervous
flubbing
not in control
poor at beginning
expected to be more aggressive
slow start, better finish
had control
precise
stood up to Carter
better speaker than usual
nervous, ill at ease because of lessons

poor summary
both nervous - stiff
neither good-both lost
both prepared
both patient
both cautious
nobody won
was objective
placid, dull, boring
not a real debate
silence when audio lost
ridiculous
vocal tone of candidates

PERSONAL IMAGE

general pro Carter
concern about humanity
general anti Carter
general pro Ford
honest
natural
decisive

statesman
general anti-Ford (poor)
both patient
difference in personalities
both lying
wish they hadn't criticized each other

ISSUE

kept ideals
closing 4 minutes/summation
indefinite/vague
tax reform
avoided that dems make tax law
re-organization of govt. agencies
energy & unemployment
didn't give specifics @ program

idea that all depends on profit
tried to blame everything on Dem. Congress
didn't give full answers to questions
went into detail about vetoes
contradiction of Nixon pardon, but not draft evaders
statement that Nixon had suffered enough
nothing new said
too many statistics/ lots of stats
nuclear power issues
represented traditional dem and gop views
TABLE 15 TRI-FOCUS RECALL OF THE FIRST DEBATE BY INTEREST, EDUCATION, PARTISANSHIP AND VOTE INTENTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
<th>Interest Low</th>
<th>Interest High</th>
<th>Education Low</th>
<th>Education High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debate Performance</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Image</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(80)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(54)</td>
<td>(42)</td>
<td>(37)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Debate Performance</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Image</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(18)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Low = Those with less than a college education.

A clear majority of responses focused on the performance aspect of the debate. In fact, almost twice as many individuals recalled something about the television presentation than commented either on a matter of policy or complained about the lack of policy content in the debate. A smaller number, 13 percent, recalled something about one of the candidates in more personal terms.

This is not to say that debate viewers recalled little instrumental knowledge from the first debate. The candidates' mastery of the medium in itself may be instrumental as it allows viewers a glimpse into the character of individuals who aspire to be President. Moreover, on the heels of national scandal and the resignation of a President
brought about by questions of ethical, if not legal, conduct; the electorate of 1976 may have been properly sensitized to acquiring or interpreting information about the character of those who would lead them. Yet at the same time if this were the case one might have expected a larger proportion of responses to focus on "personal images."

A second reason why the high level of "performance" responses may be overstated is that the question posed to respondents asked for a single answer rather than an exhaustive detailing of all that viewers recalled from the first debate. Viewers may remember "harder" policy information, but it may be recalled less frequently because it is harder and more specific. It may be easier to recall general impressions of a stylistic nature.
DISCUSSION

However, even if these two caveats apply the fact remains that the primary reaction of viewers to the first debate was that which might be expected from a roomful of viewers asked to evaluate a new TV program. The audience reacted more to the form than the content of the debate. This was true at all levels of information, education and interest; for Democrats and Republicans, for people who planned to vote for Carter, for Ford, and even among those who had not yet made up their minds who to vote for.

It is clear that the interface between television and politics in 1976 was one of political television, not televised politics. The candidates' appearances on television were viewed as performances by a mass audience of television critics. Viewers' glimpses into qualities and qualification of the candidates are also in the television context. Ford and Carter's leadership potential are compared not with Roosevelt, Kennedy or Johnson so much as with Peter Graves of Mission Impossible, the head of Hawaii Five-O and The Fonz. In 1976 a goodly part of the message was the medium.

This bald statement should not be interpreted as saying that "television does" anything. It is not a deterministic
The medium, as do all other organizations, groups, institutions, has some intrinsic properties, which have already been alluded to. These might include a focus on personalities, conflict, drama and excitement in the case of election television. However, each election has its own range and type of stimuli, or short term forces. If a particular force, such as a highly salient issue, is of sufficient magnitude and intensity it will dominate and override the intrinsic properties of the medium to a certain extent.

Perhaps the most pervasive "TV change," and hardest to empirically verify, is along these lines. Television may not have replaced partisanship as the "long term force" in voting decision, but it may have rendered obsolete the concept of a long term force. When the flow of information is weak there should be fewer short term forces to interfere with the process of partisan attachment leading to partisan voting. However, the flow of information is never weak with the coming of age of television. The content of information may be "weak"—or non-substantive, but the flow of information (in terms of availability and exposure) is massive.

Television is the dominant supplier of election information; and the dominant focus of election television is candidate-personality focused rather than pointed towards issue and/or political parties (Hofstetter, 1976; Patterson...
and McClure, 1976). In the absence of strong short term forces or constricted information flow, partisanship offered the sole or dominant cue to electors. People now get their information and interpretations from television. The dominant TV-themes become the cues and guides to electoral behavior. Thus the balance of power may have swung towards candidate appeal as the initial division in each unique election—particularly under the conditions of an absence of deep party cleavages or passionately salient issues, as in the 1976 Presidential election.7

7This argument does not ignore the fact that party pre-dispositions contribute substantially to candidate image and preference. Rather, the emphasis here is that television has contributed to a dissolution of the strength of that relationship.
CHAPTER V: MOTIVATIONS FOR EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS

The terrain to be traversed in the remainder of this dissertation differs in contour from most political science studies focusing on mass communication, and from the mode of analysis presented in the preceding two chapters. Specifically, this chapter will contrast the approach to political communication taken by most political science studies (which may be termed an "Effects" approach) with a "Uses and Gratifications" approach, more in vogue in the field of Communication. The Use-Gratification model will be elaborated, and the relative advantages of this approach will be discussed. Studies utilizing this approach will be critiqued on theoretical and empirical grounds before finally investigating the "uses" to which the conventions and debates were put.

The method of study which has characterized the vast majority of TV-media studies from 1952 (Simon and Stern, 1953) to 1972 (Patterson and McClure, 1976) has been to correlate the amount of exposure an individual reports to a particular medium with a dependent variable concerned with some effect, such as involvement in an election or an individual's vote in an election. It is the contention
of this thesis that an "effects" approach guarantees that as much information about how people behave politically will be obscured as will be revealed.

The traditional concern with the "effects" of television is premature. The starting point must be with how people use television. In studying the influence of television on children Schramm and colleagues (1961:1) observed,

In a sense the term 'effect' is misleading because it suggests that television 'does something' to children. The connotation is that television is the actor; the children are acted upon.

Nothing could be further from the fact.

It is the children who are most active in this relationship. It is they who use television, rather than television that uses them.

This passage illuminates two unwarranted corollary assumptions that have long characterized political communication research; 1) exposure is for the purpose of acquiring political information (Converse, 1966); and 2) exposure is a unidimensional concept. Such assumptions leave unanswered --and in fact beg--the question of WHY individuals expose themselves to political programming. And such a question is a necessary first step in the journey towards finding media effects.

People bring different needs with them to a communicative situation. They have different reasons for exposing themselves to a communication. They have different expectations. Given this diversity it is less than a
mystery that few studies yield consistent effects of tele­vision. Much as the "hypodermic needle" model of mass communication effects has been revised to include the mediating factors of attitudinal dispositions, the resulting reinforcement model of mass communication effects must be revised to include the presence of motivational predispositions for exposure.

Consider the following example. A wife and husband are watching one of the Presidential debates. She is concerned with the issue of women's rights and has exposed herself to the debate to get a first hand view of the candidates' position on this question. He is apolitical and is watching the debate mainly to be able to spend time with his wife. By the luck of the draw and the laws of probability both individuals appear in the sample of researchers investigating whether viewing the debate had any effect on the store of information individuals possess about the two candidates. The correlation between exposure and information is practically zero with the accompanying interpretation that the debate had little effect on information. Had the relationship been controlled by "motivation for exposure" the correlation might have been strong for "information seekers" and random for those viewing the debate for other reasons.

There may be a host of other reasons viewing the debate may fill different needs, or serve different functions for
different people. One may watch to acquire information, to spend time with an important other (communal function), to be able to talk about the election and current events with friends or co-workers (social function), because one does not like a quiet house (companionship function), or simply because one wanted to watch television and the debate was the only programming offered. Motivations are intricately and intimately tied to "effects." To fully understand television effects we must begin to map out the uses to which political programming on television is put.

The argument for a Uses and Gratifications approach to the study of political communication does not necessarily imply that the trail taken by most researchers has been circuitous. Even Hyman and Sheatsley, writing in 1947, pointed out that a message must be absorbed to have a desired impact. This realization, growing out of an explanation for the "minimal effects" doctrine, allowed for the consideration of psychological factors intervening between message and effects of the message.

The argument here is simply that the same logic should be extended to motivational predispositions. These are also psychological conditions that intervene between stimulus and response, and wholly consistent with the recognition of mediating factors such as selective exposure, attention perception and retention (Klapper, 1960). Exposure should be treated as a multi-dimensional concept, with as much
attention given to "why" as is presently given to "how much." The Uses and Gratifications model is schematically juxtaposed with the more traditional Effects model in Figure 3.

**FIGURE 3: SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS AND DIRECT EFFECTS MODELS OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

The motivational predispositions may also be thought of as indicators of "type or interest" in politics, as interest surely has a qualitative as well as quantitative dimension to it. This is one of the potential advantages
of a Uses and Gratifications approach to political communication, as researchers investigating political behavior have yet to make use of the qualitative dimension. "Type of interest" may prove to be a useful explanatory variable with strong empirical and theoretical linkages.

For example, the motivation behind many (political) behaviors (reading the newspaper, participating in elections) is generally associated in some fashion with the amount of interest one has in politics. More interested people are more likely to hold A, B, or C attitudes and engage in D, E, or F behaviors. The concept "interest," however, is robbed of much of its richness by this unidimensional treatment that employs a quantitative operationalization of "how much." Like exposure, "interest" has a dimensionality which has been largely ignored. One may have a passionate interest in learning about politics as it relates to good government, while another may have a mild interest in politics as a social game, or a sport, or as a topic of conversation with friends. Through people's communicative behavior we can attempt to describe the qualitative dimension of interest; which may prove to be equally as useful (in terms of relating it to other attitudes and behaviors as a partially heuristically oriented organizational device) as is the present unidimensional conceptualization of interest.
THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS APPROACH

The uses and gratifications approach begins with the media consumer as the starting point for communication research. The question asked is not "What effects do the media have on people," but "How do people use the media?" Explicitly, this research paradigm is concerned with,

1. the social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media and other sources (or engagement in other activities), resulting in need gratifications and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones.
   (Katz, et al., 1974:510)

There is an assumption in this approach which is lacking in the studies conducted by political scientists on media effects. The basic tenet is that the audience is an active element in the communications process. Thus an important part of media use is assumed to be goal directed (McQuail, Blumler and Brown, 1972). Moreover, as the initiative in linking need gratification and media choice and use lies with the audience member, a low ceiling is placed on theorizing about the effects of the media content on audience attitudes and behaviors (Katz, et al., 1974).

The uses and gratifications approach is an offspring of functionalism. The early use-gratifications theories were uni-functional in nature, positing that the media
serve one dominate function. Most prevalent among these are the "escapist" function (MacDonald, 1957), Stevenson's "play function" (1967), and a more recent hypothesis asserting that media exposure satisfies a need for social contact (Nordenstreng, 1970). Numerous studies also employ a dichotomous classification of media functions. These usually take the form of "fantasy-escapist" functions on the one hand and "informational-educational" satisfactions derived from the media use on the other.

Such uni- and bi-functional classifications leave much to be desired. They are far too general to satisfactorily account for the wide range of needs that communication satisfies for individuals, as many separate functions must be lumped into the same polar mound. As this fact was recognized by communications researchers, multi-functional categories emerged. One of the first such classifications was posited on a macro-sociological level by Lasswell (1948). Lasswell noted three activities of "communication specialists: surveillance of the environment, correlation of parts of society in responding to the environment, and the transmission of the social heritage from one generation to the next.

Charles Wright (1960) later added the function of entertainment and proposed a functional inventory summarized by the following question:
What are the (1) manifest and (2) latent (3) functions and (4) disfunctions of mass communicated (5) surveillance (news) (6) correlation (editorial activity) (7) cultural transmission and (8) entertainment for the (9) society, (10) sub-groups, (11) individuals, and (12) cultural systems?

The uses and gratifications approach has had only a limited test of its utility in understanding media effects in the political arena in general, and in the electoral arena. Blumler and McQuail's (1969) election study of the British general election of 1964 is the only national election study to have employed this approach. A central finding of the Blumler-McQuail study is one that vindicates their approach—the effect of television depended on what the viewer brought with him to the television situation. Four main classes of reasons for following political broadcasts were found: surveillance, contest excitement, reinforcement seeking and vote guidance seeking. Of these functions surveillance was the reason given most for attending political programming. About half of the sample agreed that one of the gratifications derived from watching party broadcasts was "to see what some party will do if it gets into power." About 50 percent also watched television to "judge what political leaders are like," and half watched "to keep up with the main issues of the day." Slightly under a quarter of the sample fell into the reinforcement and contest excitement categories, about 15 percent sought vote-guidance, and 11 percent sought both vote-guidance and reinforcement.
Blumler and McQuail found that while three-quarters of the sample watched some political programs, half of these watched out of "toleration." Political information was acquired by even the uninterested, and as in the United States, the less interested got most of their information from television (Kingdon, 1970-1971; Atkin, 1972-1973); as there was little motivation to actively seek information from sources which require more energy expenditure.

The English study by itself should supply the pangs of doubt necessary to make us "re-think" the approach taken by traditional effects studies. With perhaps 40 percent of the electorate exposing themselves to political programming for non-instrumental purposes the twin assumptions of exposure as a uni-dimensional concept and exposure for the purpose of acquiring information are untenable.

Other empirical studies utilizing the uses and gratifications approach have documented different inventories of media functions. Peled and Katz (1974) found that different types of television fare satisfied the needs of information, tension release, passing the time, feelings of national pride and the need to trust governmental leaders during the Israeli 1973 war. Greenberg, (1974) in studying the gratifications received from television viewing by London school children, lists the following: 1) passing the time, 2) "forgetting," as a means of diversion, 3) learning about things, 4) learning about oneself, 5) arousal (excitement),
6) relaxation, 7) companionship, and 8) habit.

McLeod and Becker (1974), in a study of 389 Wisconsin residents during the 1972 presidential election, found five primary gratifications derived from television viewing: surveillance, vote guidance, anticipated communication (where the content of the communication would be used in conversing with others), excitement and reinforcement. While these gratifications are in rough correspondence with the Blumler-McQuail study, the indicators used to tap each gratification were different.

McCain (1972) hypothesized 11 functions viewing television news could serve for viewers. McQuail, et al., (1972) compiled a typology consisting of four main categories: diversion (escape from routines and emotional release), personal relationships (including para-social relationships) (Horton and Wohl, 1956), personal identity (including personal reference and value reinforcement), and surveillance. Schramm, et al., (1961) find that television serves as an entertainment, social utility and information source function for children.

It should be apparent that uses and gratifications studies offer no consensus on functions played by the media in general or by television in the specific case. Indeed, each additional study reviewed seems to cloud the picture presented by Uses and Gratifications research. This is both a strength and a weakness of the approach, for some very
good--and some very bad--reasons.

The main source of cloudiness is communication itself. Because communication pervades individuals' lives it is a perpetual independent variable. The uses and gratifications approach has been applied to wildly different dependent phenomena, with the resulting typologies recognizing the dependent variable's influence. Thus we expect different criteria to emerge as salient, and different categories of gratifications to manifest themselves as the explanatory focus changes from life patterns (Brown, 1974) to soap operas (Guttman, 1973) to war (Peled and Katz, 1973).

A good portion of the cloudiness, however, comes from the investigators. Companion faults are a lack of conceptual clarity and a lack of methodological rigor. An indicator used by one investigator to measure a "relaxation" gratification is used by another investigator to tap an "avoidance" dimension. Greenberg's "habit" indicator, "because it's so much fun," might easily pass for a measure of McLeod and Becker's "excitement" gratification.

This conceptual difficulty is compounded by a lack of rigor. Investigators often do not present indicators they use to measure a gratification. And it is even more rare that components are inter-correlated to see the degree of overlap, or intra-correlated to see whether a particular factor is itself uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional. Some studies rely on empirical measures such as factor or
cluster analysis to group indicators, while others make a priori judgments on theoretical grounds. Very few effects studies attempt to ascertain the validity of their measures. (McLeod and Becker, 1974, is a noteworthy exception.)

The most damning criticism that can be leveled against uses and gratifications practitioners, however, deals not with what they have done, but with what they have failed to do. A decade and a half ago Klapper (1963) chastised functional researchers for halting after classifying the observed uses of communications without considering the consequences of those uses for the individual and for the larger society. A decade later Katz and colleagues (1973-1974), in assessing the state of the art of gratifications research, found little improvement in this regard. The uses and gratifications approach derives its strength from its position as one of many factors in the process of communication—not as an end in itself. Yet very few studies start with a consideration of the uses to which mass communications are put and then go on to study the effects of the communications with this context. One of the aims of this dissertation is to investigate the potential value of the uses and gratifications approach as a definer of specifying conditions. There may be, for example, a relationship between exposure and candidate selection for those viewers whose motivation for exposure was boredom or para-social companionship, while exposure for informational
reasons is unrelated to candidate selection.

A goodly number of uses and gratifications studies may also be criticized for not being faithful to the assumptions inherent in their research paradigm. Most uses and gratifications studies do not concern themselves with specific political events, but are instead broadly focused on general exposure to a wide variety of political programming. Blumler and McQuail (1969:341), for example, in perhaps the most rigorous application of the uses and gratifications approach on a large scale, ask the motivation question in the following manner, "Here is a list of statements that different people have made when asked why they watch party political broadcasts. (Card is handed to respondent). Please look them through. Now just give me the number of any reasons which have ever applied to you when you watched party political broadcasts." (emphasis added.)

The operative words here are "have ever applied," for it is entirely conceivable that the same individual has watched one program for one reason and a second or third program for a different reason. Political programs are often quite different in nature, such as a 30 hour convention focusing on intra-party conflict, and a 90 minute debate centering on inter-party conflict (which is also a very personal type of conflict between the two major party candidates). Empirical research conducted in a post-election setting and focusing on the totality of political
programming throughout the course of the campaign is incapable of determining the needs that were to be filled at the time of exposure. Thus it is ironic that to the extent that Time 1-to-Time 2 measurements of uses for the same individual exhibit variation, much of the uses and gratifications literature must be considered in some way deficient, while the founding assumption of the approach is strengthened.

The availability of panel data on motivations for exposure to the conventions and debates, two very different political stimuli, affords an opportunity to test the stability of motivations. Should the data indicate stability among motivational predispositions two arguments may be advanced: 1) the validity of many prior uses and gratifications studies using general indicators is strengthened; and 2) the motivations are tapping semi-permanent orientations towards politics. This second proposition is intriguing for it opens the possibility of using peoples communicative behavior to tap orientations from which explanations of political behavior may be derived.

