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MARKET RESEARCH IN POLITICS: AN HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY OVERVIEW OF ITS USE IN AMERICAN AND CANADIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

by

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B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1988

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

COMMUNICATION

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
January 7, 1993

ISBN 0-315-91084-4

APPROVAL

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DEGREE: Master of Arts (Communication)

TITLE OF THESIS: Market Research in Politics: An Historical and Contemporary Overview of its Use in American and Canadian Election Campaigns

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Title of Thesis/Dissertation:

Market Research in Politics: An Historical and Contemporary Overview of its Use in American and Canadian Election Campaigns.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the use of market research in politics. Specifically, it provides an historical and contemporary overview of its use in American and Canadian election campaigns.

The thesis has three main objectives:

(1) To show that research is an integral component of modern day election campaigns;

(2) To show that the increasing use of research in modern day election campaigns is a direct reflection of the rising prominence accorded it by ad agencies, and therefore is another example of mass marketing techniques moving from product campaigns to political campaigns; and

(3) To explore the implications of research in political campaigns.

The objectives are met by examining a variety of political and marketing literature. Three case studies, all late twentieth century election campaigns, are also presented as further illustration of the themes expressed in the literature. The case studies include the 1988 U.S. Presidential Election, the Canadian General Election of 1988, and the British Columbia Provincial Election of 1991.

Both the literature and the case studies document that modern day election campaigns depend heavily upon market research methods and techniques, even if their use cannot be

factored into the eventual outcome of a campaign. The research also indicates that its use by politicians is a direct reflection of the rising prominence accorded it by ad agencies over several decades of product marketing.

Arguments for and against the use of research in politics lack any empirical evidence to support their cause, but the ultimate concern by all is whether such research is hurting or enhancing the democratic process. The final conclusion in this thesis is that it appears impossible to conduct our political business any other way in the late twentieth century.

. . . the seven preparatory steps the modern candidate takes:

(1)Set out to discover what voters want; (2) Extensive polling; (3) Study of demographic trends; (4) Sophisticated interpretation of in-depth voter interviews; (5) Analyze results; (6) Discover that what the voters want is a candidate who doesn't need to do steps one through five; (7) Pretend you didn't. The chastened politician tells his assembled throng, "I follow my conscience."

-Political cartoonist Tom Toles

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INTRODUCTION

The diffusion of mass marketing techniques to the political arena is a subject which has received significant attention in recent years. Primarily this discussion has revolved around the use of political advertising in election campaigns, and whether or not the use of such advertising is a threat or an enhancement to the democratic process. Questions that are asked of advertising generally are reformulated and asked about in relation to its role in modern day election campaigns: what "effects" does advertising have on the voter? can more or "better" advertising cause one candidate to win over another?

The debate rages on, just as it does for advertising generally, but what has been noticeably absent from the debate is any discussion of the strategy on which the advertising is formulated. Advertisements do not drop out of thin air, either for products or politicians; they are based on systematic, often scientific, research. If they were not, any debate about advertising at all would be bogus. As Leiss, Kline and Jhally have noted in Social Communication in Advertising, "advertising uses consumer research . . . and recycles it as the strategy, form and content of advertisements."[1] In politics, those consumers are voters, but the purpose of that research is the same.

Which is why it is an area worthy of study. The fact that it has largely been neglected until recently is perhaps

due to the fact that its presence is almost invisible to all except those who are immediately concerned with it. Its use in the marketing mix has been quiet, but pervasive. This is in direct contrast to the ads themselves which, by their very nature, attract attention, not only among consumers and voters, but among those who like to study such things. It has left the student of both marketing and politics with the impression that ads do fall out of thin air, and that if only we understood how the "end product" (the ad) works, we would understand the whole cycle between consumer/voter and purchasing/voting decisions. We've spent so much time studying the end, we've neglected the beginning. The dearth of literature in this area attests to that.

This thesis, then, is a small attempt at rectifying that imbalance, at letting research share in the limelight of controversy for awhile. It has three main goals:

(1) To show that research is an integral component of modern day election campaigns;

(2) To show that the increasing use of research in modern day election campaigns is a direct reflection of the rising prominence accorded it by ad agencies, and therefore is another example of mass marketing techniques moving from product campaigns to political campaigns; and

(3) To explore the implications of research in political campaigns.

It should be clarified at the onset that research, in the context of this thesis, is defined as primary research conducted on behalf of a political party or candidate prior to or during an election campaign for the purpose of winning that campaign. It includes research prior to the "official" campaign, that is, after the writ has been dropped, because it is a rare campaign nowadays that doesn't start as early as funds will allow, the day after the previous election if possible.

For purposes of this thesis, there are also several types of research associated with political campaigns that will be excluded from discussion. This is not because these areas are unimportant, but simply because of the time and space limitations necessitated by a thesis.

The first of these exclusions is research conducted by governments in power at taxpayers' expense and then used for partisan purposes during election campaigns. This is a practice becoming extremely common and increasingly scrutinized.