As Sniderman remarked in the preface to Personality and Democratic Politics (1975), "The political man and the common man are not the same." Politics does not organize people's lives—it intrudes upon them. Only about half of the eligible electorate votes in national elections, far fewer vote in non-presidential elections, and even fewer
are engaged with the political process through means other than voting. Politics simply is not central to individuals' lives. Communication is. For inherent in "communication" is the process of social interaction. It is possible that a great deal may be learned about individual political behavior by looking at how people orient themselves towards politics in general. Moreover, it may be possible to trace peoples' orientations towards politics through observing their communicative behavior--that is by how they use, or why they expose themselves to, political communications.

An investigation into motivation is an investigation into a psychological state. As political behavior focuses on the individual's political psychology, the motivations offer us practical insights into the political personality and a host of other attitudes we have come to rely on as political indicators. It may be, for example, that those who expose themselves to political communications for social reasons (to be able to talk about politics with friends and workers) are highly efficacious, while those who watched a political convention or a Presidential debate out of boredom are located at the bottom of the efficacy scale.

Using communicative behavior to investigate orientations of people towards politics is clearly consonant with the underlying tenets of the uses and gratifications approach. Exposure is said to be caused by the
presence of a need. By observing the reasons for exposure we may make an educated inference as to what need, or combination of needs is being served. Given this inference we may then find that certain needs co-vary with various characteristics that relate directly to political behavior. Barber (1972) for example, found that certain needs (e.g. need for power) are related in a probabilistic sense to certain attitudes and behaviors (e.g. rigidity). Such a classification scheme may offer an organizational vehicle by which we may better understand the clusterings of various political attitudes and the motivations that underlie various political behaviors.
MEASUREMENT STRATEGY

There exists no consensus among researchers utilizing the Uses and Gratifications approach on the method to be employed in determining the uses to which mass communications are put. Different investigators have relied on both open and closed-ended survey questions to measure motivational predispositions. Some investigators design indicators to tap hypothetical dimensions defined in a priori fashion; while others allow dimensions of uses or users to be determined empirically by multi-variate techniques. While disparate, these foci share a common methodological assumption:

...many of the goals of mass media use can be derived from data supplied by individual audience members themselves—that is, people are sufficiently self-aware to be able to report their interests and motives in particular cases, or at least to recognize them when confronted with them in an intelligible and familiar verbal formulation. (Katz, et al., 1974:22)

The approach chosen in this study was to present respondents with fixed-choice statements concerning possible reasons for exposure to the conventions and ascertain the extent of agreement with each. This approach has companion

1The labels "use," "motivation for exposure," "reason for exposure" will be used interchangeably.
advantages of 1) minimizing socially desirable responses; and 2) permitting data to be collected for each respondent on each indicator and dimension.

In surveys focusing on undisguised political content it may be expected that some respondents who view a program for non-political reasons will attempt and be able to respond in what they feel is appropriate fashion (with a general political-type response). This may be a reason why "general surveillance" response figures so prominently in most uses and gratifications typologies. To the extent that exposure is accidental or non-purposive (e.g. "I watched the convention because I was bored and just wanted to watch TV"), distortions due to social desirability should be reduced by presenting these motivations and observing how individuals respond when confronted with them. Such non-political motivations may not spring to respondents' minds when asked in open-ended fashion and may be more proportionally represented accurately in the data only when the closed-ended probes focus attention on them.

Collecting data on all respondents across all indicators of motivational dimensions is useful as individuals may certainly expose themselves to a given program for a multiplicity of reasons. While classifying individuals according to their primary motivation for exposure to a communicative stimulus is undoubtedly useful, it is also short-sighted. Open-ended responses are more apt to elicit single or dual
responses that are less exhaustive than a battery of closed-ended questions. While the open-ended responses obtained are likely to be more central\(^2\) they are also likely to be more general and perhaps less useful.

Also a major consideration is that individuals may use a communication for more than one reason. It is more likely that exposure serves many functions simultaneously, such as a need to be informed and a need to be able to talk about current events with friends or work associates. Thus rather than typing an individual by a single dominant need it may be both more advantageous and a truer reflection of reality to consider combinations of needs and uses to which an individual puts political programming.

Viewers of the conventions were presented with 18 statements concerning possible motivations to the convention. They were asked to indicate the extent of agreement with each statement ("a lot," "some," "a little," or "not at all.")\(^3\)

The selection of items raises the possibility of sample validity (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1976). There is no guarantee that the items chosen for inclusion are representative of the universe of all possible motivations. The answers are, of course, contingent in some manner on the

\(^{2}\)The exception here is the already mentioned case of response desirability biases in a general political direction.

\(^{3}\)These statements may be found in Table 16 on page 134.
questions asked. There is full realization that the questions chosen to some extent predetermine the structure of motivations discovered. But good justification exists for each indicator chosen and statements were carefully drawn.

There were dual purposes served by the 18 statements respondents were presented with concerning their reasons for watching the convention (and overlapping 16 statements about the first debate). First, they are interesting in themselves as an often overlooked component of political behavior. The analysis section of this chapter considers them in this fashion, as discrete independent variables to describe citizens involvement with two major political events—the party conventions and Presidential debates of 1976. The second purpose served by these statements are as indicators of types of motivations. In this context the statements are operationalizations of motivational types. This second form of analysis is conducted in the following chapter.
REASONS FOR EXPOSURE TO THE CONVENTION

It is necessary throughout this analysis for readers to remember that the motivational questions were asked subsequent rather than prior to the convention. There is likely to be some slippage between the actual and reported motivation for exposure. For example, a viewer who tuned in to enjoy the excitement of the convention but found it to be dull may be less likely to report having watched for this reason. Respondents' agreement with each of the motivational statements is presented in Table 16.

The reason most often given for following the convention was "to find out who would win the nomination." Four-fifths of those interviewed said this applied to them "a lot" or "some."4 This reinforces arguments that the American public is not sufficiently interested in politics to actively monitor political developments; as information available from newspapers, television and radio had coronated the party's standardbearers in advance of the conventions; although more so in the Democratic case than the Republican. Certainly some who knew the nominees in advance also answered in the affirmative as the convention was a source of

4To provide some literary relief, unless otherwise specified the term "agreement" will include those who chose the "a lot" or "some" responses.
TABLE 16  REASONS FOR EXPOSURE TO THE CONVENTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Exposure</th>
<th>Extent of Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I watched the convention to:</td>
<td>A Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-find out who would win the nomination.</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to learn where the candidates and parties stand on issues.</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to keep up with the election process.</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to get to know the candidates and their families better as people.</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to feel that I am participating in current events.</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to be able to talk about the convention and current events with my friends.</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to feel pride in the Democratic process.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to help me decide who to vote for in the November election.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to identify with my party.</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to enjoy the excitement of the convention.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-because I like to see the way TV anchormen and reporters cover the event.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to be entertained.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-because I just wanted to watch TV and the convention was on.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the convention.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to pass the time.</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-so I wouldn't have to do other things I should be doing.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to relax and calm down from the earlier part of the day.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to help me forget about my problems for awhile.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Missing data and non-viewers of both conventions are excluded. Table entries are based on an n-size that varies between 323 and 327.
confirmation or finalization of the decision. However, it is not unrealistic to believe that half of the San Francisco electorate did not know Carter and Ford had captured their nominations until viewing the convention(s).

A more charitable view of the electorate's involvement is indicated by the second most often agreed to reason for watching the convention: "to learn where the candidates and parties stand on the issues." Thus the convention is seen by many as an opportunity to acquire "hard" information about policy matters, as almost three-quarters indicated this was among their motivations for following the convention. Exposure for this purpose was slightly associated with age (.24) and interest (.23) in a positive direction, but was negatively related to education (-.14) and information (-.18) to a small degree.\(^5\) While acquiring policy information clearly was a major motivation for following the convention it is also clear from the data presented in Chapter 3 that the bulk of the audience did not pick up this information, or that it was secondary to other aspects of the convention they recalled. As alternative explanations for this discrepancy it is possible that either 1) policy information was not available due either to the content or coverage of the convention; or 2) there may have been strong civic duty pressures for a socially desirable response (a "good citizen

\(^5\)Unless otherwise noted all reported correlation coefficients are Kendall's tau-b.
is informed, votes on the basis of issues rather than personalities or parties). These explanations are not exclusive and both almost certainly took place.

A third major reason for following the convention was the general "surveillance" response: "to keep up with the electoral process." Sixty-five percent agreed with this statement. This has strong civic duty overtones, as noted above, but correlates only moderately with viewing to learn about the candidates' and parties' issue positions (.28). Given the passive way most people follow politics and government, major political events, such as the conventions, allow citizens to "check in" with their political process and maintain a sense of identity. Thus beyond the more instrumental viewing for information there is a somewhat symbolic aspect to convention viewing that provides a place for engagement—if not marriage—between the governed and government.

Engagement of this form incorporates the notion of vicarious involvement with politics through television viewing (Horton and Wohl, 1956). Slightly over a majority (54 percent) agreed that their viewing was, in part, designed to give them a feeling they were "participating in current events." The correlation between viewing "to keep up with the election process" and "to feel I am participating in current events" was a robust .40.
There is a semi-symbolic aspect that goes well beyond keeping up with, or feeling a part of the political process. A significant proportion of convention viewers—44 percent—watched "to feel pride in the Democratic process." This may be a cornerstone of the stability the American system of government has enjoyed in that despite disenchantment with the scandalized leadership and growing cynicism towards government in general (Miller, 1974), Americans still feel pride in the form, or system of government. One interpretation of these data is that viewing the process in action (e.g. the conventions) replenishes the reservoir of diffuse support and good will the government is able to draw from. The hypothetical linkage of symbolic and vicarious rewards received moderately strong empirical support. The "pride" indicator was associated both with viewing to feel one was participating (.41) and to keep abreast of the election process (.29).

To a large extent the televising of political conventions allows for the personalization of American politics. It allows citizens to feel they are participating and to feel pride in the system of which they are a part. While "personalization" has occasionally been decried as an "evil," in that it shifts focus away from issues and matters of substance, it may also be argued that personalization is a matter of substance. Barber's (1972) warning of flaws in the Nixon psychological makeup did in fact come to pass.
in dramatic fashion. While the relative merits of personalization politics may be debated, it is less debatable that these factors are of interest to the (San Francisco) electorate, and that a good deal of convention watching was motivated by viewers wanting to know more about those who asked to lead them.

Fifty-nine percent agreed part of their reason for tuning in was "to get to know the candidates and their families better as people." The strong associations between this and learning the candidates issue positions (.42) and "to help me decide who to vote for in the November election" (.37) indicate that the character of the candidates is given substantial weight in voters' minds. In fact is is doubtlessly somewhat artificial to decompose a voter's preference into strict candidate/issue party components as these conspire together in a mutually supportive fashion for the voter to form a general impression or evaluation of the candidates.

The quest for personal knowledge about the candidates and their families, was, however, not necessarily related to obtaining information to be used in selecting a candidate. Much of it was curiosity or the simple "desire to know." Forty-four percent expressly agreed they had watched to help them "decide who to vote for in November." An additional 40 percent said this applied "not at all" to their particular circumstances. This 40 percent certainly includes a good
many who already had made up their minds who to vote for, as well as those who did not plan to vote. This is hardly surprising in the light of well documented findings that one-third of the electorate approaches the conventions with their minds made up. On the other hand the fact that close to half either sought and/or received information instrumental to voting stresses the potential importance of producing a well-run, harmonious convention where viewers can find positive attributes of either the party or candidate to embrace. First impressions are still important, and with 81 percent tuning in to find out who would win the nomination the conventions may well be the staging grounds where first impressions are formed for a substantial portion of the electorate.

The final major reason given for following the conventions was one that is often overlooked. A healthy 53 percent agreed that they had watched the convention, "to be able to talk about the convention and current events with my friends." Thus there was a social component for over half of those who exposed themselves to the convention. Politics here serves a social utility function, where a primary purpose for following politics is to acquire information, history, lore or anecdotes to be used in future conversations. For this group, or some portion of it, politics is much like the weather--a topic of casual conversation. Given the lack of centrality of politics to
most peoples' lives it is not surprising that this motivation exists as strongly as many more explicitly political motivations, but the level of agreement with this statement may be surprising. More agreed with this than said they watched to feel pride in the Democratic process or to get help in deciding who to vote for.

While the level of agreement with the remainder of statements offered to respondents dropped off, there are a number of interesting observations to be made. Responding in part to the "convention-as-theater" thesis, and attesting to the efficacy of the networks' promotional departments, 37 percent said they tuned in (among other reasons) because they liked "to see the way TV anchormen and reporters cover the event." Associated with this to a degree is the one-third of viewers who tuned in "to enjoy the excitement of the convention," and the one-quarter who simply wanted, "to be entertained." While these reasons for exposure were not as strong as others presented above, the entertainment or excitement seekers comprised not an insignificant proportion of those viewing the conventions.

It is among this group that the medium dwarfs the message. Quite used to being entertained by an entertainment medium they are not phased by the political taint of the programming. There are sufficient elements of the conventions--the pagentry, drama, mystery and conflict, magnified by the form and formulas of television coverage--
to satisfy the need for excitement and entertainment. That one of the reasons for viewing given by slightly over one-third was to see the form of the coverage rather than, or as well as, the content of the coverage centers attention on the extent to which television has become an active part of the political process rather than a benign entity reporting on the process.

These findings alone call into serious questions studies based on the assumption that a desire for information is the singular motive for exposure to political programming. Further detracting from this assumption is the small group of about 15 percent for whom exposure was in no way motivated by political or social concerns. These were people who turned on the television and happened to find the convention. Watching television here was to alleviate boredom—"to pass the time," and "because I just wanted to watch television and the convention was on." Exposure under these conditions may be described as "casual" or even accidental. Exposure that could be characterized as "diversional" was present, but extremely limited. Between five and eight percent used the conventions to "relax and unwind," "avoid doing other things," or to "help them forget" about their problems. Convention viewing, or more aptly television viewing, in these cases has virtually nothing to do either with the subject of the conventions (political nominations) much less anything specific that occurred at the
There are a number of general observations that may be made from this set of data. To summarize: 1) Perhaps the major reason for convention viewing was to keep up with politics in general and to feel involved in political happenings. 2) There was a good deal of reported interest in acquiring "hard" information, such as where the candidates stood on issues, differences between them, and what they might do if elected. 3) There was also strong interest in acquiring "soft" information about what the candidates and their families were like and the basic characteristics of the candidates. 4) People expected to talk about the convention with friends and work associates. "Anticipated communication" or social utility reasons were substantial motivations for exposure to the political conventions in 1976. 5) The conventions' entertainment or excitement value was one of the primary motivations for between a quarter and a third of those in the viewing audience. 6) There was a small, but significant, group of viewers for whom exposure to the conventions was non-purposive in a political sense. Exposure was either accidental or served the purposes of alleviating boredom or allowing the viewers to escape from the tensions of their own worlds. It is clear from these data that there is variation in a qualitative operationalization of exposure; and that exposure to political programming should not be assumed to stem solely from a need to desire to acquire information.
REASONS FOR EXPOSURE TO THE FIRST DEBATE

Respondents interviewed after the first debate were asked to recall their reasons for watching. They were asked to indicate their agreement with 17 statements, fifteen of which were repeats from the convention module. While wording changes were minimal, substituting the referent "debate" for "convention" in most cases, it is important to note the situational change from the convention to the debate. For example, the convention indicator "to see who would win" was a primarily information-seeking response. In the debate case agreement was more than likely a contest-excitement response. Winning the party's nomination is obviously quite different than performing better than one's opponent.

The statement most often agreed with as a reason for watching the first debate was "to learn where the candidates stand on the issues." Eighty-five percent indicated this was a primary reason for viewing. Three-quarters of those viewing said they watched "to get to know the candidates

6The convention statements dropped were: 1) to avoid doing other things, 2) to relax and calm down, and 3) to forget about my problems. Two indicators were added to the debate series: 1) "because everybody else I know was going to watch the debate," and 2) "to root for my candidate."
better as people." Together these form an argument that viewers brought a strong desire to find out something about the candidates with them to the televised confrontation. This particular motivation may have been stronger in 1976 than it would have been in other years as Ford and Carter were both relative newcomers to the American political scene. Many were waiting for Carter, continually accused of being "fuzzy" on issues, to define himself; and many were uncertain how the unelected incumbent, almost denied the nomination of his party, would handle himself and the attacks of his opponent. That the debates were "uneventful" or produced no massive shifts in vote intentions may be best attributed to the relatively equal performances of Ford and Carter. The viewing electorate, though not devoid of candidate predispositions, was clearly searching for information about the two candidates indicating the potential for major shifts in opinion and/or voting decision if one of the candidates had clearly emerged as the stronger.

Two other statements also inform this discussion of the search for information and the potential for change as a result of exposure to the debates. While 75 and 85 percent, respectively, sought information about the candidates and their issue stances, only 58 percent said they watched the debates to help them make up their minds who to vote for. While this certainly is not an inconsequential proportion of the viewing electorate it is clear that not
TABLE 17  REASONS FOR EXPOSURE TO THE FIRST DEBATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Extent of Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I watched the debate... to learn where the candidates stand on the issues.&quot;</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to keep up with the election process.</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get to know the candidates better as people.</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to feel that I am participating in current events.</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to see who would win the debate.</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to help me decide who to vote for in the November election.</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be able to talk about the debate and current events with my friends.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to feel pride in the Democratic process.</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to enjoy the excitement of the debate.</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because I like to see the way TV news-people participate in and cover the debate.</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to root for my candidate.</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to identify with my party.</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be entertained.</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because I just wanted to watch TV and the debate was on.</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>because everyone else I knew was going to watch the debate.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to pass the time.</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the debate.</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. n-size varies between 149 and 151.
everyone who sought information wanted the information as a voting aid. A good many of those who had already decided who to cast their vote for sought reinforcement rather than guidance. The information provided by the debate was used in the "confirmation" rather than decision stage in the process of adopting an innovation--or in this case a candidate (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971). Thus for many the debates afforded the opportunity for them to get comfortable or "feel good" about what actions they had decided to take (whether to abstain from voting or vote for a particular candidate).

At the same time there was the indication that many viewers came to the debate ready to be swayed; or at least were dispassionate about either their candidate or the debate itself. Only 23 percent said they watched to root for their candidate. In addition, less than one-quarter of those viewing evidenced a partisan involvement in the debate. Only 22 percent watched to feel a sense of identification with their party. There was little difference between Carter (29 percent) and Ford (24 percent) supporters in candidate rooting; and little difference between Democrats (20 percent) and Republicans (24 percent) in party-rooting. While comparable data are not available the election of 1976 may have been one of relatively low emotional engagement, as

7Vote intention expressed on wave 1 survey conducted prior to the first debate.
the low turnout despite the closeness of the race would indicate. Thus a good deal of the information-seeking was motivated by basic curiosity, and a desire to see what was in store for the future depending on which candidate received the electoral sanction.