The second is research conducted by media outlets during election campaigns. As we are all aware, media regularly conduct their own polls on political parties and candidates, and the controversy surrounding this practice is

extensive. This thesis will discuss aspects of media, but only as it relates to research initiated by the candidates and parties themselves. While there are many ethical issues around this relationship that are similar to those raised by media originated polling, there are some significant differences. For example, whether or not the media is indeed "manufacturing" its own news is a source of continuing speculation.

The remainder of this introduction, then, elaborates on the importance of research in election campaigns. It will show that its current role in political campaigns was precipitated by an ever expanding role in advertising agencies, because as Leiss, Kline and Jhally have again noted, "ad agencies were pioneers in marketing research and thus, not surprisingly, the first group to apply marketing research tools to the political arena."[2] Larry J. Sabato in Media Technology and the Vote concurs with this statement:

> Most political technicians trace the advances in political polling, direct mail, demographic precinct targeting, and most media innovations to the private sector, whose marketing needs financed volumes of research and much trial-and-error experimentation. . . . . Consultants borrowed heavily from business technology.[3]

The implications of this "borrowing" are the main subject of Chapter Two. Here, I will provide an overview of the research technologies and methodologies currently used

in politics, followed by the main arguments for and against their use.

As noted earlier, much of the controversy is similar to that surrounding advertising itself. It should be noted here, however, that I will not be providing a critique of the methodologies themselves, i.e., whether or not one method is more "statistically valid" than another, for example. While it is true that much of the debate about the use of research in politics revolves around this question and ones similar to it, it seems to me these finer points should be debated by the researchers themselves, people much more qualified than I to make such judgements. For purposes of this thesis, the fact that such technologies and methodologies exist at all and are used in as serious a venture as election campaigns make them worthy of discussion about a whole host of issues separate from whether they contain "sampling errors" or "systematic bias."

Chapter Three of the thesis provides a look at the evolution of research in politics, reflecting the continued "borrowing" from the private sector that was referred to earlier. It provides an historical review of major technological innovations in research and the political campaigns in which they were employed. The presence of the ad agencies is seen to be always hovering nearby. We see

how they become indispensable enough to merge into a new breed of "market advisor" - the political consultant.

The role of this new consultant and the various genres it has spawned in current elections is the subject of the fourth chapter. This chapter presents three case studies, all recent elections, which highlight the degree to which modern election campaigns have come to see research as an integral component in the fight for victory at the polls.

The three campaigns reviewed as case studies include the American Presidential Election of 1988, the Canadian General Election, which took place the same year, and the 1991 British Columbia provincial election.

The two general elections were chosen primarily because they were won by the "right-wing" parties, namely the Republicans in the U.S. and the Conservatives here in Canada. There is a general feeling expressed in the literature that such parties have led the way in the transferral of mass market techniques to the political arena. The myth is that such parties have been particularly adept at this, especially the Republicans, given their historically close ties to Madison Ave. Critics charge that this adeptness is responsible for the wins of these parties. But is it? An examination of the American election is especially telling in this regard as it is the Americans who appear to be at the forefront of political innovations.

Conversely, the B.C. provincial election was chosen because of an electoral win by the New Democrats, the "left-wing" party in Canada. An examination of this election illustrates two points: one, that the use of any technology is, to coin a phrase used by a number of authors, "politically neutral," and thus not associated with any ideology, and two, that there are many factors in an electoral campaign which contribute to its outcome, research being only one of them.

As we will see, this will be the common thread throughout all the case studies, for as Leiss, Kline and Jhally again note, "there are no guarantees of success . . . but after all, this is the lesson found in the marketing record itself . . . ."[4]

The Purpose of Research

As stated earlier, the primary function of research is to provide a basis for communication strategy, a strategy that will either help sell a product, as in the case of marketing generally, or in politics, help elect a political party or candidate.

This goal is not a covert one, either in the marketing of politics or products. Leiss, Kline and Jhally have noted that:

> . . . two fundamental purposes of all advertising and marketing research: (1) to understand how consumers experience the meaning of products and how they formulate the intention to purchase; and (2) to construct persuasive communications strategies on the basis of that understanding that will reach the inner experiences of persons.[5]

In Media, Technology and the Vote, Stephen E. Frantzich notes that "research . . . serves as initial steps for targeted communications . . . ."[6]

In fact, ad agencies themselves, whom we accept as providing the model of persuasive communications for the political arena, have integrated research to such an extent that its presence exists throughout the entire advertising and marketing process. To reflect its current prominence, the research departments themselves are now being renamed "Strategic Planning," reflecting some advertisers' convictions that communications strategy without research could result in "a big idea about the wrong thing and lead to irrelevant brilliance."[7]

This conviction has also been made manifest in agencies by physically moving research staff into creative departments, staff that is often recruited from graduate schools in the social sciences. It appears to be a natural progression for such students, given that many ad agencies, primarily in the U.S., have ongoing relationships with

universities for purposes of either consulting or joint research projects.

This practice is not new, for as we will see in the chapter on the history of research, Professor George Gallup was recruited by Young & Rubicam in 1929 to found the first agency research group in the U.S. In recent years, American agencies like Ted Bates have worked with the music and marketing departments of Columbia University and participated in psychophysics (brainwave activities) research at the State University of New York.[8] Another ad agency, D'Arcy, McManus & Masius, have arrangements with several universities as consultants in special areas including statistics, psychology and sociology.[9]

Clearly, advertising agencies take research very seriously. In fact, in order to compete with the ad agencies' ability to provide clients with both research and advertising services, research firms are now expanding to include all aspects of marketing. This is especially true in Canada where there are just too few general elections to support full-time political consultants, making competition especially keen among all slices of the marketing pie. Interviewed by Claire Hoy in Margins of Error, Michael Marzolini of Insight Canada Research notes that:

> We take it into communications strategy, almost the public-relations area, in making use of the numbers. It's just not enough to go out and do a poll and say,

> 'Well, 42 per cent of the people think you're a jerk.' What you have to be doing is to find out that while 42 percent of the people think that now, you can get that down to 28 percent if you do certain things. . . . We put together everything from computer graphics, strategy maps, poll-by-poll analysis, social demographics . . . pretty much a campaign blueprint. This is what you do: you follow it from page 1 to 45, you go to these places I tell you to go to, you say these things.[10]

Conversely, although Martin Goldfarb, known in Canada as the "Liberal Pollster," does mostly corporate work:

> The bulk of his (Goldfarb) business then (as it still is, in dollar terms) was corporate work. . . . He inspired several well-known commercial campaigns, among them: "We Care About The Shape You're In," for Wonderbra, "It's Ours," for Petro-Canada, and "Ford Has A Better Idea," for the Ford Motor Co.[11]

In the ultimate manifestation of who's doing what for whom, or as Randall Rothenberg has noted, "a classical reversal," "many political strategists are now crossing over to the corporate sector, claiming if they can sell politicians, they can sell products.[12]

The Goals Of Election Campaign Research

Having established that research is indeed, the basis of persuasive communications strategy, our next step is to ask who such strategy is aimed at, and why it is so important during elections.

Research during political campaigns is sought from a well defined and targeted group of people. Specifically, they are individuals who are either undecided or likely to change their vote before election day. Their opinions are sought, and their psyches probed, to try and determine what could persuade those individuals to vote in a certain way.

Obviously, such "switchers" (also referred to as the "swing vote" and the "alienated voter") do not constitute the entire electorate. Due to a variety of factors, primarily party loyalty, the majority of individuals do not change their vote during an election campaign. For those that do, however, their impact can be staggering. Commentators have noted that elections can be decided by only a 3% swing in the total vote.[13]

Another point to note about the swing vote is that their numbers appear to be increasing, especially in the U.S. As Larry Sabato again notes:

> While it is still true that most voters . . . have their minds almost made up before the campaign even begins, it is also true that in just about every election, as much as a third or even more of the electorate is honestly uncommitted or switchable, and that number may be growing as the strength of party identification declines.[14]

In a recent seminar sponsored by the U.S. magazine "Campaigns and Elections," delegates were told to "assume three-quarters of the electorate are empty vessels waiting

to be filled . . . ."[15] While most of the literature would be unwilling to concede that the swing vote has reached those proportions, the statement illustrates the fact that elections are becoming more of a wildcard. Obviously, those who orchestrate campaigns will call upon anything to reduce the odds of losing. Research has come to be seen as a bona fide way of doing that.

Research is also very important during elections, however, for the "campaign within a campaign," also known as the "metacampaign." This campaign sees the primary target as the media and releases the results of privately commissioned research in an effort to get favourable publicity. It's a practice referred to as "priming" and as noted in Media Technology and the Vote, "is done by building upon data from public opinion polls and focus group testing, which form the basis for "agenda packets" - press releases, flyers, videocassettes . . . designed to reshape political discussion."[16]

As will be seen later in this thesis, it is this "priming" which has proven to be one of the most controversial subjects concerning the use of research in modern electoral campaigns. For example, Dan Nimmo states that research used in this way are "tools of propaganda as well as information,"[17] and Claire Hoy has noted that "media use polls to determine what issues or people to cover."[18]

Summary

Research today is seen as the basis for persuasive communications strategy, whether we are discussing product or political marketing. During election campaigns, its goal is to solicit information from swing voters in an attempt to win that campaign. The remainder of this thesis will document just how that goal has been achieved.

FOOTNOTES

[1]William Leiss, Stephen Kline and Sut Jhally, Social Communication in Advertising (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1990), 193.

[2]Ibid., 390.

[3]Larry J. Sabato, "Consultant Service: The New Campaign Technology," chap. in Joel L. Swerdlow, Media Technology And The Vote: A Source Book (Boulder: Westview Press for The Annenberg Washington Program, 1988), 183.

[4]Leiss, Kline and Jhally, Social Communication in Advertising, 403.