As was the case with motivations for following the convention there were strong surveillance and civic duty overtones to debate viewing. Four-fifths of the audience indicated a reason for their viewing was simply "to keep up with the election process." Two-thirds tuned in to feel they were participating in current events. Thus major political events (or events billed as major) such as the conventions and debates function as a major linkage mechanism. Not only are they places and times for citizens to "check-in" and check up on their political process; but they provide the citizen with a real sense of participation in that process. Thus the event itself, irrespective of whatever content or information they receive from the event, serves a major function at a societal level. They provide "national experiences," much as the assassination of a President or trip to the moon. National attention is focused solely on one event for a moment in time, however brief it may be. All (or most) Americans share this common experience even if they interpret it in different ways.

And as with the convention, one of the by-products of the event is a feeling of pride in the system of government.
Almost half of those viewing (47 percent) either watched the debate for, or at least received from the debate a feeling of pride in the democratic process. These three items show strong empirical linkages. The feelings of vicarious participation through debate viewing is related to feeling pride in the democratic process (.34) and viewing to keep up with the election process (.34). Pride and viewing to keep up with the process are themselves related at the same magnitude (.33). A full matrix of inter-correlations may be found in Appendix 3.

Debate viewing also had its less noble side. Inter-mixed with citizen engagement was the exciting specter of the first head to head confrontation between presidential aspirants in 16 years; and 62 percent watched "to see who would win." Pure contest-excitement is probably the major reason, but not the sole reason why people agreed with this statement. For some it was "put up or shut up time." Faced with the remaining two candidates of a once burgeoning field many undoubtedly saw the debate(s) as the acid test. The desire to see who would win may be interpreted as the desire to see who would make the best President.

Yet at the same time it is evident from the more than three-fifths agreement that the "win versus lose" frame of reference was operative for many viewers. The debate over issues, enunciating and clarifying policy positions was not an end in itself. Instead this was, along with the
effectiveness of presentation and performance, a means to the end of besting the opponent. While these are not exclusive the strictly competitive aspect of the debate was certainly prominent in viewers' minds. Some 40 percent expressly agreed they had watched "to enjoy the excitement of the debate." In many ways this is not unlike Affirmed versus Alydar or Ali versus Spinks. The head-to-head competition between two heavyweights, rules of the game in the time limit of "rounds" of questions, and impartial referees from the journalistic community gave the debate the overtones of sport in the minds of many.

It is also interesting to note the fascination of the viewing public with the referees. About one-third (35 percent) indicated one of their reasons for viewing was because they liked "to see the ways the TV newspeople participate in and cover the debate." In some cases the individual reporters, such as Barbara Walters, were probably more familiar to the viewers than were the candidates. The extent of agreement with this statement demonstrates vividly the concept of para-social interaction. For good or ill the press, and especially TV-journalists, have become "stars" with celebrity status and their own audience. The correlation between the TV coverage and excitement variables was a modest .21.

The debate, like the convention, also served a social utility function for many viewers. Slightly over half,
51 percent, watched to be able to talk about the debate with their family and friends. This is roughly the same percentage who said they watched the convention(s) for this reason. The strength of this motivation reinforces a multi-step flow of communication. While the "two-step" flow (Lazarsfeld et al., 1954) has been buried by some observers (Robinson, 1978) it is clearly errant to suggest that information gleaned from television does not get re-diffused along with the viewer's personal interpretation of that information.

The social uses of viewing the debate were interrelated with viewing to keep up with the electoral process (.26) and to feel one was participating in current events (.30). Thus while exposure to the debate may be primarily motivated by a desire to have a topic of conversation in daily interactions or an ability to take part in discussions a latent function is to keep national attention focused on the campaign. At the micro-level of individual political behavior the point should again be made that exposure to political programming is strongly motivated by social as well as informational needs.

There were also a number of minor reasons for watching the Carter-Ford debate. Some (16 percent) simply wanted to be entertained. For some exposure was haphazard. They turned to their favorite cheap source of entertainment and found the debate. Others, perhaps more cynical switched on the debate in order to be entertained. About ten percent
explicitly agreed they wanted to watch TV and the debate was on, and an equal number watched simply "to pass the time." Another 10 percent were somewhat motivated by peer pressure ("because everybody else I knew was going to watch,"), and eight percent were more or less forced to watch in order "to spend time with (my) family and friends" who were watching the debates.

The inter-correlations between these reasons are significant, indicating a block of between 10 and 15 percent for whom exposure to political programming in general (as evidenced by the conventions and the debates) is non-pur­posive in a political context. Exposure among this group ranges from haphazard to accidental. With the addition of cadres who watch either for social reasons or for the excitement and spectacle the prevailing assumption implicit in most media and politics research of exposure being motivated by informational needs (and exposure being tantamount to information reception) is untenable.
COMPARATIVE STRUCTURE OF CONVENTION AND
DEBATE MOTIVATIONS

The conventions and debate were two very different types of political happenings. The conventions were marathon intra-party affairs, characterized by peaks and valleys of activity. The first debate was an intense inter-party conflict lasting only 90 minutes. Yet the structure of the motivations for exposure to each was quite similar. The spearman's Rho rank order coefficient between the two sets of observations is .94. Table 18 presents the percentage of agreement with each statement and the relative ordering of common indicators for both programs.

The comparative rankings of uses from the convention and debates show strong similarity. The sole difference in the ordering of the first five items is the "to see who would win indicator." As already discussed agreement responses here have very different meanings for the two forms of programming studied. The hard information about candidates' issue stances, softer information about candidates' personal characteristics, and general surveillance-civic duty responses are the most often given responses to questioning about both the conventions and debates. On each indicator agreement was higher when the first debate was the subject of attention as might be expected as 1) the candidates were
TABLE 18  COMPARATIVE RANKING OF MOTIVATIONS FOR EXPOSURE TO THE CONVENTIONS AND FIRST DEBATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percent Agreement</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn issue positions</td>
<td>85% 73%</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up with election process</td>
<td>79% 65%</td>
<td>2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know candidates better as people</td>
<td>75% 59%</td>
<td>3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in current events</td>
<td>68% 54%</td>
<td>4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See who would win</td>
<td>62% 81%</td>
<td>5 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help decide how to vote</td>
<td>58% 44%</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk with family/friends</td>
<td>51% 53%</td>
<td>7 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel pride in democratic process</td>
<td>47% 44%</td>
<td>8 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy excitement</td>
<td>40% 33%</td>
<td>9 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See TV coverage</td>
<td>35% 37%</td>
<td>10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root for candidate</td>
<td>23% NA</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify with party</td>
<td>22% 36%</td>
<td>11 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be entertained</td>
<td>16% 24%</td>
<td>12 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just to watch TV</td>
<td>10% 14%</td>
<td>13 14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of friends watching</td>
<td>10% NA</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pass the time</td>
<td>8% 15%</td>
<td>14.5 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with family/friends</td>
<td>8% 14%</td>
<td>14.5 14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid doing other things</td>
<td>NA 8%</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relax and calm down</td>
<td>NA 8%</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forget about problems</td>
<td>NA 5%</td>
<td>-- --</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. "a lot" or "some" response
b. "NA"=not asked
the center of attention and physically present for the duration, and 2) the debate was a "bigger" event, with more intensity and surrounded by more publicity and attention. Also as might be expected viewers felt the direct Carter-Ford pairing in the debate to yield more useful information in helping them come to a decision on whether or not to vote and/or who to support.

There was little difference in either the relative ranking or absolute percentages on the social discourse variable, to talk with family and friends, across the two sets of observations. This was an important reason for following political programming for about half of those viewing. Being able to feel pride in the democratic process was a second construct that changed little from convention to debate, as about 45 percent agreed it was one of the reasons they watched political programming.

The remaining exposure motivations were agreed to by less than half of those viewing. The "excitement" of the event and the television coverage itself were ranked between ninth and eleventh in terms of reasons for viewing. However the approximately one-third who agreed with these reasons is far from a trivial amount, and the stability of the percentages across both forms of programming indicates this group is far from random or artifactual.

Partisan reinforcement provided by the two events differed. The conventions evidently brought home partly
loyalty and pride more so than did the conflict between the representatives of the two parties at their debate. While the absolute levels of agreement are perhaps lower than might be expected (convention = 36 percent, debate = 22 percent) the data indicate the symbolic importance of the national conventions to the party system.

Finally, what have been termed "non-purposive" or accidental exposure was found to rank lowest of the various types of motivations considered among both convention and debate viewers. Despite theories of the "inadvertent audience" (Robinson, 1975) and passive learning through television (Krugman and Hartley, 1970-71) it is arguable that these viewers belong with those who were not exposed to the two events rather than with those who were exposed for more instrumental reasons.

The next chapter will concentrate on clustering the various indicators into more clearly interpretable dimensions as a prelude to the seventh chapter, which addresses the question of whether or not including exposure motivations in a communications model can increase our understanding of political attitudes and behaviors.
While the individual motivations for viewing, or uses viewers made of the conventions and debates contribute insights into individual political behavior and the role of television in the political process, the data need to be reduced to more manageable proportions to test their utility as a set of specifying conditions to further define media relationships. There are three main reasons for this. First, working with 34 separate variables (18 from the conventions and 16 from the debate) would produce too large a mountain of data to be scaled in parsimonious analysis. In fact, the avalanche could bury the investigator. Second, the reliability of any single item is dubious. Finally, the utility of employing motivational factors is enhanced to the extent that properties (or components) of underlying dimensions may be discerned.

ANTICIPATED MEDIA FUNCTIONS

The statements drafted to serve as indicators of motivations came largely from the studies of other investigators, which were reviewed briefly in the preceding chapter. Their repeated use adds to a growing pool of
comparable data. While each indicator was designed to tap a specific construct, attempts to link indicators and constructs in a one-to-one relationship are futile. The same response may be given by different respondents for different reasons. For example, agreement that an individual watched the convention "to get to know the candidates and their families better as people" might be based on a desire to find out more about the candidates qualifications for office; or desire to feel that (s)he knows the candidate personally. The first response might be considered to be filling an "information" function while the latter a "parasocial" function. One could want to see who won the nomination to keep abreast on political developments ("Surveillance function) or to have a topic of conversation at work (Social function).

Thus it may be more realistic to talk about manifest functions—what the indicator was designed to tap; and latent functions—what the indicator may also be measuring. The indicators are coupled with their hypothesized manifest and latent functions in Table 19. It is also appropriate to sketch the outlines of each function in a more conceptual manner. The eight anticipated functions are illustrated below:

1. **Social Function.** This entails viewing for reasons of social intercourse. It subsumes the "communal" function of viewing in order to be together with people, and an
"anticipated communication" function of viewing in order to take part in subsequent discussions with friends, family and associates.¹

2. **Vote Guidance Function.** Viewing is pointedly instrumental in character, to aid the individual in deciding who to vote for; or less commonly considered, whether or not to vote.²

3. **Play Function.** Viewing here is for the purpose of being aroused or entertained. (These are neither identical or mutually exclusive sub-functions). Convention/debate viewing is done to see the excitement of the contest, the pagentry, the drama—some of the same elements that are scripted for entertainment television shows in general.³

4. **Withdrawal/avoidance Function.** Television viewing here serves a function unrelated to the content of the programs. It allows viewers to put off things they should be

---

¹Other studies using this concept are: Foley's (1968) McCain's (1972) "communal" and "conversational;" Schramm's (1961) "social utility;" McQuail's (1972) "personal relations;" Greenberg's (1974) "companionship;" and McLeod and Beeker's (1974) "anticipated communication."

²See Blumler and McQuail (1969); and McLeod and Becker.

doing, escape from the tensions of the day or forget about troublesome problems. ④

5. Boredom/Habit Function. Television viewing is essentially non-purposive, both as it relates to the content of programming and as a non-political function such as noted above. TV viewing here is an end in itself. People view in order to watch TV, a favorite American pastime and simply to pass the time。⑤

6. Personal Reinforcement Function. Viewing enables the individual to bolster one's sense of self worth. This may take civic duty forms, where the viewer adheres to societal norms defining the "good citizen," or may have a partisan orientation, allowing the viewer to compliment herself on selecting the "right party or candidate。⑥

7. General Surveillance Function. Viewing for this purpose is simply to keep abreast of political developments

④In this general vein are Peled and Katz's (1974) "tension release;" Greenberg's (1974) "forgetting about problems;" McQuail et al. (1972) "diversional;" and McCain's (1972) "diversional" "avoidance."

⑤Related to this are Greenberg's (1974) "habit" and "passing time;" Peled and Katz's (1974) "passing the time;" and possibly McCain's (1972) "background companionship" and isolationist."

⑥Peled and Katz's (1974) "feeling of national pride" is complimentary, while more directly related are McLeod and Becker's (1974) "reinforcement seeking;" and McQuail, et al. "personal identity."
and happenings. Citizens monitor the political process without necessarily becoming passionately involved or searching out specific information.⁷

8. Learning Function. Viewing here is more pointed towards acquiring specific information. It subsumes what McCain (1972) has termed "information" (learning about the candidates' issue stances) and "quasi-information" (learning about the candidates "as people"). This may or may not be separate from the general surveillance function, as the two are not mutually exclusive. The main difference is that the "learning" function is more narrowly defined.⁸

The latent linkages between dimensions of usage and specific indicators may be troublesome to some. It is no doubt true that if one strained hard enough a rationale linking almost any indicator to any dimension could be proposed—and would undoubtedly be true for at least some individuals. In postulating latent functions I have tried to constrain my imagination and not dig too deeply for obtuse rationales. The latent associations noted are those

⁷A general "surveillance" dimension has been found or used by Blumler and McQuail (1969); McLeod and Becker (1974); and McQuail et al. (1972):

⁸Depending on the specific operationalizations used by investigators, part of the function is incorporated in the "surveillance function." Those focusing more narrowly on learning are Greenberg's (1974) "learning about things;" Schramm's (1961) and Peled and Katz's (1974) "information" and McCain's (1972) "information" and "quasi-information."
for whom logics "suggested themselves" in a process better described as intuitive rather than scientific.

The social dimension includes all variables that refer explicitly to some group of "others" as manifest indicators. Included as latent are indicators that suggest a general monitoring of the political process and developments. The assumption underlying this is that these provide the objects and substance for discussions with others.

The indicator "to help me decide who to vote for" is a manifest indicator of the "vote guidance" dimension for apparent reasons. "keeping up with the election process" is latent as it may or may not provide information for use in a voting decision. Learning more about the candidates or their issue positions are undoubtedly used as vote guidance aids for some, but is considered latent as also included are people for whom information is an end in itself and may already have made their minds up for whom to vote. It is also the case for some of this group that the information gleaned from viewing political programming acts to reinforce their vote decision. For this reason of possible reinforcement, "to identify with my party" is also considered a latent indicator of the "vote guidance" dimension.

The person reinforcement dimension is marked by feeling of active participation in the election or involvement in the form of identifying with a party or rooting for a candidate. Using the conventions or debates to identify with one's
party contributes to a reinforcement of one's sense of self worth in that individuals' convictions of their decision to feel kinship with one party is strengthened. Party identification is a psychological attachment to a party in an affective sense (Converse et al., 1960:120). By viewing the party, or the candidate representing the party, the individual is able to select positive attributes, refresh her attachment, and "congratulate" herself on her choice of identification. A latent indicator of this dimension is the general "keeping up with the election process," as one's sense of self worth may be reinforced by fulfilling this obligation of a "good citizen." Similarly, deriving "feelings of pride" is a reminder that the citizen is part of a nation from which a sense of identity may be derived; and a sense of self worth reinforced to the extent that she feels positive about this identity and national attachment.

Learning issue positions and learning about the candidates "as people" are manifest types of learning, while "seeing who won the nomination" may be learning or verification. "Seeing who won the debate" may or may not give insights into the candidates and their qualifications and may thus also be a form of learning. Aid in deciding who to vote for may also be considered learning of a sort (as could almost everything else) and these are considered
to be latent indicators of the learning dimension. The withdrawal-avoidance and boredom-habit linkages appear to be fairly straightforward and are not elaborated on.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>CONSTRUCTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up with election process.</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See who won nomination.</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in current events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk with friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with family/friends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All friends were watching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel pride in Democratic process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn issue positions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know candidates as people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide how to vote.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify with my party.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root for my candidate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be entertained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy the excitement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See who won the debate.</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See TV coverage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid jobs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help forget problems.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relax and calm down.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass the time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just to watch TV.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Manifest and Latent functions are as previously defined. M=Manifest; L=Latent
b. The indicators refer both to the convention and debate except when the same indicators are hypothesized to refer to different constructs. These are separated with the table.
FACTOR ANALYSIS OF MOTIVATIONS FOR CONVENTION VIEWING

An R-type principal component factor analysis was performed on respondents' evaluations of the reasons for viewing the convention in order to empirically investigate what, if any, common dimensions underlay the statements. Orthogonal rotation was performed in order to simplify the factor structure. The particular method of rotation used (varimax) acts to simplify factor complexity while other rotation strategies concentrate on simplifying variable complexity (Rummel, 1970:391). Employing an orthogonal solution has the advantage of yielding more easily interpretable factors, while an oblique solution, where factor axes need not be uncorrelated, may be more realistic as the underlying dimensions are not necessarily assumed to be unrelated to each other.\(^9\)

Using a conventional Eigenvalue value of 1.00 or above as a criteria in determining when to stop the extraction of factors (Rummel, 1970) a four factor solution best fit the data. Five and six factor solutions (with

\(^9\)A factor solution employing oblique rotation was performed and yielded a similar structure and loadings to the orthogonal solution reported in this chapter. Given little difference the orthogonal solution is presented as it is more easily interpretable.
eigenvalues of .99 and .90 respectively) yielded little additional information and were rejected in the interest of parsimony. The four factor solution accounted for 53 percent of the common variance. The communalities (the total amount of a variable's variance accounted for by the factors) and the rotated factor loadings are given in Table 20.

The factor loadings that will receive the bulk of attention are those over .50, or those that account for one-quarter of the variance in particular variables. Factor 1 is a general political factor. While this factor is not near and clear-cut in regards to the hypothesized dimensions of usage, there is an instrumental character to it. The three attributes that load most highly represent the main ingredients of Presidential politics—parties, candidates and issues. Loading at a lower level are the variables "to help me decide how to vote" and "to feel pride in the Democratic process."

\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Factor} & \text{Eigenvalue} & \% \text{Variance} \\
1 & 4.28 & 23.8 \\
2 & 2.90 & 16.1 \\
3 & 1.21 & 6.7 \\
4 & 1.06 & 5.9 \\
\end{array} \]

\[ \text{The first factor extracted from a factor analysis procedure is most often quite general in character (Rummel, 1970).} \]
The second factor combines the hypothesized withdrawal/avoidance and boredom/habit into one cluster that may be termed "non-purposive" usage—at least as it relates to the content and nature of the conventions. All five items load highly on this factor with the factor accounting for between 26 and 54 percent of the variance in the variables. At a secondary level on this factor were the "entertainment" variable (.332) and the communal variable of spending time with family and friends (.329). For this cluster it is clear that politics has little to do with their reasons for viewing political programming.