[5]Ibid., 147.

[6]Stephen E. Frantzich, "The Rise of the Service-Vendor Party," excerpt in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 175.

[7]Dennis Bruce, "It's What Put the 'Great' In Great Britain Ads," Marketing, 14 December 1987, 41.

[8]"Who's Who In Advertising Research: The Ten Largest Agency Research Operations Queue Up," Advertising Age, 18 October 1982, M11.

[9]Ibid., M20.

[10]Claire Hoy, Margin of Error: Pollsters And The Manipulation Of Canadian Politics (Toronto: Key Porter, 1989), 191.

[11]Ibid., 137.

[12]Randal Rothenberg, "The Boom In Political Consulting," The New York Times, (24 May 1987) reprinted in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 191.

[13]Much of the literature surrounding political campaigns discusses the role of swing votes in elections. For the specific percentage referred to, see Anthony Gargrave and Raymond Hull, How To Win An Election (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979), viii.

[14]Sabato, "Consultant Service," 183.

[15]Tom Barrett, "Smear Tactics," Vancouver Sun, 14 September 1991, D9.

[16]Sabato, "Consultant Service," 183.

[17]Dan Nimmo, The Political Persuaders (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 108.

[18]Hoy, Margin of Error, 8.

CHAPTER TWO

A CONTEMPORARY OVERVIEW

PART 1
METHODOLOGIES AND TECHNOLOGIES

It seems prudent before discussing the implications of the new technologies and methodologies to review just what those are. The term research, even expanded to political marketing research, doesn't reveal what is currently in use by its practitioners. I will not pretend that this is an exhaustive list, for innovations in this field are taking place at a staggering rate, but it does at least attempt a brief overview of those techniques in use up to and including the elections described in the case studies.

An outline of the current techniques will fulfil two purposes:

(1) To familiarize the reader with the techniques that are currently being scrutinized in this chapter, and

(2) To expedite the understanding of such techniques as applied in the case studies, thus preventing a "start and stop" approach in describing the elections and stopping to define the techniques.

Primary Research Defined

To help provide a framework for the methodologies and technologies that will be discussed, it's useful here to

provide a definition of research as it applies to the collection of primary data. Unfortunately, the literature does not provide such a definition as it applies specifically to the political arena, so as with much from political marketing, we will borrow from marketing generally.

In their book, Strategic Marketing For Non-Profit Organizations, Philip Kotler and Alan Andreasen define marketing research as "the planned acquisition and analysis of data measuring some aspect or aspects of the marketing system for the purpose of improving an organization's marketing decisions.[1] They go on to note that the methods constituting such research can be very diverse.

That diversity extends to the political arena, for there are few, if any, techniques applied in that arena which did not arise first from product marketing. As noted in Media, Technology and the Vote,

> Political campaigns rarely involved new uses of communications technologies. What becomes "new" in politics has long since been proven in the nonpolitical marketplace. As journalist James Perry noted in The New Politics as early as 1968, "It's not show biz that's taking over in politics, it's industrial and business technology.[2]

Helping in that takeover have been research techniques originating in the social sciences. Combined with new technologies, the two are helping to blur the distinction

between the traditional "categories" of research: qualitative and quantitative. Many of the newest companies involved in the collection of data are pursuing both and combining them in innovative ways to provide complex demographic data to their clients.

Here, then, is a list of what's "hot" in the research circuit. As noted in the introduction, it will then be followed by the defences and criticism levied against the use of that research in politics.

Quantitative Research

Although as stated earlier, the delineation between qualitative and quantitative research is breaking down, the collection of most data can still be classified as in one camp or another. For purposes of this thesis, they are also useful categories for organization.

Generally, quantitative research is defined as research where objective "numbers" data is the main concern. It usually consists of a questionnaire with a large number of the target audience (in the case of election campaigns, voters). Depending on the size of the sample, anywhere from 200 - 1000 people will be interviewed.[3]

Although in product marketing campaigns, such surveys can be broken down into a wide range of sub-classifications,

surveys in election campaigns usually fall into one of the following categories:

(1) Benchmark Surveys: usually done during a pre-campaign period, this type of survey provides a "baseline" against which to judge future campaign events and changes. Often this single sample of voters constitute what is called the "panel" approach, that is, they are a single sample of voters who are interviewed and re-interviewed at least three or four times during the campaign. The information received from this type of survey is most often used to formulate campaign strategy.

(2) "One-Shot" Surveys: as their name suggests, this type of survey interviews a different sample of voters every time a new poll is taken.

(3) Tracking Polls: this type of poll can be a part of either the "Benchmark" or "One-Shot" survey. Their purpose is to identify trends, specifically, to evaluate the impact of the election campaign's advertising and media coverage. In current elections, they are often done on a daily basis, causing at least one consultant to nickname them "one petite election after another."[4] Information received from these daily tracking polls is one of the reasons many election campaigns now change their advertising strategy throughout the campaign, something unheard of in traditional election strategy.