The third factor incorporates the hypothesized social functions with elements of surveillance, civic duty and vicarious participation. For future reference this is termed a "social function." Loading most highly here are the uses to be able to talk about the conventions and current events with friends, to feel one is participating in current events, and to keep up with the election process. At a lower level one finds viewers who watched to feel pride in the democratic process. Relatively absent from the loadings in this column (of course after the simplification of orthogonal rotation) are the informational attributes of learning about the candidates as people and their stands on issues. Thus this is a politically instrumental factor, but far less election specific. It relates more to the citizen-as-citizen than citizen-as-voter.
### Table 20: Communalities and Rotated Factor Loadings of the Convention Exposure-Motivation Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Communalities</th>
<th>Factor Loadings</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>Factor 3</td>
<td>Factor 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify with my party.</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know the candidates/families as people.</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.669</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.161</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn the candidates/parties issue positions.</td>
<td>.519</td>
<td>.643</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>-.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel pride in the Democratic process.</td>
<td>.454</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>.335</td>
<td>.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide how to vote.</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.468</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in current events.</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>.615</td>
<td>.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See how TV people cover the event.</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See who would win the nomination.</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>-.097</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about the convention with friends.</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>.611</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy excitement of the convention.</td>
<td>.354</td>
<td>.243</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.210</td>
<td>.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up with the election process.</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>-.168</td>
<td>.575</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with family and friends.</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relax and calm down.</td>
<td>.411</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.596</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help forget problems.</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.512</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just to watch television.</td>
<td>.551</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.736</td>
<td>-.074</td>
<td>-.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be entertained.</td>
<td>.455</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.332</td>
<td>-.074</td>
<td>-.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid doing other jobs.</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>.554</td>
<td>-.103</td>
<td>.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass the time.</td>
<td>.390</td>
<td>-.082</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= Highest factor loading for variable

= Secondary loading—explains at least 10 percent of the variance in variable.
The final factor is a play factor. The only two variables that load significantly (over .50) are the entertainment and excitement variables.

Beyond the general scope of each factor a number of interesting observations may be made about the contribution each factor makes towards explaining the variation in specific variables. A number of variables load moderately on two factors while others are explained by none of the factors. The response most often given to the question of why one watched the convention—"to see who would win the nomination"—was attributed to "none of the above," perhaps because there was little original variation to be explained. Little may also be said about star-gazers. Watching to see how TV people covered the event failed to correlate highly with any of the factors.

At the other extreme were viewing to decide who to vote for, to participate in current events, to feel pride in the democratic process and to be able to talk about the convention and current events with friends. While each except for "vote help" loaded primarily on either the instrumental or social factors, the secondary loading are also worthy of note. These two factors are obviously far from independent. With this necessary caveat noted it may be concluded that the indicators of motivations behind exposure to the convention cluster into four primary groups: 1) an instrumental involvement with politics mostly specific
to the election; 2) a less intense, more socially oriented, form of following and keeping current with politics that is less directly associated with the election; 3) an even less instrumentally oriented group of motivations that concentrates on the excitement and entertainment value of politics; and 4) a set of reasons that are totally non-instrumental as they relate to politics. The next section of this chapter looks at similarities and differences in the factor structure of the motivations for exposure to the first Ford-Carter debate.
Factor Analysis of Motivations for Debate Viewing

A five factor solution, accounting for 59 percent of the total variation in the set of indicators, was found to best represent the 17 statements presented to debate viewers. As the factor analytic technique works by extracting common variation, the resulting factor solution takes note particularly of the two variables added to the convention module and less so of the three items deleted from the battery of items focusing on exposure to the conventions.

This factor solution does however show a considerable degree of overlap with the solution derived from the convention motivations. The first factor is the non-purposive dimension prominently evident above. The highest loadings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>% Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The items deleted in a previous lack of foresight were "to relax and calm down from the earlier part of the day," "so I wouldn't have to be doing other things I should be doing," and "to help me forget my problems for awhile." The items added were, "to root for my candidate," and "because everybody else I know was going to watch the debate." The items deleted are less critical since all tapped the same dimension in the case of the convention and two of those five indicators remaining define the non-purposive factor in this case also.
of .76 and .61 are the "to pass the time" and "just to watch television" indicators. Correlating less robustly was the motivation of watching to spend time with family and/or friends (.32). The general surveillance measure of watching to keep up with the election process was negatively associated with this factor (-.39).

The second factor strongly resembles the instrumental political factor. The hard and soft knowledge items of learning where the candidates stand on the issues and getting to know the candidates better as people define this factor, along with those who sought information to help them come to a decision on whom to support in the election. This is more of a pure "learning" factor than was found in the case of the convention. The surveillance and civic duty component of the convention's instrumental factor is much weaker here.

This may be due to the emergence of a separate "personal involvement" factor. (And this may in turn be due to the addition of the "root for my candidate" variable.) The third factor contains the "rooting" variable, along with identification with one's party and feelings of pride in the democratic process. This factor explains slightly over half of the variation in the former two variables and one quarter of the variation in the latter.

The loadings on this factor indicate less a searching out of information as factor 2 seems to be, but a dimension
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>COMMUNALITY</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass the time.</td>
<td>.621</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just to watch television.</td>
<td>.401</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time with family/friends.</td>
<td>.473</td>
<td>.478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All my friends watching.</td>
<td>.374</td>
<td>.319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify with my party.</td>
<td>.583</td>
<td>.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root for my candidate.</td>
<td>.657</td>
<td>.166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be entertained</td>
<td>.582</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know candidates as people.</td>
<td>.458</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See who would win debate.</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide how to vote.</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See how TV people cover debate.</td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>-.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy excitement of the debate.</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>-.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel pride in the Democratic process.</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>-.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about debate with friends.</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>-.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn candidates' issue positions.</td>
<td>.281</td>
<td>-.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in current events.</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>-.251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up with election process.</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>-.395</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

--- = Highest factor loading for variable.
----- = Secondary loading—explains at least 10 percent of the variance in variable.
of deep personal involvement with the election contest. Viewers here are less independent-minded citizens wheeling their shopping carts down the aisles of ideas than advocates of particular product brands--be they parties or candidates.

The play factor identifies itself among the reasons given for watching the debate although it is more strongly associated with entertainment (.72) than excitement (.40). This is probably due to the differences in the nature of the convention and debates as the gaiety and pagentry that marked the conventions was clearly absent from the somber debate.

The final factor that emerges from the debate motivations is a purer social factor than was evident when the focus of study was the conventions. The variable to be able to talk about the debates and current events marked this factor the most clearly (.67). The other indicator finding a home on this factor was the added variable "because all my friends were watching (.41).

The factor solution for debate motivations is less clear-cut than that of the conventions. While the same general dimensions emerged in each analysis there were a greater number of variable that found themselves unable to be simplified on a single factor. The motivations of viewing to keep up with the election process, and to participate in current events were explained by a combination of two or three factors, as were (to a lesser extent) the
reasons to feel pride in the democratic process, because friends were watching and spending time with ones family and friends. The low communalities on viewing to see who would win and to see how TV newspeople participate in and cover the debate indicate that none of the factors do particularly well in explaining the variation in these motivations.
FACTOR INTERRELATIONSHIPS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Factor scales were computed for the four dimensions of convention viewing and five dimensions of debate viewing. All variables were weighted proportionally to their contribution to each factor. The standardized value of individuals' scores on each variable was then multiplied by the factor weight for the variable. Through this process (Rummel, 1970) each individual was assigned a score on each of the nine factors.

While any names given the factors are somewhat arbitrary and perhaps misleading the following labels are given the factors to codify the above discussion. Convention viewing factored into 1) political, 2) non-political, 3) social and 4) play dimensions. Debate viewing labels are 1) non-purposive, 2) political instrumental (hereafter called political, 3) personal involvement (hereafter called involvement), 4) play and 5) social. It should be recalled that the political dimension to the convention viewing incorporated aspects of both the political and involvement dimensions of convention viewing. The correlations between debate and convention viewing factors are displayed in Table 22.

While the two factor analyses produced general agreement on the types of viewing motivations it is
premature to conclude that individual respondents viewed the conventions and debate for the same reason. While there is no hard and fast rule on what should be taken as evidence of stability in individuals' motivations across the two times it is not unreasonable to expect that the correlation between convention factor A and debate factor A should be higher than the correlation between convention A and debate B, C, D or E. This criteria is clearly met only with the non-purposive and play factors. The convention social factor is associated as strongly with the debate political factor as it is with the convention factor. Moreover the highest single correlation is between the convention political and debate involvement factor.

TABLE 22 INTER-CORRELATIONS\textsuperscript{a} OF CONVENTIONS AND DEBATE FACTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Convention</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Non-Purposive</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>political</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-purposive</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involvement</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. coefficients are Kendall's tau-b.

Two explanations may be considered, both of which undoubtedly contain elements of truth. The first is primarily methodological and recognizes that different components went into the factors, and that data were collected on different variables for the conventions and debates.
The second explanation invokes the theoretical underpinnings of the uses and gratifications model. This explanation would argue that as the convention and debates were different communicative stimuli responses would be expected to be different. People have different expectations, and make different uses of the different forms of programming.

The resolution of this conflict is a key one for if the theoretical argument prevails many of the empirical studies operationalizing the uses and gratifications approach with measures of "exposure to political programming in general" are called into question even while the "correctness" of the approach is strengthened.

In order to illuminate this question factor analyses were performed using only the variables that were common to both the convention and debate. The results did not differ from those reported earlier with the same four dimensions of convention viewing and five dimensions of debate viewing emerging as have been previously identified.

Even more telling evidence is found by gleaning the correlation between respondents' scores on the specific motivations common to the conventions and debates (Table 23). Of the 14 common variables only two correlate over .5

---

As noted earlier, the first debate was an intense 90 minute direct confrontation between the two Presidential candidates. In contrast the conventions were intra-party affairs spread over a duration of days with the candidates themselves being present only for a short time.
and three at .4. Thus while there is undoubtedly some methodological artifact in the findings, and while the general dimensions of usage are similar, both the conventions and debates owned unique structures of viewer exposure. The convention and debates were two very different events and viewers watched for different reasons.

**TABLE 23**  
**CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PARALLEL CONVENTION AND DEBATE VARIABLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>identify with party</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep up with election process</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be able to talk with friends</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel pride in democratic process</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel I am participating in current events</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get to know the candidates as people</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be entertained</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>help me decide how to vote</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to enjoy the excitement</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to pass the time</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to see TV coverage</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>just to watch television</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to spend time with family and friends</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to learn where the candidates stand on issues</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Substantive reasons reflecting the differences of the conventions and debates as types of programming should also be taken note of as reasons for the low correlations between parallel indicators. Certainly viewers would expect to learn more about the candidates' stands on issues from the debate given the direct Ford-Carter confrontation and program format. (and also from their mere presence.)

Similarly people might have in fact planned to spend time with family and friends watching the debate together.
The debate was a meticulously scheduled 90 minute program that promised to be an important, if not exciting, event in the 1976 election. People expected other people to watch; unlike the convention which ran 25-plus hours on television, had a looser time schedule of "important" or interesting events such as the balloting and acceptance speeches, and in which people were generally less interested.

The heavy drama of the debate in the showdown between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter may also have been responsible for the relatively low correlation between the excitement and entertainment indicators at the two time points. As the data on peoples' recall of the conventions strongly suggested (Chapter 3) it was the behavior of the delegates that was the focal point of the convention viewers. One might expect, therefore that relative to each other the convention viewers might have expected the convention to be more entertaining and debate viewers would have expected the debate to be more exciting. However, the marginal distributions show only a seven percentage point difference between convention and debate viewers across both entertainment and excitement. While the differences are in the expected direction their sizes are well within the realm of sampling error. Thus this explanation is bolstered by little support from the data and other explanations such as the possible unreliability of single indicators should be kept in mind.

\[15\text{See Table 16.}\]
While the correlation coefficients are generally lower than expected there is some evidence of internal validity in their orderings. As just discussed, those weakest in association (at the bottom of Table 23) were those most amenable to being influenced by the unique characters of the conventions and debates. Those variables of a more significant empirical linkage are less likely to have changed with the type of programming. One could easily identify with her party through viewing the party itself (the convention) or the party's representative staunchly defending it (the debate). Even Republicans who viewed the Democratic convention would find enough talk of "November's opponent" to have partisan identification reinforced. The next highest correlations, to keep up with the election process, to be able to talk with friends, and to feel pride in the democratic process all apply more to the taking place of the event than the nature of the event. While the debate was undoubtedly a "bigger" event, one would expect the time 1 to time 2 correlations to be stronger under this circumstance.

As the factor scales shall be the primary independent variables in the next chapter it is helpful to first explore some of their characteristics and biases. Table 24 presents a demographic overview of each of the factors on interest, age, education, sex, income and base of factual information.
The most general conclusion that may be drawn from these data is that none of the factors is well identified by any demographic variable. Thirty of the 54 correlation coefficients are under .10 and an additional 16 range between .10 and .19. Thus the motivations for exposure to political communications are largely independent of socio-economic characteristics. This recalls the findings of Lazarsfeld and colleagues who argued that (communication) opinion leaders were diffused throughout all strata in the society.

**TABLE 24 DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF FACTOR SCALES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>In-terest^a</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Edu-ca-tion</th>
<th>Sex^b</th>
<th>In-</th>
<th>Inform-a-tion^c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Convention</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Political</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Non-purposive</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Social</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Play</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>--Political</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Non-purposive</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Social</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Play</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Involvement</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. The question measuring interest was specific to following the Presidential election campaign.

b. A positive correlation indicates females were more likely than males to score highly on the factors.

c. This is an information index, with a quite narrow definition of information. Respondents were asked the term of office of a U.S. Senator, the number of Senators in the Senate, and which party held a majority of Senate seats. All variables contributed equally to the index.
Interest in the campaign was positively related, although only slightly, to political reasons for following the conventions and debates, as well as to the personal involvement dimension of the debate. Interest was also negatively related to non-purposive motivations for following political programming. The social factor was related to interest as strongly as was the political factor, lending support to the contention advanced earlier that interest may be more than a uni-dimensional concept, as the guiding force behind social viewers was a desire to be able to talk with friends about current political events.

While older viewers were slightly more likely than younger viewers to watch the conventions for political reasons and younger viewers more likely to watch the debate for play reasons, age explains little of the variation in the factor scales. The same may be said about education, sex, income and knowledge. While minor differences exist it is clear that these communication variables are not merely surrogates for demographic variables.
may be more precisely defined by the type of exposure, such as for social, political, entertainment or non-purposive reasons. Including motivational factors allows for research questions phrased with stronger probabilistic leanings, such as "Under what conditions is an (anticipated) effect more or less likely to occur?" Should motivations for exposure prove to be an efficacious intervening variable much of the literature yielding "minimal effects" findings would be in need of re-examination.

The state of the art of uses/gratifications research is not such that elaborate hypotheses may be immediately formulated and tested. In many ways this study is akin to an initial well sunk into the sea floor. There is good reason to expect oil, but the size and contour of the deposit is largely unknown. The most reasonable strategy is to "grop[e] with sensitivity," extract a sample, and try to make some sense out of it.

The following analysis considers the dimensions of viewing associated with the conventions and debates as independent variables. These variables are used to explain variation in exposure and recall of the conventions and debates, previously considered in chapters three and four. The specific propositions tested are detailed later.

In the following analysis it if often necessary to use the dimensions resulting from the factor analysis in physical controls or in some form requiring discrete
groupings. The limited sample size necessitated very gross collapsing of each factor. All factors have been trichotomized to yield a sufficient number of respondents for analysis in each sub-group. The collapsing of factor scales was done in a manner designed to group roughly equal thirds of the sample in each category. A consequence of this procedure is that results will be more conservative than if the data were able to provide a larger number of more homogeneous groups. It is often the case that the respondent groupings are sufficiently small that the data are at best suggestive rather than ever being conclusive, and no claims are being made as to their generalizability.
DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING AND THE CONVENTIONS

In returning to the nominating conventions a number of hypotheses may be generated concerning the relationship of the four dimensions of viewing to the various dependent variables considered. These dependent variables include: 1) the amount of exposure to the conventions; 2) the ability to recall something from the conventions; 3) the content of the recollection; and 4) the affective character of the recollection.

1. Exposure to the Conventions. Expectations here are that those individuals who viewed for political reasons or social reasons should view a greater number of hours than did those who viewed for non-purposive reasons or reasons of play. Political viewers may be more interested in politics and have a greater desire to be informed about political events. Social viewers were also shown to have a greater interest in the election than viewers motivated by other concerns (Table 24) and should be expected to have viewed a greater number of hours as they expected (relatively speaking) to use the conventions as a topic in social discourse. Non-purposive viewers, one suspects, would watch least as they have turned on the television almost despite the presence of the conventions. An inverse relationship
is also expected in relationship to score on the "play" scale as the convention might be expected to rapidly evaporate its entertainment or excitement component. The hypothesis is that those interested in the conventions for these reasons will have less of a reason to keep viewing than those who watch for political or social reasons.

By and large these are the patterns that emerge from the data displayed in Table 25 despite the crude measurement strategy of splitting the sample into thirds on each dimension. The average number of hours of both conventions viewed shows a monotonic decrease as categories of respondents on the political dimension goes from high to low. This is accelerated when the control of partisanship is added. The hypothesis concerning the social factor also is confirmed, except in the case of Democrats viewing the Republican convention.

The conclusion drawn regarding the non-purposive factor also conform to expectations, although the observed differences are less than might be expected. A reason for this may be the peculiar operationalization used. Given the marginal distributions of the indicators that characterize this factor (see Chapter 5) non-purposive reasons do not strongly apply to one-third of the sample. A larger sample that would allow closer scrutiny of a more finely graduated "non-purposive" group of viewers would probably demonstrate the more dramatic differences in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Republican Convention</th>
<th>Democratic Convention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Republicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( \overline{x} ) (n)</td>
<td>( \overline{x} ) (n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>8.9 107</td>
<td>11.4 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>6.9 107</td>
<td>7.9 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4.3 109</td>
<td>4.4 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Purposive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>6.2 108</td>
<td>7.2 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>6.5 123</td>
<td>7.0 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7.6 92</td>
<td>11.4 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>8.5 106</td>
<td>9.3 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>7.1 109</td>
<td>8.8 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4.5 108</td>
<td>6.8 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>6.7 107</td>
<td>8.6 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>7.1 108</td>
<td>9.0 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6.3 108</td>
<td>7.4 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
exposure. Expectations of the play factor were not upheld, with absences of monotonic relationships marking this viewing dimension for both the Republican and Democratic conventions.

2. Recall of the Conventions. The hypotheses that may be made here are consistent with the previous section. The more that either political or social reasons motivated viewers' involvement the more likely individuals should be to recall something from the convention. There should be an inverse relationship between the ability to recall something and non-purposive reasons for viewing. No formal inferences are made about the ranking of viewers on the play factor. As discussed earlier (Chapter 3) convention coverage often resembles a collage of anecdotes and vi­nettes of "delegate life." Viewers scoring highly on the play scale thus would be afforded a good deal of "content" to remember which would be consonant with their initial reason for watching the convention(s). Moreover, as viewers located at the lower end of the scale may be watching for political or social reasons no linear re­lationship is hypothesized.

While the ranking of factor groups on recall of the conventions differ across the Democratic and Republican versions, some general observations may be made. Those

---

1As noted earlier this same argument applies to all di­mensions.
whose viewing was motivated by social reasons were among the most likely to have retained something of the conventions. This fits in nicely with the "anticipated communication" component of this dimension. Those in the lowest third of the social factor were the least able to recall anything from both the Republican and Democratic gatherings. In fact in the Republican case the "social—low" group trailed the next lowest group by nine percentage points in recalling a convention happening. On the aggregate, the social component appeared to be the best predictor of whether or not respondents retained anything from the conventions, more so than even political motivations.

TABLE 26 DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING BY ABILITY TO RECALL SOMETHING ABOUT THE CONVENTIONS

Percent Able to Recall Something about\textsuperscript{a}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Republican Convention</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Democratic Convention</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social—high</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>Non-purposive—low</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play—high</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Social—high</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political—med.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Political—med.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-purposive—low</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>Play—high</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social—med.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Political—high</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political—high</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Play—low</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-purposive—med.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Social—med.</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-purposive—high</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Non-purposive—med.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play—med.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Play—med.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political—low</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Non-purposive—high</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play—low</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Political—low</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social—low</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Social—low</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{a. The total base of respondents is 323 for the Republican and 321 for the Democratic convention. Approximately one-third are in each category of all factors.}
The political factor is not related in a monotonic fashion to the ability to recall something from either convention. The "medium" category ranks first followed by the "high" and "low" categories with roughly equal intervals separating the categories. However, the small percentage differences coupled with the measurement strategy neither permits the hypothesis regarding this dimension of viewing to be confirmed nor totally refuted.

Non-purposive viewing was related to recall in the expected manner. Those scoring highly on this scale were found at the bottom of the recall ladder while recall was high among those people scoring in the bottom third of this scale. Like the social indicator the relationship is linear in both cases of convention viewing.

The play factor also conforms to expectations -- only because there were no expectations associated with it. In the Republican case 72 percent of those in the top third recalled something, as did 57 and 54 percent of those respectively in the medium and low groupings. In the Democratic case the scores of the high, medium and low groups are 43, 38 and 42 percent respectively. Thus as was the case with the amount of hours viewed this factor remains undistinguished; either with no unique properties or its properties hidden.

3. The Content of the Recollections. It may be recalled that the analysis of respondents' recollections of the
convention grouped responses into eight categories. While it might be expected that non-purposive viewers would be more likely to recall general behavior, or play viewers recall celebrities and candidates' families, or political viewers would be more likely to recall platforms or issues, the search for differences in content according to motivations yielded few regularities. In fact, a goodly number of the trichotomized dimensions of viewing exhibited curvilinear (or random) tendencies.

The many response categories over which the factor groupings were divided reduced the base of the n-size to the point where only extremely large differences between categories of the independent variable could be considered meaningful. There were no differences of this magnitude (such as 20 percent between categories). Thus there appeared to be little among differences in the content of the recollection that co-varied with motivational predispositions. Whether this is in fact the case or partially attributable to the limitations of this data base and coarseness of operationalizations remains an empirical question deserving of study.

4. The Affective Character of the Recollection. While the specific referent of the convention recall is important

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These were: Party, Convention style/delegate behavior, Speakers, Convention selection/outcome, Families and celebrities, Platform/issues, Candidates' personal characteristics, Television and "other."
in order to learn what respondents focused on, the affective character is equally important for it gives insight into how people think about politics in more general terms. Moreover as the realities of one's life may leave little time for the specifics of politics, this more general view may also be a more realistic view.

At issue here too is the possibility raised earlier of tapping orientations through observing communicative behavior. Specific hypotheses regarding the relationship of viewing dimensions to affect come easily for the political and non-purposive factors. One does not expect those who watch because they have nothing better to do to be positively engaged with either what they are viewing or the political system in general. Thus the stronger the non-purposive component the more likely the rememberance is to be negative in character. Those whose viewing is strongly motivated for political reasons are more likely to a) feel they have a stake in the outcome; and/or b) feel they should or want to be informed; and/or c) feel pride or some attachment to their political system via viewing. This should translate into positive engagement and it is thus not unreasonable to hypothesize these individuals are more likely to recall something positive from the conventions than are those who viewing is less predicated on political reasons.
It is slightly harder to formulate hypotheses about the social and play dimensions. The principal component of anticipated communication gives little clue to social viewing. One could suppose affect would be negative as the growth of cynicism and mistrust of politicians in the culture might be reflected as a dominant theme in conversations. On the other hand the components of "feeling involved" and the positive association with interest in the campaign may be reflected in positive affect. On balance the "social dimension"--"affect" relationship is expected to be positive for many of the reasons outlined in the discussion of the political factor. The play factor is expected to be related to negative affect; although not as strongly as the non-purposive factor. While recalling something that entertained or excited a viewer may be said to be neutral in character, one would probably not expect a viewer who watches for these reasons to accord the political process a good deal of dignity or respect.

As the data in Table 27 indicate the hypotheses concerning the political and non-purposive factors are supported. Those in the top third on the non-purposive factor and on the bottom third of the political factor were among the most negative in their recall of both conventions. The inverse was also true except in the case of the non-purposive scale and the Democratic convention. It should also be noted that these findings are more "general
### TABLE 27  DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING AND AFFECT OF CONVENTION RECOLLECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Republican Convention--Affect</th>
<th>Democratic Convention--Affect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nega-</td>
<td>Neur-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Purposive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
tendencies" than "dramatic characteristics" of these two dimensions.

The expectations of the social factor's behavior were less strongly supported. In the Republican case there is little to differentiate those in the top and middle thirds. However these two groups differ from those in the lower third in the manner hypothesized. The expected pattern of responses unveils itself only for negative affect in the Democratic case, as the lower one scored on the scale the more likely was negative affect to characterize the remembrances. The positive affect side of the ledger was curvilinear, although those in the bottom third were the least likely to have a positive cast to their glances of the convention. Expectations were not confirmed regarding the play dimension of viewing, as differences between the three categories were either minimal, non-monotonic, or both.

A number of general conclusions may be made concerning the relationship between the dimensions of viewing and convention variables. First, and most important, is the simple fact that there are observable differences in "scores" on dependent variables according to peoples' motivations for watching the national nominating conventions. While the tests are not overly rigorous, nor the differences overly dramatic, given the grossness and conservative nature of operationalizations almost any differences are
certainly suggestive if not significant. Moreover that the differences are in the hypothesized direction (in the direction of common sense) advocates of the uses and gratifications approach can take some degree of solace in these data.

As a set of specifying conditions (or filters) the inclusion of motivational attitudes certainly adds information beyond that which a simple dichotomous concept of exposure (yes, no) yields. Moreover the motivations add as much to questions such as simple exposure to the conventions as does the more hallowed attitude of partisanship; and when used in conjunction with partisanship a more powerful model of political communication is clearly evident.

Finally, the differences in how people recalled the conventions (affect) indicate that it may in fact be possible to unearth general orientations towards politics by carefully observing the communicative behavior of individuals. While the observed relationships (for the political and non-purposive factors) are not overly compelling, they are at least an inviting avenue for a future line of inquiry.
DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING AND THE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

The analysis in this section reconsiders the debate effects discussed in Chapter 4 in light of the five dimensions associated with the debate-viewing. The dependent variables are 1) the focus of peoples' recollections; 2) the affective character of those recollections; and 3) respondents' subjective evaluations of whether or not the series of debates had any effect on their voting plans.

1. The Focus of Recollections about the Debate. Responses to the question of "what stood out" about the first Presidential debate were classified into one of three groups—"debate performance," "personal image," or "issue"—in the analysis in Chapter 4. As the personal image category was a minor category (13 percent of all responses) responses falling into this category have been divided among the other two categories to reduce the complexity of tables to be presented. This editing procedure yields a dichotomous "issue—style" dependent variable. The warning that these data should be taken as not more than "suggestive" should be repeated, as the total number of respondents distributed across the three codes of the exposure independent variables is approximately 100 in the case of the debates.
If these data were considered in ignorance of the analysis of convention content and viewer motivations one would expect that viewing for political reasons would be positively associated with recalling substantive cognitions (issues) from the debate, while the inverse would be true for non-purposive viewing. The empirical experience with the content of recollections from the convention, on the other hand, would lead one to expect little differences in substantive—stylistic comments between the various levels of communication dimensions.

Hypotheses about the relationships of the social and play factors to debate rememberances are more ambiguous. The stronger the play motivation, according to one line of thinking, the more likely would stylistic responses be to dominate recall. Viewers seeking to be entertained or excited would probably be more likely to find that need satisfied in how Ford and Carter confronted each other rather than by the proposed programs and disagreements on policies and goals with which they confronted each other. However, sharp policy disagreements may in fact create the conflict that entertains or excites and thus individuals viewing for different amounts of the "play" reason may not differ. Similarly one might find the ingredients for social discourse on either issue or stylistic bases.

As was the case in the consideration of recall from the nominating conventions, the various dimensions and
and levels of viewer motivations demonstrate little power in explaining response variation. While monotonic except in the non-purposive case, differences among categories are not strongly linear, often lacking differences between all three categories, observable differences are also quite small relative to sample size. While it is possible—and and likely—that measurement error and coarseness masks differences among categories, these data do not present a convincing case that peoples' motivations in exposing themselves to a communicative stimulus is solidly linked to what they recall from that stimulus. However, given the data and caveats of method, there is enough support that pursuing this line of inquiry is prudent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Focus of Recollection</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Purposive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>(31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The Affective Character of Viewer Recollections. It is expected that political and social motivations for viewing will be positively related to favorable affect, while the stronger the play or non-purposive components the more likely the rememberance will be to be negative in character. The bases of these hypotheses are the same as was detailed in the case of conventions. The involvement direction is not tested in this case as the data base is inadequate. The components involved in this dimension presume that viewers either have a party or candidate as champion. Accordingly the object of the affect would have to be considered to fairly test this dimension. Two pro-Ford viewers, one of whom commented on Carter while the other addressed his attentions to Ford would most likely have given comments that would respectively have been classified as negative and positive in affective character. As the pool of respondents is not large enough to reliably include the linkage of affect, partisan or candidate predisposition and object of recall, the involvement factor is deleted from this segment of the analysis.

The political factor behaves as expected, although the relationship is moderate rather than strong. Those in the top third of the scale were the most positive and offered the fewest disparaging comments. There was, however, little difference between the two groups at the bottom of the scale in negative affect (about 70 percent
of the comments in each group were negative).

The non-purposive scale also behaved as expected in monotonic fashion. For those of whom this was a strong viewing motivation 75 percent recalled something negative about the initial Carter--Ford meeting, as did 63 percent in the middle range and 59 percent of those for whom this motivation was least important. As the marginal distributions indicated that non-purposive viewing was a major factor in exposure for perhaps less than 15 percent of the sample it is the difference between those scoring "high" on this factor and "others" that demands primary attention. Moreover, it is worth noting that even the top third includes those for whom the non-purposive motivation was not particularly strong. Thus purer measures and a more adequate data base would more likely reveal even sharper differences than those observed.

Expectations concerning the social factor are also upheld. Those in the top third volunteered the most positive and least negative recollections, while those in the bottom third were the most negative and least positive in their rememberences of the debate of any of the 12 groups presented in Table 29. Slightly over half of those viewing primarily for social reasons characterized the debate derogatorily, as did about 80 percent of those for whom social viewing was least important. As was the case of the conventions, expectations of the play factor's
behavior were not upheld. There were no differences between categories, with the play factor remaining undistinguished and proving to be of little value as a specifying condition.

TABLE 29 DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING AND AFFECTIVE RECOLLECTION OF THE FIRST DEBATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Affect of Recollection</th>
<th>Total (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Purposive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Respondents' Evaluations of the Debates' Effects. Respondents participating in the third wave of the survey (conducted after the third Presidential debate) were asked if they thought the debates had any effect on how they planned to vote in the election. While this measure is obviously more subjective than looking at vote preference across two time points it serves as a measure of the degree to which respondents were open to change and the extent to which they felt something they had heard or seen altered their impressions of at least one of the two candidates.
The theory behind looking at responses to this question across dimensions of viewing is that different reasons for exposure should be differentially associated with the likelihood of change relative to potential consequences of exposure.

One expects, for example, that those seeking information (those scoring highly on the political factor) would be the most likely to change their views as a result of something they heard or saw while viewing the debates. Conversely, a low score on the political factor should be an indicator of lack of interest in acquiring new information about the candidates or parties. It is expected that these viewers would be the least likely to feel the series of debates had any effects on how they planned to vote.

The inverse is expected in the case of viewers whose primary motivation for exposure was non-political in character, or "non-purposive." However two points should qualify this hypothesis. First, given the small proportion of truly non-purposive viewers, the distance between the top and middle thirds of this scale should be larger than between the middle and bottom third. The second point is that there is some evidence that would lead one to expect that differences should not be great, as a body of evidence supports theories of "passive learning." That is, people acquire information even when it is not their express
purpose to do so (Krugman and Hartley, 1970-71).

An impressive example of this phenomenon comes from a survey of New Jersey residents conducted by Rutgers University's Eagleton Institute shortly after the 1977 primary election. The Poll, administered in the 10 days immediately following New York's Mayorality run-off election, found that 61 percent of those living in the area of the state served by New York television correctly named Ed Koch as the victor. Among state residents served by Philadelphia television only 16 percent were able to name Koch. The interesting factor is that interest in the New York mayoralty race was roughly even in both areas of the state. Thus even those who were uninterested acquired substantial information as a result of simple exposure. The difference between those high on the non-purposive factor but low on the political factor (in terms of hypothesized different effects) is that the former group does not particularly care about acquiring information while the latter has more expressly disavowed any such interest.

The "passive learning"--"inadvertent audience" notions may also be applied to the play factor in formulating expectations. This makes for muddled predictions about the

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3This was more than were able to name the Republican candidate for Governor in New Jersey--which lacks an in-state VHF television station --and only eight percent less than could name the incumbent Governor, the Democratic candidate.
behavior of people at the various categories of this variable. One line of thought is that people for whom entertainment/excitement is a key component of exposure would be fairly likely to change vote intentions as they are less likely to be firmly anchored to a party or candidate. Conversely, these same people may show the least amount of movement as there is a relative absence of a search for information behind their viewing. On balance it is expected that "play" and "effects on vote" will be inversely correlated, but without firm conviction.

The relationship between viewing for social reasons and the likelihood of change is hypothesized to be positive. When asked whether they had "talked about the (first) debate with friends or people at work" three-quarters of those at the top of this scale said that they had, compared to 64 percent of those in the mid-range and only 40 percent of those at the bottom of the scale. The greater amount of discussion of what was seen and heard adds to the possibility of views being reappraised. Simply put, the more people share views of what they have experienced the greater the probability of being exposed to contrary interpretations and the greater the potential for change.

Finally, an inverse relationship is expected between the involvement factor and subjective evaluations of the debates' impact on individuals' votes. The argument here is that those who were most heavily involved in a personal
way rooting for a candidate or party are the least likely to reappraise their position. These individuals have a good deal of ego-involvement in their viewing and are thus also likely to hold attitudes that are highly central, salient and difficult to change. Accordingly, those lowest on the involvement dimension should admit to being affected most. A problem with this relationship is that there is doubtlessly some confusion over what is an "effect." Certainly some respondents—and most likely those at the top of the involvement scale—answered affirmatively that the debate had the effect of strengthening their commitment to a candidate. (The question asked about "effects" rather than "changes of vote intention.") This obviously confound this test to a degree and should make results more conservative to the extent of its occurrence. 4

The data in Table 30 offer strong support of the hypothesis advanced in the case of political viewers. Almost half (46 percent) of those in the top group felt the debates had some effect on how they planned to vote compared to 19 percent in the middle category and 13 percent of those in the bottom third of the scale. The 46 percent is the highest figure and 13 percent the lowest

4At the same time after listening to hundreds of interviews asking similar questions I am convinced that the great bulk of the population interprets the question asking about effects as asking if they changed their minds.
of all 15 groupings. Thus the motivational factor in this case proves to be a powerful intermediary variable in an exposure effects relationship.

TABLE 30
DIMENSIONS OF VIEWING AND SUBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF DEBATES' IMPACT ON VOTE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>% Saying That Vote Was Effected by Series of Debates&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>(n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>(32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Purposive</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>(31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>(29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>(29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>(29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>(28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Med.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>(31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> The question referred to was asked on the third wave after the series of debates had been completed and read, "Do you think the debates had any effect on how you plan to vote?" The figures reported are the percentage of those who answered in the affirmative.

Those in the upper level of the social scale were also more likely to feel the debates had an effect on how they planned to vote than were those at lower levels of social viewing. While the scores at the extreme ends of the scale were not as large as among political viewers, the relationship is monotonic. While one would not want to
attach particular weight to the specific figures in view of the respondent pool's size and less than optimal operationalizations, it is the general direction of the relationship that is significant. Those who viewed the debates for reasons of social contact in fact did engage in more inter-personal communication about the debates, and were more likely to have had their voting decision affected by the debates than were those for whom this was less of a reason for viewing.

The pattern of data only partially supports the hypothesized "involvement" relationship, perhaps due to the possible source of confoundment discussed earlier. Those who were least involved with the debate/campaign in a personal way were the most likely of the three groups to have said the debates had an impact on their vote. However, there was no difference between the two top groups; and the range of scores is slight. Twenty-one percent of those most involved said their vote was effected as did 36 percent of those who were least involved.

The hypotheses concerning the non-purposive and play factors were not supported. There was no difference between the three categories of the non-purposive dimension, with 29, 24 and 26 percent of the groups (moving respectively from high to low) indicating their voting decision had been affected by the debate. The play factor performs as it has in the past--almost randomly. The
relationship is curvilinear with those in the middle category far more likely to have felt their voting decision to have been affected by the debate.
DISCUSSION

The flag on which the uses and gratifications emblem was embroidered was hoisted into the winds provided by the conventions and debates. And it flew. It did not fly magnificently; nor did it fly gracefully. It just rippled from time to time in intermittent gusts. Yet it is worthwhile remembering that the embroidery was coarse and cumbersome, and no doubt weighted the flag down to the point where only strong gales could reasonably be expected to cause minor movement. In this primitive actualization of the approach the focus of attention should be on the existence of movement rather than the amount. What should be read from these findings is not the existence of "new knowledge," so much as its potential.

One of the potential benefits of the Uses and Gratifications approach, as a set of specifying conditions to further define and subset exposure—→ effects relationships, seems promising in the light of data in this chapter. In both cases, of the conventions and debates, there was ample variation in the various dependent variables that was related in logical common-sense ways to the reasons people had given for exposing themselves to political programming on television.
As a set of specifying conditions the dimensions of viewing were related to exposure to the conventions, ability to recall something from the conventions, and subjective evaluations of the debates' impact. It is not inconceivable that many of the null findings establishing the "minimal effects" doctrine of media consequences were in part due to the usage of too gross a model of mass communication. A finding, for example, that viewing a political program did not lead to a more knowledgeable sample may be due to a unidimensional conceptualization of exposure that produces a masking effect (Rosenberg, 1968). Using motivations as specifying conditions allows for the exposure → information relationship to be more adequately tested in terms of a probabilistic science where the emphasis is on finding out under what conditions exposure leads to a growth in information. While the operationalization and testing of the Uses and Gratifications approach was a major goal of this study there are a number of implications not only for the study of political communication, but for practitioners of the Uses and Gratifications model, public opinion knowledge of citizen behavior, and more "real political actors" such as candidates, and the political parties. Some of these implications are addressed in the final chapter.
CHAPTER VIII: IMPLICATIONS

This analysis has proceeded through a number of fairly straightforward steps. Five possible explanations why empirical findings often contributed to a "minimal effects" doctrine of television (and political communication in general) influences were outlined. Two of these reasons -- studying political television at a time likely to uncover only minimal effects and utilizing an overly-general model of the communications process -- were singled out for more intense study.