In recent years, the revolution in quantitative research has not been in the provision of new methods, but in the application of new technologies to those methods.

Traditionally, surveys on behalf of a political party or candidate have been conducted either by telephone or person-to-person, usually on an individual's doorstep. They involved the researcher(s) soliciting information from the respondent verbally and manually recording the data, a somewhat slow and tedious process.

Because speed in the collection of data is of crucial importance in the limited time frame of an election campaign, it was inevitable that any technology which could increase this speed would be seized upon. The new technologies which have accomplished this include:

Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)

This technology combines Wide Area Telephone Service (WATS) lines and data-entry terminals. "The interviewer reads a set of questions from a video screen and types the respondents' answers right into the computer.[5] According to Kotler, this process eliminates data editing and coding, reduces errors and saves time.

Computer Aided Personal Interviewing

This is the replacement of pen and paper by portable lap top computers to record in home interview responses.

Random-Digit Automated Dialing and Automated Recordings

This technology completely replaces human interaction. Random numbers are telephoned through automated dialling. The respondents are presented with a prerecorded set of questions, and they reply by dialing or pushing telephone numbers corresponding to particular responses. A similar system uses a "synthesized voice."[6]

Indeed, the trend in quantitative research (and qualitative, as we shall see later) is to eliminate the "middle man" - the interviewer - completely, allowing an uninterrupted flow between the respondent and the information sought. The goal here is to allow the respondent to feed his or her data directly into a computer; respondents are not required to verbalize their thoughts at all.

The systems which allow this "direct response" are known as Computerized Audience Opinion Systems. The field is dominated by two devices: the Program Evaluation Analysis Computer (PEAC), developed in Canada, and the Perception Analyzer, from Columbia Information Systems of Portland, Oregon. The purpose of both is not only to collect data electronically, but to "combine the depth of qualitative research with the statistical validity of quantitative."[7] They are examples of the technologies now available that are

breaking the delineation of traditional research categories referred to earlier.

The systems both work through the use of hand-held devices, similar to a TV remote control device, and allow respondents to record their reactions second-by-second, if the situation requires it. In each case, researchers have immediate access to the data, presented in either numerical or graph form.

Both PEAC and the Perception Analyzer have been used where "statistical rigour" has been desired, but their real strength appears to be in adding "precision to the tricky business of gauging emotional responses,"[8] in other words, as a tool to complement traditional qualitative research methods.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is traditionally defined as those research methods aimed at understanding the 'why' of attitudes and actions, or more specifically, underlying motivation. Done on either a one-to-one basis, or in small groups, it is significantly less structured than quantitative research. In his book, Advertising, John Wright describes some of the features of this type of research:

> It is usually exploratory or diagnostic in nature. It involves small numbers of people who are not usually sampled on a probabalistic basis. . . . No attempt is made to draw hard and fast conclusions. Impressionistic rather than definitive.[9]

This lack of definitive conclusions is one of the reasons the use of this type of research is considered controversial. Another is that it has its roots in psychiatric group therapy.

Generally, qualitative research is conducted through one of two methods: "one-on-one depth interviews" or "focus groups", also known as "group depth interviews." In both types of interview, the goal is to get the consumer/voter talking freely about his or her attitudes toward the product/candidate. The only difference in the two is in the number of people interviewed. In the one-on-one depth interview, there is only one respondent and one interviewer. In the focus group, there are anywhere from eight to fifteen individuals, any and/or all of whom are expected to respond to open-ended questions put forward by the interviewer (often, a professionally trained psychologist).

Individuals participating in depth interviews are drawn from "pre-determined population sub-groups."[10] For most election campaigns, that sub-group is the swing voters. Unlike respondents who reply to survey instruments, however, participants in this type of research are usually paid for

their time - an average of $40 - $50 for a one and a half to two hour session (in product campaigns where the opinions of professional are sought, the amount can easily be as much as $200).[11]

As will be seen in the Case Studies, focus groups are often used in the pre-testing of campaign advertising spots, and appear to be particularly useful at picking out those spots that are bad. In fact, their judgements are now so trusted that campaign spots are actually shelved on the focus groups' recommendations.[12]

Obviously, the use of such groups in election campaigns, as in marketing generally, is exerting a fair amount of influence, which is why its practitioners are ever eager to improve their precision. Both PEAC and the Perception Analyzer, as discussed earlier, are attempts at doing this.

As with quantitative research, their primary achievement is in "shortening the distance between the target population and the decision-maker."[13] In focus groups, instead of responding verbally to an interviewer, respondents reply electronically to audio or video material. Results are tabulated so quickly, that as one consultant has noted, "in a debate, during the intermission, the candidate can be informed of his earlier performance and make adjustments in his strategy accordingly."[14]

PEAC and the Perception Analyzer also provide two more examples of the fluidity of research techniques between product and political campaigns:

> Columbia has already used the "Perception Analyzer" for a number of commercial accounts to judge customer reaction to a variety of new products. Columbia, along with two other competing companies nationally, believes what works in judging a brand of deodorant can work in judging a politician.[15]

More On Computers . . .