The intent of this dissertation was to test these biases. After examining two political events to sketch the parameters of viewer reaction the uses and gratifications paradigm was operationalized and applied to these events. The focus was broadened to include viewer reactions to the conventions and debates as communicative stimuli rather than simply as discrete political events in the political process. It is the contention of this thesis that such a focus is necessary to fully understand both these isolated events and the larger political process.

Rather than systematically reviewing the findings of this research I prefer to focus on a few specific findings.
and discuss (often in a heavily speculative manner) some possible consequences of these findings. I believe there are implications of this research for: 1) the social science study of political communication and political behavior in general; 2) researchers utilizing the uses and gratifications paradigm; and 3) central actors of the political drama — candidates and "the organization" political parties. Many of these implications have been mentioned in their respective sections. This last chapter is a highlighting of findings rather than a general listing.

1. The Social Science Study of Political Communication and General Political Behavior

The results offer favorable testimony in the trial of the Uses and Gratifications approach. When simple exposure was decomposed into qualitative slices there were observable differences in dependent measures in predictable and reasonable ways. Thus one verdict is that social science research on the process of political communication could profit by further model developing and testing. The uses and gratifications approach contributed substantially to this study of the role of television in the political process. It was a tool used for unearthing information about the conduct of politics that is so often buried under the tombstone of "exposure." While this particular paradigm proved useful itself, it also argues the need for a conceptual review of the central elements of political
(or any) communication -- source, message and audience.

The consideration of a multiplicity of public affairs types of programming (Hofstetter, et al., 1976), as noted in the introductory chapter, examples movement in this direction on the concept "source" by considering component parts rather than the general "public affairs programming."

Political Communication research appears to be a juncture in time. The empirical road traveled by many communication researchers has been worn into a rut due to the lack of a firm bedrock of support. More attention should be given to shoring up the theoretical foundation on which the road was build if it is to be quickly, comfortably, or productively traveled.

A smaller effort should also be undertaken "to see what wrongs should be righted." If overly-simple model development is partially responsible for the findings of "minimal effects," studies coming to these (and other) conclusions should be replicated using more sophisticated designs. Which findings were really minimal effects? And which were really masked effects?

The final implication for political communication research is little more than a restatement of the argument that much research has been done at the unfortunate time of the general election. The imagery recalled by those viewing the national nominating conventions added fresh information as to the symbolic functions of the conventions,
citizen learning, and affective attachment to the political system. And there is no doubt that these are but a few nuggets from a mine whose riches may be limited only by the imagination of its prospectors. This vein certainly offers more promise than the one whose shaft begins just before the general election. "Agenda-setting" research is clearly a move in this direction and continued emphasis should be placed on this topic.

While more peripheral, social scientists studying political behavior in general may be intrigued by a suggestion offered by these data—that motivations leading to communicative behavior may be a method of tapping orientations to politics. It should be recalled that the sub-groupings of individuals on various factors did not differ on what they remembered from the conventions or debate. But they did differ on how they remembered the conventions and debate. The differences were in the affective dimension—more general and less well defined than specific cognitions. While it is beyond the design of this study and scope of this dissertation to investigate the consequences of this finding, this may prove to be valuable in future research. Orientations are seeded more deeply in the individual than are attitudes. A wide range of attitudes and behaviors may be predicted from the more general orientations. One who is cynical about politics or distrustful of government is, for example, less likely
to feel efficacious and less likely to vote. It may be that cynicism is one of a number of attitudes held by individuals who have a distinct approach, or orientation, to politics. The possibility that this and other orientations might be measurable by accounting for communicative behavior (how much and why one views, reads and discusses politics) should be given place on the research agenda.

This study also offers something more tangible than an ephemeral notion of "tapping orientations" to those interested in political behavior. It offers information on the two broad questions of "How people think about politics?" and "Why they pay attention to it?" The answers to the more commonly asked questions of "What do people feel or think about some person or object?" can be more fully understood if they are put in a larger context. The questions of "How" and "Why" people engage themselves with the political system may provide that context, in addition to being intrinsically interesting questions.
2. **Researchers Utilizing the Uses and Gratifications Paradigm.**

The above section presented the "good" news to those scholars employing a uses-gratifications approach. Now here is the bad. The differences in individuals' usage of television from the conventions to the debates indicates that a) uses are more program specific than many studies have considered; or b) measures commonly used by practitioners of this approach have serious reliability problems. Whichever explanation, or combination thereof, is true, the evidence offered in this thesis calls into serious questions the reliability, validity and generalizability of a goodly number of uses-gratifications studies.

As noted earlier, most of these studies operationalize motivations for exposure by asking individuals why they watch political programming in general or implicitly assume that the reasons leading an individual to watch one particular program hold true for that individual across a wide range of programming. The data from this study of San Franciscans clearly refute both of these generalizations. The differences in motivations for exposure across the two (and as noted earlier, highly disparate) forms of political programming argue that these studies are deficient—even
while the founding assumption of the uses and gratifications studies is strengthened. Usage of the media, in this case television, was in fact dependent on the needs and expectations that each viewer brought with him to the particular viewing situation—not to "political communications" in general. Thus, it is less than clear what studies asking about motivations in general terms are measuring. While this procedure may be a better method for tapping "orientations" to politics it undoubtedly retards the linking of exposure to a political program with the consequences of that exposure.

The second explanation calls the reliability of measures used to tap "uses" into question on grounds of stability. It may be that the conceptualization of uses has been adequate but the operationalizations of this concept are deficient. Given the relationships between a factor representing a concept of usage and various dependent measures were similar across both the convention and debate—even while individuals' scores on that factor changed from one event to the other—there are indications that these data possess some internal validity. It appears, then, the weight of evidence tips the scales in the direction of the first explanation centering on the program-specific nature of audience uses and gratifications.

No matter which explanation accounts for the low stability of usage indicators a shadow of doubt is cast
over the findings of many use-gratification studies. More skeptical attention should be given to claims of generalizability, and more constructive attention should be given to operationalization of concepts. If the concepts have not been satisfactorily measured the conceptual linkages cannot have been satisfactorily investigated.

The final spate of comments directed specifically to researchers employing the uses-gratifications framework deal with the argument that "the simple mapping of media functions has ceased to be a progressive research endeavor. Emphases should be placed on 1) linking use with the consequence of use; and 2) attempting to draw generalizations from prior studies.

In his Presidential address to the AAPOR fifteen years ago Joseph Klapper chastised functional researchers to move beyond the description of functions to the consideration of consequences for both the individual and society (Klapper, 1963). While the statute of limitations may have elapsed, Klapper's charge is as cogent today as it was years ago. The continued description and mapping of functional inventories adds little to our knowledge of the process of political communication or human behavior. Whatever payoffs come from this exercise are but a fraction of those that would be derived from studies beginning with uses and persevering to consider effects.
The time may also have come to take stock of recent findings of this research tradition. Notwithstanding the methodological problems discussed earlier, increased attention should be given to the derivation of generalizations from empirical studies. We need not argue over the name of a concept such as "alienation," "withdrawal," "cynicism," or "disaffection." First, our indicators are not sufficiently refined to permit such fine conceptual gradation. But more to the point, how useful is this knowledge? It strikes me as more useful to know that different investigators in different research settings have independently documented a certain sized group whose viewing could be called "non-purposive," (or otherwise labelled by a number of names) and that this group behaves differently from groups who view for different reasons. Thus this research tradition seems to be in a position where a concentration on mid-level theory could be highly beneficial.
3. **Central Actors of the Political Drama -- Candidates and "The Organization" Political Parties.**

These data vindicate the evergrowing use of television by national, state and even local candidates for public office. Not only does television allow candidates to communicate with those mildly interested who lack the motivation to actively seek information; but with those totally uninterested who may not even be aware a campaign is on. Theories of persuasion would target those with the most limited base of information as the easiest to tip towards a candidate by reception of new information.

Those with that base are the most likely to be non-viewers, non-purposive viewers, and those viewing for "play" reasons. This not inconsequential portion of the electorate can best be reached by "spot" advertisements, interspersed throughout prime time programming so as to make exposure to at least some campaign information all but avoidable and universal (Atkin, 1972-73).

One implication of this is that candidates may be expected to continue relying heavily on television as the principal means of reaching voters. It is not only cost-effective but is the only means of reaching that strata of the public most susceptible to influence attempts. As
a consequence of exposure coupled with few perceptual barriers to the receipt of information television does have the potential to be a "powerful" medium. Investigations into its effects should center less on the commonly studied attitude change and more on the process of attitude formation.

For example, studies indicate that the debates were "minimally effective" in changing peoples' minds about Jimmy Carter (Sears and Chaffee, 1979). This is a trivial question compared to the one that asks, "How did people form opinions of a man known by less than five percent fully one year before he was inaugurated as President?" People were introduced to Carter long before the debate -- through primary elections and attendant media coverage and the nominating convention. The common-sense assertion that the attitude must be formed before it can change leads back to the argument that much research into media effects has been done when effects should be at ebb tide. Thus the influences of television may be vastly underestimated in the scholarly literature.

The relative absence of viewers' recollections of the convention in terms of political parties and the substantial ill will felt towards the parties are indicators of the parties vulnerability. But one need not even look for this evidence for party weakness. The meteoric rise of Jimmy Carter from an unknown one-term ex-governor with
no public recognition and little political support to the Democratic nominee for President in itself offers testimony to how frail political parties have become. The party has suffered the loss of patronage to civil service, and loss of the nomination function to the direct primary, and the loss of the electioneering function to media specialists and pollsters. Even the adversary function of "the loyal opposition" has been stripped from a once-proud inventory of party functions.

Service in the political party is no longer a necessary condition for a candidate to "get known," to attain the national visibility and support necessary for a first ballot victory. Through the use of advertising and network public affairs coverage of the primaries candidates such as Carter and McGovern have been able to circumvent the formal party organization in mobilizing the electorate. A consequence of the waning power of parties over nominations has been that candidates maintain their personal campaign organizations even after capturing the nomination. Even Richard Nixon, whose renomination in 1972 was never in doubt, eschewed the Republican Party organization for CREEP in mounting his re-election campaign.

The impact of this lies in a recognition that the rules of the game, and conditions for success in playing the game, have changed. Political parties must realize and accept these changes rather than passively waiting for
a "return" to the past. If the Carter success in 1976 is any example, such a return is not forthcoming. Parties must realize and accept that functions they used to perform have been taken over by other actors (through waves of "reform" and technological advancement). If parties are to increase their prominence in the conduct of politics one of two tracks must be taken: 1) they may concentrate on carving out new functions -- or roles -- to perform; or 2) they may compete with the actors who have arrogated the functions formerly played by parties.

An example of the former would be a concentration on constituent services at the local level. In point of fact the parties are presently losing power in this domain, as a greater proportion of Congresspeople are actively staffing and maintaining district offices and constituent services at home. This serves to increase the independence of Congresspeople from party. To the extent candidates compete for nominations, contest elections and maintain communication with constituents independent of party there is little to bind candidates to parties and few sanctions the party can impose on disagreeable representatives. A strong grass roots party -- organized around constituent services -- would give the party some leverage with increasingly autonomous candidates.

Much as the party must compete with its own members if it is to reemerge as a viable institution it must also
compete with outsiders who have encroached into the parties' domain. Parties must be able to offer candidates something if they are to win back some control over those who invoke the label when wooing voters.

The suggestion for parties is captured in the old adage, "If you can't beat 'em join 'em." The parties cannot now beat the public relations firms, media specialists, pollsters and campaign management firms in services they offer to candidates. Political parties must concentrate on developing in-house capacities rivaling the private sector in running campaigns. Should the development of this skill (or service) be supplemented with a stronger grass roots capability, through constituent services or some other means, the parties would again be able to offer attractive services to her candidates.

Parties may also need to take greater risks by taking bolder action in primary contests. If parties were to reemerge as central actors in the nominating process their overall strength would be bolstered. This requires a greater willingness on the part of parties to endorse preferred candidates over others in primary contests. Low turnout primary elections are where "organization" could produce rewards. New Jersey's Hudson County, by way of example, the last of the state's strong Democratic organizations, in part keeps candidates indebted and maintains its power base by working in primary elections. Hudson
County ranked 19th out of New Jersey's 21 counties in percentage of registered voters participating in general elections from 1963 to 1975. However, over this same time period it ranked second in turnout for primary elections. As a result, Democratic candidates in New Jersey consistently find themselves paying "courtesy calls" on the Hudson leadership. Granted, this increased intrusion into intra-party politics is something of a gamble. However, considering the dramatic and continuing atrophy of political parties there is little to be lost at this point.

Finally, it should be again emphasized that the convention and debate data showed a domination of softer personal-image concerns over factual information or issue-orientations. Peoples' recall of the debates indicated that Carter and Ford were judged less on the basis of "Presidential ability" than on the criteria of "television performers," held against the standard of professional actors and other entertainment faire as the Langs suggested a decade ago (Lang and Lang, 1968). Their poor performances, adjudged against these standards may be a reason for the substantial negative coloration to recall from the debate.

While this model of candidate selection is undesirable in the context of Democratic theory it is too simple to indict the networks for their convention coverage or the audience for their standards of judgment during the course
of the debates. This is simply televised politics—with "televised" rather than "politics" being the active word. Television is style, be it entertainment or news; a triumph of form over content.

We get used to seeing style on (non-political) television, with the consequence that everything we see on television—including political television—is seen in terms of style. This does not mean that issues, and what might be termed "substance" when held against the yardstick of democratic theory, is not present. Rather, this is not now our primary focus, if it ever once was. This is a byproduct of politics and campaigning using television, a relatively new element and innovation in our culture. This is the way we now see politics, socialize our children to see it, and—whether we like it or not—we might as well get used to it. At least for the foreseeable future it's here to stay.
APPENDICES

Appendix A contains exact replications of the interview schedules used in all four waves of this study. As such the reader has reference to the exact question wording and sequencing of the interviews.

Appendix B is a truncated listing of all responses given to the open-ended question, "Is there any one thing you saw or read about the (Democratic/Republican) convention that stands out in your mind?"

Appendix C contains matrices of correlations between and among the closed-ended "uses" questions relied upon in this study.
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PLEASE NOTE:

Appendix A contains very small print. Filmed as received.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS.
APPENDIX A: Interview Schedule

Hello, I'm ____________ from the Spencer Research Organization, an opinion research firm in San Francisco. We are conducting a study about people's attitudes towards politics, and towards the candidates for President this year. I would like about 15 minutes of your time. Your responses will be held strictly confidential.

1:10-1:12

I'd like to ask you first about the good and bad points of the two major candidates for President. First, the Democrat. Is there anything in particular about Jimmy Carter that might make you want to vote for him?

1:13-1:15

Is there anything about Carter that might make you want to vote against him?

1:16-1:18

Now the Republican. Is there anything in particular about Gerald Ford that might make you want to vote for him?

1:19-1:21

Is there anything about Ford that might make you want to vote against him?

1:22-1:23

Did you happen to see any of the convention the Republicans held last week on TV? If yes: About how many hours of the convention would you say you watched during the four days it was on?

0. did not see convention (SKIP TO Q 1:25)

________ code actual number of hours watched

1:24

Did you happen to see any of Gerald Ford's acceptance speech?

1. no
2. yes
8. don't know
9. no response
1:34- Is there any one thing you saw or read about the convention that stands out in your mind? IF YES: What would that be?
0. no
1. yes

1:36

1:37 Did anything you saw or read about the convention change your views about Jimmy Carter? IF YES: Did it make you feel more or less favorable towards Carter?
0. no
1. yes, more favorable
2. yes, less favorable
3. yes, but neither more or less favorable
8. don't know
9. no response

NOTE: IF RESPONDENT DID NOT SEE ANY OF THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION ON TV; AND DID NOT SEE ANY OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION ON TV ("no" on both Q 1:22 AND Q 1:30, SKIP TO Q 1:56)

People give us a number of reasons for watching the national nominating convention. As I read you these statements please just tell me whether you agree with them a lot, some, a little or not at all. (IF RESPONDENT HESITATES, REPEAT RESPONSE OPTIONS)

I watched the convention..... a lot some little at all dont know resp.

1:38 ...to keep up with the election process 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:39 ...to enjoy the excitement of the convention 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:40 ...to find out who would win the nomination 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:41 ...because I just wanted to watch TV and the convention was on 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:42 ...to help me decide who to vote for in the November election 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:43 ...to relax and calm down from the earlier part of the day 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:44 ...to feel that I am participating in current events 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:45 ...to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the convention 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:46 ...to pass the time 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:47 ...to be able to talk about the convention and current events with my friends 1 2 3 4 8 9
1:25
Did you happen to read anything about the Republican convention in the newspaper? IF YES: Would you say you have read a good deal, some, or not very much about the convention?

0. no, read nothing
1. not very much
2. some
3. good deal
8. don't know
9. no response

(IF RESPONDENT HAS NOT SEEN ANY TV AND HAS NOT READ ANY NEWSPAPERS—"no" on both 1:22 and 1:25—SKIP TO Q 1:30)

1:26-
1:28
Is there any one thing you saw or read about the convention that stands out in your mind? IF YES: What would that be?

0. no
1. yes

1:29
Did anything you saw or read about the convention change your views about Gerald Ford? IF YES: Did it make you feel more or less favorable towards Ford?

0. no
1. yes, more favorable
2. yes, less favorable
3. yes, but neither more or less favorable
8. don't know
9. no response

1:30-
1:31
How about the Democratic convention held last month. Did you happen to see any of that convention? IF YES: About how many hours of the convention would you say you watched during the four days it was on?

0. no (SKIP TO Q 1:33)

_ _ _ code actual number of hours watched

1:32
Did you happen to see any of Jimmy Carter's acceptance speech?

1. no
2. yes
8. don't know
9. no response

1:33
Did you happen to read anything in the newspaper about the Democratic convention? IF YES: Would you say you read a good deal, some, or not very much about the convention?

0. no, read nothing
1. not very much
2. some
3. good deal
8. don't know
9. no response

(IF RESPONDENT HAS NOT SEEN ANY TV AND HAS NOT READ ANY NEWSPAPERS—"no" on both 1:30 and 1:33—SKIP TO NOTE BETWEEN 1:37 and 1:38)
...to help me forget my problems for awhile
...to feel pride in the Democratic process
...to be entertained
...to learn where the candidates and parties stand on the issues
...because I like to see the way TV anchormen and reporters cover the event
...to get to know the candidates and their families better as people
...to identify with my party
...so I wouldn't have to do other things I should be doing (SKIP TO Q 1:58)

Some people didn't watch the convention because they were too busy or just not interested. How about you. What would you say is the main reason you didn't watch any of the convention? (PROBE: "Can you be more specific?" "What do you mean?")

Now we'd like to ask you some questions about where you get your information about politics. In thinking back over the last month, since the Democratic convention in mid-July, about how many newspaper articles would you say you have read about the Presidential campaign?

0. none
1. one or two (a few)
2. three to seven
3. eight to fifteen
4. more than fifteen
5. don't know
6. no response

On the average day, about how many hours do you personally spend watching television?

_____ code actual number of hours
8. don't know
9. no response
1:60 There are two types of news programs on TV. The local news, and the national news which is presented by Walter Cronkite, John Chancellor, or Harry Reasoner. About how many times a week would you say you watch national news programs on the average?

________ code number of times (code "3" for "a few" and "7" for "nightly")
8. don't know
9. no response

1:61 Outside of the regular news programs, the networks occasionally put on special programs such as coverage of the various primary elections. Did you happen to see any of the network specials this year? IF YES: About how many would you say you have seen?

________ code number of times
8. don't know
9. no response

1:62 About how many programs on the campaign would you say you have listened to on the radio in the past month?

________ code number of times
8. don't know
9. no response

1:63 And how about magazine articles about the campaign? How many would you say you have read in the last month?

________ code number of articles
8. don't know
9. no response

1:64 Did you see any of the commercials paid for by the candidates during the primary campaign? IF YES: About how many would you say you saw?

________ code number of times
8. don't know
9. no response

1:65 Where would you say that you have gotten the most information about the election this year from?

1. television
2. newspapers
3. magazines
4. radio
5. other people
6. television and some other source (combination)
7. newspapers and some other source (combination)
8. television and newspapers (combination)
9. don't know or no response
0. other
If newspapers, television radio and magazines gave conflicting reports about something, which would you be most likely to believe?

1. newspapers
2. television
3. radio
4. magazines
5. television and newspapers (combination)
6. other combinations
7. don’t know
8. no response

During the course of the primary elections and up to the conventions, did you ever get together with friends, neighbors or people at work and talk about how the campaign was going? If yes: About how many of these discussions would you say you had? (If none, skip to Q 1:70)

- none
- code number of discussions
- don’t know
- no response

Have you talked with any people and tried to show them why they should vote for one of the candidates?

1. no
2. yes
3. don’t know
4. no response

Did any people you know talk to you about why you should vote for one of the candidates?

1. no
2. yes
3. don’t know
4. no response

Right now, before the Presidential campaign really gets under way, do you feel you have enough information to cast an informed vote, or don’t you feel you could cast an informed vote right now?

1. could cast informed vote
2. could not cast informed vote
3. don’t know
4. no response

Would you say that you have more information, less information, or about the same amount of information about the candidates as most people do?

1. more information
2. same amount of information
3. less information
4. don’t know
5. no response
About what percent of your information about politics, from 0 to 100, would you say comes from TV?

_____ code percentage

49 don't know
49 no response

Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, an Independent, a Republican, or what?

1. democrat
2. independent (SKIP TO Q 2:13)
3. republican
5. other (SKIP)
6. don't know/apolitical (SKIP TO Q 2:14)
9. no response

Would you call yourself a strong (Democrat) (Republican) or not a very strong (Democrat) (Republican)? (SKIP TO Q 2:14 AFTER THIS QUESTION)

1. strong
2. not very strong
4. don't know
9. no response

Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic or Republican party?

1. democratic
2. closer to neither/ don't know
3. republican
9. no response

You when it comes to politics in general, do you usually think of yourself as a liberal, in the middle of the road, as a conservative, or don't you think of yourself along liberal or conservative lines?

1. liberal
2. middle of road
3. conservative
7. doesn't think of self this way
9. no know
9. no response
Now we would like to read you a few statements that some people have made and ask you whether you agree with them a lot or a little, or disagree with them a lot of a little (IF RESPONDENT HESITATES, REPEAT RESPONSE OPTIONS)

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Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about the way the government runs things.

Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that people like me can't really understand what's going on.

Sometimes I feel that I don't really know enough about the candidates for Senate and Congress to feel comfortable voting in those contests.

It isn't so important to vote when you know your party doesn't have a chance to win.

People like me are just as qualified to vote as any other citizen.

It is the responsibility of every good citizen to vote.

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right: just about always, most of the time, only some of the time, or none of the time?

1. always
2. most of the time
3. some of the time
4. none of the time
5. don't know
6. no response

Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do: a good deal, some, or not much?

1. good deal
2. some
3. not much, none
4. don't know
5. no response

Would you say that most people can be trusted; or that you really can't be too careful in dealing with most people?

1. can be trusted
2. can't be trusted
3. both, sometimes, or don't know
4. no response
Finally, I'd like to ask you just a few questions about voting. First, thinking back to 1972, Nixon the Republican ran against McGovern the Democrat. Did you vote for Nixon, McGovern, or did you not vote in 1972.

1. Nixon
2. McGovern
3. didn't vote in 1972
8. don't know, can't remember
9. no response

Now going back to the election for the Mayor of San Francisco held last November, Barbagelata the Republican ran against Moscone the Democrat. Do you recall whether or not you voted in that election? IF YES: Who did you vote for?

1. Barbagelata
2. Moscone
5. did not vote
6. not able to vote (too young, non-S.F. resident)
8. don't know
9. no response

Have you always voted for the same party or have you voted for different parties for the office of President since you have been able to vote?

1. always same party
2. mostly same party (volunteered response)
3. different parties
8. don't know
9. no response

How about the election for other state and local offices. Do you usually vote a straight ticket; or do you generally vote for candidates of different parties?

1. straight ticket
2. some of each, different parties
8. don't know
9. no response

Now how about the upcoming election. Would you say that you have been very interested, somewhat interested, or not very interested in following the campaign this year?

1. very interested
2. somewhat interested
3. not very interested
8. don't know
9. no response

Who do you think will be elected President in November?

1. Ford
2. Carter
8. don't know (SKIP TO Q 2:37)
9. no response (SKIP TO Q 2:37)
Why do you think (Ford) (Carter) will win? (PROBE: "WHAT ELSE," "WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?")

So far as you know, do you expect to vote in November or not? IF YES: How sure are you of making it to the polls? Are you pretty sure or very sure?

1. no (SKIP TO Q 2:40)
2. yes, pretty sure
3. yes, very sure
8. don't know
9. no response (SKIP TO Q 2:40)

Who do you think you will vote for in the election, Ford the Republican, or Carter the Democrat?

1. Ford
2. Carter
8. don't know
9. no response

How about in the race for Senate. Do you think you will vote for Hayakawa the Republican or Tunney the Democrat?

1. Hayakawa
2. Tunney
8. don't know
9. no response

There's been some talk about changing the length of Senators' terms of office. Do you happen to know how long Senators are elected for?

1. six years
2. other
8. don't know
9. no response

Do you know how many members there are in the Senate?

1. 100
2. other
8. don't know
9. no response

And do you happen to know which party has a majority of seats in the Senate?

1. democrats
2. republicans or other
8. don't know
9. no response
And now, just a last two or three questions about yourself. What is your age?

2:43- code number of years

99. no response

2:45 What is the highest grade in school that you completed?
0. none
1. less than eighth grade
2. some high school/ junior high 8-11 grades
3. completed high school
4. some college
5. completed college
6. professional or graduate work
8. don't know
9. no response

2:46 Is your religious preference Protestant, Catholic, Jewish or something else?
1. Protestant (SPECIFY DENOMINATION__________________________)
2. Catholic
3. Jewish
4. other
5. none
9. no response

2:47 What race are you?
1. white
2. black
3. oriental
4. other
9. no response

2:47 And about what do you think your total income will be this year for yourself and your immediate family?
0. under 3,999
1. 4,000-6,999
2. 7,000-9,999
3. 10,000-12,999
4. 13,000-15,999
5. 16,000-19,999
6. 20,000-29,999
7. over 30,000
8. don't know
9. no response

2:48 CODE SEX OF RESPONDENT
1. female
2. male
THANK RESPONDENT
Hello, I'm ________ from the Spencer Research Organization, an independent research firm in San Francisco. We are conducting a study of people's attitudes towards politics and towards the candidates for President this year. We would like just a bit of your time. Your responses will be held confidential.

1:10- I'd like to ask you first about the good and bad points of the two major candidates for President. First, the democrat. Is there anything in particular about Jimmy Carter that might make you want to vote for him?

1:13- Is there anything about Carter that might make you want to vote against him?

1:16- Now the republican. Is there anything in particular about Gerald Ford that might make you want to vote for him?

1:19- Is there anything about Ford that might make you want to vote against him?

1:22 Did you happen to follow any of the Republican convention on TV, radio or in the newspapers when it was held last month?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:24]
2. yes
3. don't know [SKIP TO 1:24]
4. no response [SKIP TO 1:24]
1:23 Was there anything you saw or read about the convention that changed your views about Gerald Ford? If YES: Did it make you feel more or less favorable towards Ford?

0. no
1. yes, more favorable
2. yes, less favorable
3. yes, but neither more or less favorable
8. don't know
9. no response

1:24 Did you follow any of the Democratic convention, held last July, on TV, radio or in the newspapers?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:26]
2. yes
8. don't know [SKIP TO 1:26]
9. no response [SKIP TO 1:26]

1:25 Was there anything you saw or read about the convention that changed your views about Jimmy Carter? If YES: Did it make you feel more or less favorable towards Carter?

0. no
1. yes, more favorable
2. yes, less favorable
3. yes, but neither more or less favorable
8. don't know
9. no response

1:26 Now about the debates. Before the first debate, held last Thursday, how did you feel about the debate. Would you say you were very excited, somewhat excited, or not very excited about the debate?

1. very excited
2. somewhat excited
3. not very excited
8. don't know
9. no response

1:31 Before the debate, did you expect that one candidate would get the better of the first match, or did you expect them to both do about the same? If ONE CANDIDATE EXPECTED TO DO BETTER, PROBE: Which one did you expect to do better?

1. Carter
2. Ford
3. both would do the same
8. don't know, didn't think about it
9. no response
1:32 Did you see the debate on TV or listen to it on the radio; or did you not happen to catch it? IF YES: Did you watch the debate or listen to it?

0. no [SKIP TO 1:67]
1. yes, watched it on TV
2. yes, listened to it on radio
3. yes, both—some TV and some radio
8. don't know [SKIP TO 1:67]
9. no response [SKIP TO 1:67]

1:33- Is there any one thing from the debate that stands out in your mind? IF
1:35 YES: What would that be?

0. no
1. yes

1:36- Did (viewing) (listening to) the debate change your views about Jimmy Carter?
1:38 IF YES: How is that? (PROBE FOR RESPONSES THAT CAN BE CLASSIFIED AS FAVORABLE OR UNFAVORABLE—THAT IS TRY TO BE SURE OF THE DIRECTION OF THE CHANGE)

0. no
1. yes

1:39- Did (viewing) (listening to) the debate change your views about Gerald Ford?
1:41 IF YES: In what way is that? [PROBE FOR DIRECTION OF CHANGE]

0. no
1. yes

1:42 Who do you think won the debate? IF FORD OR CARTER IS GIVEN AS RESPONSE, PROBE: Do you think that he won by just a little or by a good deal?

1. Ford by a lot
2. Ford by a little, some
3. neither won, both did the same [SKIP TO 1:50]
4. Carter by a little, some
5. Carter by a lot
8. don't know [SKIP TO 1:50]
9. no response [SKIP TO 1:50]

1:43- You've just said that (Carter) (Ford) won. What particularly impressed you about (Carter's) (Ford's) performance?
1:50 People give us a number of reasons for watching the debates. As I read you these statements please just tell me whether you agree with them a lot, some, a little or not at all. [IF RESPONDENT HESITATES REPEAT RESPONSE OPTIONS]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>a lot</th>
<th>some</th>
<th>little</th>
<th>at all</th>
<th>know</th>
<th>resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I watched the debate....</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>...to feel that I am participating in current events</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:51 ...to enjoy the excitement of the debate</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:52 ...because I just wanted to watch TV and the debate was on</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:53 ...to keep up with the election process</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:54 ...to pass the time</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:55 ...to be able to talk about the debate and current events with my friends</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:56 ...because I like to see the way TV newscasters participate in and cover the debates</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:57 ...to see who would win the debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:58 ...to help me decide who to vote for in the November election</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:59 ...to feel pride in the democratic process</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:60 ...to root for my candidate</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:61 ...to learn where the candidates stand on the issues</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:62 ...because everybody else I know was going to watch the debate</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:63 ...to be entertained</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:64 ...to get to know the candidates better as people</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:65 ...to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the debate</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:66 ...to identify with my party [SKIP TO 1:70 AFTER THIS QUESTION]</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1:67- Some people didn't watch or listen to the debate because they were too busy, just not interested, or don't have a TV set. How about you. What would you say is the main reason you didn't watch the debate? [PROBE: "Can you be more specific?" "What do you mean?"]
1:70 Some people have told us that they think the debates are "a lot of nonsense," while others have said that the debates are a good way to learn where the candidates stand on the issues. How about you? Do you think it's a good idea to have the debates?

1. yes, good way to learn, good idea
2. no, lot of nonsense
3. don't know
4. no response

1:71 Do you plan to watch the other debates between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter?

1. no
2. yes
3. don't know
4. no response

1:72 In the days after the debate, did you read anything about the debate in the newspaper?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:74]
2. yes
3. don't know [SKIP TO 1:74]
4. no response [SKIP TO 1:74]

1:73 Who did the newspaper say won the debate?

1. Carter
2. Ford
3. nobody/both
4. don't know
5. no response

1:74 Did you hear anything about the debate on the radio after the debate?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:76]
2. yes
3. don't know [SKIP TO 1:76]
4. no response [SKIP TO 1:76]

1:75 Who did the radio say won the debate?

1. Carter
2. Ford
3. nobody/both
4. don't know
5. no response

1:76 And did you talk about the debate with friends or people at work after the debate?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:78]
2. yes
3. don't know [SKIP TO 1:78]
4. no response [SKIP TO 1:78]
Who did these people feel had won the debate?

1. Carter
2. Ford
3. nobody/both
4. don't know
5. no response

When asked what is the most important quality a President should have people tell us many different things. How about you? What do you think is the most important quality a President should have? [P R O B E: "What else?" "Are there any other qualities you think are important?"

Now we would like to present you with a list of adjectives that people use to describe the Presidential candidates and have you tell us whether or not you think the adjectives fit the candidates. [IF RESPONDENT HESITATES REPEAT OPTIONS]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2:10</th>
<th>First, would you say that Gerald Ford is very informed, somewhat informed, or not very informed?</th>
<th>very</th>
<th>what</th>
<th>not</th>
<th>very</th>
<th>know</th>
<th>resp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:11</td>
<td>And how about Jimmy Carter? Is he very, somewhat or not very informed?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:12</td>
<td>Would you say that Jimmy Carter is very sincere, somewhat sincere, or not very sincere?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:13</td>
<td>And how about Gerald Ford's sincerity?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:14</td>
<td>Would you say that Jimmy Carter is very likeable, somewhat likeable, or not very likeable?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>And is Gerald Ford very, somewhat or not very likeable?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:16</td>
<td>Would you say that Gerald Ford is very devious, somewhat devious, or not very devious?</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2:17</td>
<td>And Jimmy Carter?</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:18</td>
<td>Would you say that Mr. Carter is very decisive, somewhat decisive, or not very decisive?</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:19</td>
<td>And what about Mr. Ford's decisiveness?</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:20</td>
<td>Would you say that Mr. Ford is very religious, somewhat religious or not very religious?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2:21</td>
<td>And where would you place Mr. Carter?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2:22 How about the candidates intelligence. Would you say that Jimmy Carter is very smart, somewhat smart or not very smart?

2:23 Is Gerald Ford very, somewhat, or not very smart?

2:24 How temperamental would you say Jimmy Carter is; very, somewhat or not very temperamental?

2:25 And how temperamental do you think Gerald Ford is?

2:26 Would you say Mr Ford is very inspiring, somewhat inspiring or not very inspiring?

2:27 And how inspiring is Mr. Carter?

2:28 How about competence. Is Mr. Carter very, somewhat or not very competent?

2:29 How competent do you think Mr. Ford is?

2:30 Do you think that Jimmy Carter is very compassionate, somewhat compassionate, or not very compassionate?

2:31 How do you view Gerald Ford in terms of compassion?

2:32 And how honest is Mr. Ford; very, somewhat or not very honest?

2:33 And how about Mr. Carter?

2:34 Finally, how well do you think the word "leadership" applies to Mr. Ford; very well, somewhat, or not very well?

2:35 And how does the word "leadership" apply to Mr. Carter?

2:36 If newspapers, television, radio and magazines gave conflicting reports about something, which would you be most likely to believe?

1. newspapers
2. television
3. radio
4. magazines
5. television and newspapers (combination)
6. other combinations
7. don't know
8. no response
7:39 Where would you say that you have gotten the most information about the election this year from?

1. television
2. newspapers
3. radio
4. magazines
5. other people
6. television and some other source (combination)
7. newspapers and some other source (combination)
8. television and newspapers (combination)
9. don't know or no response
10. other

2:40 Right now, some time before the election in November, do you feel you have enough information to cast an informed vote, or don't you feel you could cast an informed vote right now?

1. could cast informed vote
2. could not cast informed vote
8. don't know
9. no response

2:41 How we would like to read you two statements that some people have made and ask you whether you agree with them a lot or a little; or disagree with them a lot or a little. First, "Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say about the way the government runs things."

1. agree a lot
2. agree a little
4. disagree a little
5. disagree a lot
8. don't know
9. no response

2:42 Next, "Sometimes politics and government seems so complicated that people like me can't really understand what's going on." Would you say you agree with that a lot or a little, or disagree a lot or a little?

1. agree a lot
2. agree a little
4. disagree a little
5. disagree a lot
8. don't know
9. no response

2:43 How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right: just about always, most of the time, only some of the time or none of the time?

1. always
2. most of the time
3. some of the time
4. none of the time
8. don't know
9. no response
2:44 Over the years, how much attention do you feel the government pays to what the people think when it decides what to do: a good deal, some or not much?
1. good deal
2. some
3. not much, none
8. don't know
9. no response

2:45 Now just a couple of questions about the upcoming election. Would you say that you have been very interested, somewhat interested, or not very interested in following the campaign this year?
1. very interested
2. somewhat interested
3. not very interested
8. don't know
9. no response

2:46 Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal which candidate wins the presidential election this fall, or that you don't care very much which candidate wins?
1. care very much
2. care pretty much, care
3. pro-con, depends
4. don't care very much, care a little, care some
5. don't care at all
8. don't know
9. no response

2:47 Who do you think will be elected in November?
1. Ford
2. Carter
8. don't know [SKIP TO 2:51]
9. no response [SKIP TO 2:51]

2:48 Why do you feel that (Ford) (Carter) will win?