While Peac and the Perception Analyzer are currently two of the most talked about applications of business technology to politics, the use of computers generally has greatly expanded the research capabilities of even the most leanly financed candidate. This has been made possible by the development of a variety of campaign management software programs, in conjunction with the low cost of personal computers.

While some of this software enables campaign workers to initiate their own research, such as conducting their own polls and running cross-tabulations, some of it gathers all the data collected by others and recirculates it, for a price, of course. It's called Computerized Network Communications, and while it's not that new in the world of marketing (companies like Nielsen have been "re-circulating"

data for years), its specific application to the world of politics is.

As of 1987, anyway. That was the year that former Republican political consultant Doug Bailey and Roger Craver, a former Democrat consultant, set up the Presidential Campaign Hotline, or officially, the "Daily Briefing on American Politics, transmitted weekdays by the American Political Network (APN), Inc. of Falls Church, Virginia."[16]

Basically, the "Hotline" transmits campaign information each morning to 400 or so subscribers for an average fee of $250 per month[17] (The fee varies according to subscriber category, eg. media outlet, political consultant, university, etc.[18]). It's available to anyone equipped with a PC, a modem, and the ability to pay the fee.

The Hotline was started as a way of tracking presidential contenders in the '88 US Presidential Election. Its purpose at that time was twofold:

(1) To keep subscribers fully apprised of timely developments in the race for the White House;[19]

(2) To launch the "First-Ever Daily Presidential Tracking Poll." Each night, from Sept. 5 onward, 333 randomly selected voters will be asked which candidate they support, demographic information about themselves, and

their opinion of advertising, issues and gaffes as they arise in the campaign.[20]

With the conclusion of the '88 Election, what was the "Presidential Hotline" became the "Transition Hotline," informing subscribers of changes in personnel and systems in the new administration. Subscribers were also offered access to the "Hotline Database," which "grows at a rate of 100 pages/week and is to politics what Lexis is to the legal profession."[21] Media, Technology and the Vote comments that the database "will represent the most concise and insightful history of the 1988 presidential campaign available."[22]

The Hotline currently supplies a "daily summary of print and electronic news coverage of everything from the New Orlean's Mayor's Race to the Annual Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations."[23] One of those summaries is the "Poll Update," a daily report from all sources. Another is "Insider Commentary," a daily analysis by the Hotline's contributing analysts, well known pollsters and consultants in both parties.[24]

The Hotline plans to conduct its own polling again in the '92 Presidential Election. In their own words, their goal is:

> . . . to become the single, most reliable source of data and information that reflect political developments in the U.S. . . . to be to American politics what Dow Jones is to the American economy.[25]

Other Companies To Note:

While companies like APN have made their mark by offering "more" data, other companies are cashing in on political campaigns by offering more "precise" data. Again, as with marketing generally, this preciseness can lead to a reduction in advertising costs, as message becomes matched with an ever more targeted audience.

This matching has become possible through the proliferation of cable systems and VCR's, on the one hand, and the availability of sophisticated demographic data, on the other. Known as "A/V targeting," its use was limited until recently because :

> . . . demographic information about particular audiences within a cable system was often sketchy. Political time-buyers were reduced to cross-referencing neighbourhood demographics with the national audience-make-up . . . when matching spots with slots.[26]

All of this changed when Nielsen Media Research and the National Cable Television Association merged their databases. It means that today, for significantly less cost than advertising on network television, "audiences of remarkable psychographic (if not demographic) homogeneity"[27] can be reached. Mergers such as this will continue to provide not only more precise information to clients, but

also allow them to use it in a much more cost effective manner.

Two other software programs of note are "Map Info" and "Micro Mapping." Both operate by combining a variety of databases with a map, allowing the user to "perform analyses that were never before possible."[28]

For example, Map Info can take a map of any scale and overlay up to 50 layers of data onto that map, either independently or simultaneously. The use can examine anything from a neighbourhood to a whole country, noting such things as party affiliation, race, sex or age.[29] Micro Mapping provides a similar service. For people like canvassers, it means they can "trace a proposed route, then receive a list of all registered voters along the way, including address and party registration."[30]

The use of this software in identifying the swing vote has become one of its most important applications, a point which has not been lost upon its critics, as we shall see shortly. Pollster Allan Gregg has described his use of the new software like this:

> We can target not just the possible swing ridings, but the swing polls within those ridings, and key voters within those polls. We can identify on a block-by-block basis their historical voting behaviour, their demographic profile, their inferred preference. . . .[31]

PART 2
CRITICISMS AND DEFENCES

Discussion surrounding the use of research in political marketing campaigns coalesces around four main subject areas. These include:

(1) Political Parties - much of the literature discusses the use of research as it impacts upon the role of political parties in the election process. While critics agree that the role of such parties has changed appreciatively throughout the twentieth century, there is considerable controversy as to whether or not the new techniques have caused such changes, or simply responded to them.

(2) Money - the fact that election campaigns are more expensive per capita than ever before is an undisputed fact. What is disputed is whether this significant rise in costs, primarily due to the use of new technologies, has helped electoral wins or remained just one more variable election analysts are unable to isolate.

(3) Media - releasing research findings to the media in an attempt to either receive favourable news coverage on one side or bring discredit to the other has been a long standing election campaign goal. Critics argue that using these findings as "news" provides the electorate with serious distortions; defenders argue the media treat such news responsibly, ultimately arguing "freedom of the press."

(4) Democracy - the question most critics are ultimately concerned with in relation to the use of all political marketing techniques is whether or not such techniques help or hinder the democratic process. Those who justify the use of research believe it makes politicians more finely attuned and responsive to the electorate. Critics argue just the opposite: research is stripping the electorate of its power to elect its leaders and replacing it with a contest between "non-ideological specialists."

The remainder of this chapter elaborates on the subject areas introduced here. It examines in detail the arguments raised in relation to each of these areas, drawing upon a wide variety of political and marketing literature.

Political Parties

As stated earlier, there is a general consensus that the role of political parties has changed dramatically over the past several decades. Primarily this change has been experienced by the parties as a loss of power and influence over the election process. For example, Professor Doris Graber has noted that in the 1940's, party allegiance was the most important determining factor in the vote, the candidate's personality coming in a distant third. By the

1960's, or what has now been dubbed the "television age," this order had been reversed.[32]

Political analysts refer to this change as "the emergence of the candidate-centered system" and note that it was a time when the political parties "lost their ability to play a dominant role in election campaigns."[33] What caused this change, however, is still a source of controversy.

Defenders of the new technologies point to a variety of factors outside their use which have contributed to the decline of political parties. One perspective is that the "machines declined because there was no longer a mass of largely, uneducated, easily mobilized immigrants."[34] Another is that politics has become much less labour-intensive, "not unlike many of the activities in the rest of our lives."[35]

This latter argument goes on to say that politics, generally, has become a more passive activity than it ever was previously, primarily because most of that activity had to do with reaching out to voters, something the new technologies no longer make necessary. And, as one critic has noted, the "grassroots" just doesn't have spare time and energy like they used to. He notes succinctly:

> One reality everyone must face . . . is that there is less of it (time) around these days. Seventy percent of the women under 34 work. Both women and men want to spend more time with their families and more time in health-related activities.[36]

In conjunction with this lack of time is the fact that there is simply less for the untrained volunteer to do. As Larry Sabato has noted, "new campaign techniques quickly became too complex for lay people to grasp; even the consultants had to specialize."[37] A similar sentiment is expressed by "Candidates don't have the time to learn all aspects of an election campaign these days . . . . Candidates have to depend upon professionals."[38]

The complexity of the techniques and the waning of party power are the reasons Dan Nimmo sees for the growth of political consultants. He argues that both factors worked in conjunction with each other to create a vacuum which the "direct descendants" of p.r. professionals stepped in to fill:

> The decline of the political parties has created opportunities for consultants and the tools of their trade. As party power waned, new means of financing campaigns, telling the candidate's story and getting the candidate's voters to the polls became necessary.[39]

New methods have also become necessary because of the sheer size of the electorate, especially in the U.S. Frank Luntz attacks the democratic ideal of the candidate talking directly to the voter in the late twentieth century by explaining the time required to make this ideal a working reality:

> If the two Senate candidates in Florida could shake the hands of 120 people an hour for 24 hours a day, it would take three years to meet every individual who

> voted in the 1986 election. If they made 10 speeches a day to audiences of 100 persons, it would take eight years to reach every vote.[40]

Luntz goes on to note that "today, no . . . candidate has enough time and energy to meet even one-tenth of the roughly 600,000 people in a congressional district."[41]

Defenders of the new technologies also note that while the technologies themselves are new, the goals to which they are applied are almost timeless. One such goal is the use of research to determine which part of the electorate can be considered the "swing vote" and what might be done to win their favour. In recounting the preliminary plans of an American election in 1910, M. Ostrogorski notes:

> The real campaign begins by reconnoitring the electoral ground and making an estimate of the forces available on either side. All over the Union, in each locality, polling lists are drawn up showing which party each elector is going to vote for; if he has not made up his mind or has not given an indication of his choice, he is ranked among the doubtful . . . the national committee will . . . concentrate all its efforts on the States in which the majority is inconsiderable or uncertain, where the parties are so well matched that a small group of electors may turn the scale in favour of either side."[42]

Indeed, one of the most compelling arguments for the use of research in modern electoral campaigns is that its sophisticated methods are simply replacing inefficient attempts at reaching the same goals. Agreeing with the notion that "campaign professionals of earlier eras were strategists without benefit of the complex technologies

standard today,"[43] one commentator muses about the significance of the different methods:

> Paid workers and volunteers . . . have always compiled information on voters. Until recently, such information was on three-by-five cards. Now it is in computers. Does this change mean anything?"[44]

Additionally, in support of the argument that "the new technologies are more effective than the methods they are replacing,"[45] Luntz again argues:

> Before the age of polling, candidates desiring a measure of the public's pulse had to rely on the advice of party bosses and business and religious figures, hardly a representative sample.[46]

Supporters of the new technologies state that its critics are longing for a purity in politics that never really existed. While discussing advertising specifically, but which applies to all facets of marketing in politics, Kathleen Hall Jamieson states that "presidential advertising has always been an adaptive art that used whatever resources it could muster from torch parades to roadblocking to invite the attention of its intended audience."[47] Its supporters ask, why, in the late twentieth century, would they suddenly change now.