2:50

2:51 So far as you know, do you expect to vote in November or not?
1. no [SKIP TO 2:56]
2. yes
8. don't know [SKIP TO 2:55]
9. no response [SKIP TO 2:55]
Who do you think you will vote for in the race for the Senate, Hayakawa the republican or Tunney the democrat?

1. Hayakawa
2. Tunney
3. other, will not vote for Senate
4. don't know
5. no response

And how about in the election for President, do you think you will vote for Ford the Republican or Carter the Democrat?

1. Ford
2. Carter
3. other, don't know
4. don't know
5. no response

What made you decide to vote for (Ford) (Carter) rather than (Carter) (Ford)? Would it be his stand on the issues, his personal qualities, his party affiliation or something else?

1. issues
2. personal qualities
3. party affiliation
4. other (SPECIFY: ____________________________ )
5. don't know
6. no response

If you decide to vote for one of the candidates instead of the other, what do you think will be the deciding factor. His stand on the issues, his personal qualities, his party affiliation, or something else?

1. issues
2. personal qualities
3. party affiliation
4. other (SPECIFY: ____________________________ )
5. don't know
6. no response

Why don't you think you will vote in the election?

2:58- And now, just a last two questions about yourself. What is your age?

2:60- code number of years
2:61 What is the highest grade in school you completed?
0. none
1. less than 8th grade
2. some high school / junior high / 8-11 grades
3. completed high school / 12 grade /
4. some college
5. completed college
6. professional or graduate work
8. don't know
9. no response

THANK RESPONDENT
and code

2:62 Sex of respondent
1. female
2. male

2:63-2:65 Date of Interview ——/—/——
2:66-2:67 Length of Interview ——— Code number
no. day of minutes
Hello, this is __________ calling from the Spencer Research Organization, an independent research firm in San Francisco. We are doing a study about people's views of the candidates in this year's elections. I would like between 5 and 10 minutes of your time. Your responses will be kept confidential.

1:10 As you know, the government faces many serious problems in this country and in other parts of the world. What do you personally feel is the most important problem the government in Washington should try to take care of?

1:15 How strongly do you feel about this problem? Are you extremely concerned about it, fairly concerned, or only a little concerned?

1. extreme concern
2. some concern
3. a little concern
8. don't know
9. no response (no problem mentioned)

1:16 Which candidate do you think would be more likely to do what you want done about this--Jimmy Carter or Gerald Ford, or wouldn't there be any difference between them?

1. Carter
2. Ford
7. no difference
8. don't know
9. no response

1:17 What would you say is the next most important problem the government in Washington should try to do something about?
1:22 Which candidate do you think would be more likely to do what you want done about this problem?

1. Carter
2. Ford
7. no difference
8. don't know
9. no response

1:23 How about the upcoming presidential election. Would you say that you have been very interested, somewhat interested, or not very interested in following the campaign this year?

1. very interested
2. somewhat interested
3. not very interested
8. don't know
9. no response

1:24 Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal which candidate wins the presidential election next week, or that you don't care very much which candidate wins?

1. care very much
2. care, care pretty much
3. pro-con, depends
4. don't care very much, care a little, care some
5. don't care at all
8. don't know
9. no response

1:25 Who do you think will win the Presidential election?

1. Ford
2. Carter
8. don't know
9. no response

1:26 So far as you know, do you expect to vote in next week's election or not?

1. no [SKIP TO 1:31]
2. yes
8. don't know [SKIP TO 1:30]
9. no response[SKIP TO 1:30]

1:27 Who do you think you will vote for in the race for the Senate, Hayakawa the republican, or Tunney the democrat?

1. Hayakawa
2. Tunney
5. other, will not vote in Senate contest
8. don't know
9. no response
1:20 And how about in the election for President. Do you think you will vote for Ford the republican, or for Carter the democrat?

1. Ford
2. Carter
8. don’t know [SKIP TO 1:30]
9. no response [SKIP TO 1:30]

1:29 What made you decide to vote for (Ford) (Carter) rather than (Carter) (Ford). Would it be his stand on the issues, his personal qualities, his party affiliation, or something else? [SKIP TO 1:34 AFTER THIS QUESTION]

1. issues
2. personal qualities
3. party affiliation
5. other (SPECIFY: __________________________)
8. don’t know
9. no response

1:30 If you decide to vote for one of the candidates instead of the other, what do you think will be the deciding factor. His stand on the issues, his personal qualities, his party affiliation, or something else? [SKIP TO 1:34 AFTER THIS QUESTION]

1. issues
2. personal qualities
3. party affiliation
5. other
8. don’t know
9. no response

1:31- People give us a number of reasons why they don’t vote in elections. Some are too busy, some aren’t registered, and others just aren’t interested in politics. How about you? Why don’t you think you will vote in the election?

1:34- As you probably know the League of Women Voters sponsored a series of three debates among the presidential candidates and one debate between the vice-presidential candidates. Did you happen to see any of those debates on TV or listen to them on the radio? [IF NO, SKIP TO 1:35]

How many of the three Presidential debates did you see?

a. none
1. one
2. two
3. three
8. don’t know
9. no response

Did you happen to see the debates between the vice-presidential candidates?

0. no
1. yes
8. don’t know
9. no response
Overall, who do you think won the series of debates between the Presidential candidates? If Ford or Carter is given as response, probe: Do you think that he won by just a little, or by a good deal?

1. Ford by a lot
2. Ford by a little, some
3. Neither won, both did the same
4. Carter by a little, some
5. Carter by a lot
6. Don't know
7. No response

What would you say were the most important reasons why you watched the debates?

[INTERVIEWERS, PROBE INTENSELY FOR BOTH THE NUMBER OF REASONS ("IF THREE "MY" THING ELSE") AND FOR THE SPECIFICITY OF THE REASON ("WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT")]

Did (viewing) (listening to) the debates change your views about Jimmy Carter?

If yes: How is that? [Probe for responses that can be classified as favorable or unfavorable—try to be sure of the direction of the change]

0. No
1. Yes

Did (viewing) (listening to) the debates change your views about Gerald Ford?

If yes: How is that? [Probe for responses that can be classified as favorable or unfavorable]

0. No
1. Yes

Do you think the debates had any effect on how you plan to vote?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. No response
How about others. Do you think the debates will have an effect on how others plan to vote?

1. yes
2. no
3. don't know
4. no response

Have you ever talked about any of the debates with friends or people at work?

1. no
2. yes
3. don't know
4. no response

Who did most of these people feel had won the debates?

1. Carter
2. Nobody, both did the same, split among friends
3. Ford
4. don't know
5. no response

Now we would like to present you with a list of adjectives that people use to describe the Presidential candidates and have you tell us how well you think the adjectives fit the candidates. [If respondent hesitates, repeat options]

First, would you say that Jimmy Carter is very decisive, somewhat decisive, or not very decisive? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

And how about Gerald Ford? Is he very, somewhat or not very decisive? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

Would you say that Mr. Ford is very likeable, somewhat likeable, or not very likeable? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

How about Mr. Carter? Is he very, somewhat, or not very likeable? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

Would you say that Mr. Ford is very intelligent, somewhat intelligent, or not very intelligent? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

And Mr. Carter? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

How compassionate would you say Jimmy Carter is, very, somewhat, or not very compassionate? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

How compassionate do you think Gerald Ford is? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

Do you think Mr. Ford is very honest, somewhat honest, or not very honest? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]

And is Mr. Carter very, somewhat or not very honest? 1 2 3 4 5 [some not don't no]
2:16 Finally, how well do you think the word "leadership" applies to Mr. Carter; very well, somewhat, or not very well?

1. very well
2. somewhat well
3. not very well
8. don't know
9. no response

2:17 And how does the word "leadership" apply to Mr. Ford?

1. very well
2. somewhat
3. not very well
8. don't know
9. no response

Now we'd like to ask you some questions about where you get your information about politics.

2:21 First, how about the newspaper. Would you say that you have read a good many, some, or a few newspaper stories about the election?

1. good many
2. some
3. few
8. don't know
9. no response

2:21 How about magazine articles about the campaign. Have you read a lot, some or a few of these?

1. lot
2. some
3. few
8. don't know
9. no response

2:22 Would you say you have heard a lot about the campaign on the radio, some, or not very much from radio programs?

1. lot
2. some
3. little
8. don't know
9. no response

2:23 How about television. There have been a lot of commercials paid for by the Ford and Carter campaigns on TV lately. Have you seen a good number of these, some of them, or only one or two of them?

1. lot
2. some
3. few, one or two
4. none
8. don't know
9. no response
2:24 The networks themselves occasionally produce special broadcasts about the campaign and the candidates. Did you happen to see any of these? [If YES: About how many would you say you have seen?

1. over 15
2. 10-15
3. 6-10
4. 3-5
5. 1 or 2
6. none
7. don't know
8. no response

2:25 There are two types of news programs on TV. The local news, and the national news presented by Walter Cronkite on CBS, by John Chancellor and David Brinkley on NBC and by Harry Reasoner on ABC. About how many times a week would you say you watch national news programs on the average?

 code number of times (code "3" for "a few" and "7" for "nightly")
8. don't know
9. no response

2:26 And about how many times on the average week would you say you watch the local news?

 code number of times (code "3" for "a few" and "7" for "nightly")
8. don't know
9. no response

2:27 About what percent of your information about politics, from 0 to 100, would you say comes from TV?

 code percentage
89. don't know
99. no response

2:29 Would you say that the national television news reporting you have seen has taken sides for or against one of the candidates, or that it has not taken sides? If YES: Which candidate has it favored?

1. not taken sides
2. favored Carter
3. favored Ford
4. other (Specify: ____________________________)
5. don't know
6. no response

2:30 How about the reporting in the newspaper. Has that favored one of the candidates more than the other? If YES: Which candidate has it favored?

1. has not favored anyone
2. favored Carter
3. favored Ford
4. other (Specify: ____________________________)
5. don't know
6. no response
2:31 How just a last few questions about yourself. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, an Independent, a Republican, or what?

1. democrat
2. independent [SKIP TO 2:33]
3. republican
4. other
5. don't know/apolitics SKIP
6. no response TO

2:32 Would you call yourself a strong (Democrat)(Republican) or not a very strong (Democrat)(Republican)? [SKIP TO 2:34 AFTER THIS QUESTION]

1. strong
2. not very strong
3. don't know
4. no response

2:33 Do you think of yourself as closer to the Democratic or Republican party?

1. democratic
2. closer to neither/ don't know
3. republicans
4. no response

2:34 Have you ever gotten together with friends, neighbors or people at work and talk about how the election was going? IF YES: About how many of these discussions would you say you have in an average week?

1. over 15
2. 10-15
3. 6-9
4. 3-5
5. 1 or 2
6. no (none)
7. don't know
8. no response

2:35 Would you say that you have heard a good deal, some, or not very much about the Jimmy Carter interview that appeared in playboy magazine?

1. good deal
2. some
3. not very much
4. nothing [SKIP TO 2:39]
5. don't know [SKIP TO 2:39]
6. no response [SKIP TO 2:39]
2:36- Do you think this interview had any effect on your decision about who you should vote for? IF YES: How is that?

0. no
1. yes

2:39 Would you say that you have heard a great deal, some, or not very much about the Gerald Ford statement made during the second debate saying that Eastern Europe is not dominated by Russia?

1. heard great deal
2. heard some
3. heard not very much
4. heard nothing [SKIP TO 2:43]
5. don't know [SKIP TO 2:43]
6. no response [SKIP TO 2:43]

2:40- Do you think this statement had any effect on your decision about who you should vote for? IF YES: How is that?

0. no
1. yes

2:43- What is your age please?

________ code number of years

2:45 What is the highest grade in school that you completed?

0. none
1. less than 8th grade
2. some high school/ junior high/ 8-11 grades
3. completed high school
4. some college
5. completed college
6. professional/graduate work
7. don't know
8. no response

2:46 CODE SEX OF RESPONDENT

1. female
2. male

2:47- DATE OF INTERVIEW ___/___ Length of Interview (minutes)_______
2:50

THANK RESPONDENT FOR COOPERATION
WAVE 4

NAME ___________________________ Ph # ________ Sex ___ Age ___

Hello, I'm _______ from the Spencer Research Organization and I'd like to take two minutes of your time to ask you a few questions about the election this past Tuesday. Your responses will be held confidential.

1. First, did you vote on election day?
   1. Yes (GO TO QUESTION 2, SKIP QUESTION 5)
   2. No (GO TO QUESTION 5)
   3. No response

2. For whom did you vote for President, Ford the Republican, or Carter the Democrat?
   1. Ford
   2. Carter
   3. other (PROBE TO FIND OUT WHICH CANDIDATE)
   4. voted, but did not vote for President
   5. no response

3. What made you decide to vote for (Ford) (Carter) rather than (Carter) (Ford)? Would it be his stand on issues, his personal qualities, his party affiliation, or something else?
   1. issues
   2. personal qualities
   3. party affiliation
   4. voted, but did not vote for President
   5. other (SPECIFY: ____________________________)
   6. don't know
   7. no response

4. For whom did you vote in the U.S. Senate race, Hayakawa the Republican, or Tunney the Democrat?
   1. Hayakawa
   2. Tunney
   3. other
   4. voted, but not for Senator
   5. don't know
   6. no response

5. What was the most important reason why you did not vote on election day?
   5a. (IF NOT MENTIONED) Are you registered to vote? _____Yes _____No

6. Finally, two quick questions about yourself. What is your age?
   ______ code number of years
7. What is the highest grade in school you completed?

0. none
1. less than 8th grade
2. some high school/junior high/8-11 grades
3. completed high school, 12th grade
4. some college
5. completed college
6. professional/graduate work
7. don't know
8. no response
APPENDIX B: Responses to Open-ended Convention Imagery Questions

Republican Convention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Total(n)</th>
<th>Neg.</th>
<th>Neu.</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. TV Coverage</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- good piece of TV theater</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>-- good TV coverage</td>
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<td>-- liked TV shots</td>
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<td>-- Kansas City is a nice place</td>
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<td>2. Convention Style/Delegate Behavior</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>-- dull convention</td>
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<td>-- behavior of delegates</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>-- no trouble at convention</td>
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<td>-- convention was well organized</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>-- convention was exciting/enthusiastic</td>
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<td>-- demographic composition of delegates</td>
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<td>3. Party</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>-- comments on factional division</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>-- intensity of Reagan supporters</td>
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<td>-- intense infighting of delegates in factions or between delegates</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>-- Ford trying to reconcile elements of party</td>
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<td>-- debate over Vice-Presidential selection process</td>
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<td>-- factional fight over rules</td>
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<td>-- Reagan mistreated as Ford controlled convention machinery</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>4. Platform-Issues</td>
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<td>-- comments on the ideology of the platform</td>
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<td>-- debate over the platform</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>Howard Baker</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Gerald Ford</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronald Reagan</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>closeness of nomination</td>
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<td>outcome of nomination</td>
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<td>delegate switch to Ford</td>
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<td>Ford's selection of Dole</td>
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<td>same old Nixon gang in control</td>
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<td>Reagan for Vice-President drive</td>
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<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Ford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Ford dancing with Tony Orlando</td>
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<td>battle of the wives for applause: Betty Ford versus Nancy Reagan</td>
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<td>Nancy and Ronald Reagan as a nice couple</td>
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<td>Susan Ford with Tony Orlando/Sony Bono</td>
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<td>Jack Ford</td>
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<td>bribe to Reagan delegate</td>
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<td>phone ripped from N.Y. delegation</td>
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<tr>
<td>band played too much</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>nominations were ridiculous</td>
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<td>Ford had a speech coach</td>
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<td>bad things said about Democrats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dole looks like Nixon</td>
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### Democratic Convention

#### Responses

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<tr>
<th>1. TV Coverage</th>
<th>Total(n)</th>
<th>Affect</th>
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<tr>
<td>--conflicted with All-Star game</td>
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<td>Neg. Neu. Pos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>--camera catching delegates</td>
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<tr>
<td>faces, emotions</td>
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<td>0 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>--failure to cover protesters outside</td>
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<td>1 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>--got tired of the expression &quot;sterile&quot;</td>
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<td>1 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>--liked the TV shots</td>
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<th>2. Convention Style/Delegate Behavior</th>
<th>Total(n)</th>
<th>Affect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--convention was dull/boring</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>--behavior of delegates</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3 0 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>--no trouble at the convention</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 1 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>--convention was well organized</td>
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<td>0 2 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>--convention was exciting/enthusiastic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0 0 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--demographic composition of delegates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 1 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>--the convention was &quot;open&quot;</td>
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<td>0 0 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>--good overall feeling from the convention</td>
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<td>0 0 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>--general comments on convention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 1 1</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. Party</th>
<th>Total(n)</th>
<th>Affect</th>
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<tr>
<td>--demographic unity/agreement/togetherness</td>
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<td>0 19 9</td>
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<th>4. Platform-Issues</th>
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<th>Affect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--comments on the ideology of the platform</td>
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<td>3 3 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>--unity, consensus on platform</td>
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<td>0 0 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>--Panama Canal</td>
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<td>1 0 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>--general comments on platform</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<tr>
<td>--Barabara Jordan</td>
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<td>--Jimmy Carter</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>--Jerry Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>--John Glenn</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Morris Udall</td>
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<tr>
<td>--Rev. M.L. King, Sr.</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>--many women speakers</td>
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<tbody>
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<td>--Brown's staying in race so long</td>
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APPENDIX C: Correlation Matrices Between and Among Convention and Debate Viewing Variables

The variables numbered 1 through 35 in the following three tables are as follows:

I watched the convention...
1. to keep up with the election process.
2. to enjoy the excitement of the convention.
3. to find out who would win the nomination.
4. because I just wanted to watch TV and the convention was on.
5. to help me decide who to vote for in the November election.
6. to relax and calm down from the earlier part of the day.
7. to feel that I am participating in current events.
8. to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the convention.
9. to pass the time.
10. to be able to talk about the convention and current events with my friends.
11. to help me forget my problems for awhile.
12. to feel pride in the Democratic process.
13. to be entertained.
14. to learn where the candidates and parties stand on the issues.
15. because I like to see the way TV anchormen and reporters cover the event.
16. to get to know the candidates and their families better as people.
17. to identify with my party.
18. so I wouldn't have to do other things I should be doing.
I watched the debate...

19. to feel that I am participating in current events.
20. to enjoy the excitement of the debate.
21. because I just wanted to watch TV and the debate was on.
22. to keep up with the election process.
23. to pass the time.
24. to be able to talk about the debate and current events with my friends.
25. because I like to see the way TV newspeople participate in and cover the debate.
26. to see who would win the debate
27. to help me decide who to vote for in the November election.
28. to feel pride in the democratic process.
29. to root for my candidate.
30. to learn where the candidates stand on the issues.
31. because everybody else I know was going to watch the debate.
32. to be entertained.
33. to get to know the candidates better as people.
34. to spend time with my family and friends who were watching the debate.
35. to identify with my party.
TABLE 31: Intra-correlations among Convention Viewing Variables (tau-beta)

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TABLE 33: Inter-correlations between Convention and Debate Viewing Variables (tau-beta)

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