Technological Change: A Threat To Party Power?

In summary, supporters of the use of new technologies in politics believe the goals of political parties have been

enhanced by their presence, even if outside consultants are hired in order to attain those goals. In contrast, critics believe the new technologies have replaced the party system and see such a replacement as a threat to democracies that are based on responsible party government. They express the concern that party insiders have been usurped by "non-ideological professionals," and express disdain that "the campaign managers must treat their client-candidates essentially as commodities to be merchandised to the voters."[48]

Claire Hoy is one of the most vociferous critics of politicians' current dependence on research findings. In his book Margins of Error, Hoy introduces the subject by lamenting that "methodology has replaced ideology as the new god of politics." He goes on to note:

> . . . the essence of parliamentary democracy is at risk. We elect politicians to lead, not follow numbers . . . . Old time political insiders have been replaced by the technocrats, the men and machines with the latest tabulations.[49]

Another group which has been quick to criticize the use of the new technologies in relation to political parties has been U.S. Democratic Senators. In an extensive debate in the U.S. Senate in 1988, one senator after another regaled their colleagues and the public with the dangers of the new technologies (although as one critic has pointed out, all

politicians use them). One line of argument is expressed like this:

> Reliance on campaign consultants and media campaigns with their direct appeals to the voters over the heads of party and group leaders, is not geared toward negotiation, compromise and coalition building. . . . Governing . . . demands coalition building - the traditional function of political parties. However, to the extent that changes in campaign practices bypass parties and result with less experience in this art, our governing institutions are likely to be staffed by personnel who will have to learn these skills through on-the-job-training.[50]

As stated earlier, whether or not technological change and its accompanying consultants has been the cause of waning political power, or simply a development in response to it, will be a source of continuing speculation. Not employed in the speculation, however, are the parties themselves.

Picking up on Jamieson's earlier note about presidential advertising always being an adaptive art, both the Republican and Democrat National and State Parties have established themselves as consultants in their own right for many of the new technologies. Observers such as Paul Herrnson believe this consultancy and/or "brokerage" role is a key component of the modern political party:

> The parties will never enjoy the level of electoral influence attributed to the old-fashioned political machines, but the evidence suggests that party organizations have and will continue to develop structures and processes that are well suited to the current system of cash-oriented "high-tech" campaign politics.[51]

Herrnson goes on to note:

> Are party organizations capable of adapting to the changing nature of American electoral politics? Yes, they are. Signs of their adaptability include . . . their integration into political consulting agencies that largely make up the new corps of congressional campaigners, and the expansion of the services they provide to their congressional candidates. . . . They help many of their candidates, and especially those running in competitive races, run more professional and sophisticated campaigns that are well suited to the electoral conditions of the contemporary United States.[52]

The Republicans were the first to fill this new role, not surprising given their historically close ties to Madison Avenue. They were the first to build permanent party headquarters, and the first to become the "vendor of choice" to candidates,[53] most of whom now consider their national party to be an important source of "advice, connections and valuable campaign services and assistance."[54]

The same is now true for most Democratic candidates. At one time thought to be "outgunned and impotent," the Democratic Party has also redefined its role "to become a major repository of many of the campaign services and resources needed by congressional candidates, state and local party committees..."[55]

The fact that political parties are now providing services once the exclusive domain of the consultants means candidates can now access these services at a much lower

cost. Having said that, however, the cost is still significant. Which brings us to the next area of controversy concerning the use of research in politics - the sheer amount of money required to harness its capabilities.

MONEY

> "Politics has got so expensive that it takes a lot of money even to get beat."[56]
>
> - Will Rogers

> "Democracy" one consultant recently noted, "is a growth business."[57]

There is no question that the "new" politics has become increasingly expensive, a trend that is unlikely to abate. While figures relating specifically to the research component of modern electoral campaigns are difficult to find, evidence of the increasing costs of marketing generally as applied to politics are abundant (we assume that research costs have risen proportionately as part of campaign strategy costs).

One example of the mounting costs is evidenced by the increasing costs of U.S. Senate campaigns. In 1974, the cost of the five most expensive campaigns for the U.S. Senate was $1 million. By 1984, the average cost for the most expensive campaigns was $10 million.[58] During approximately the same time period, average Senate campaign costs rose from $609,000 to $3.1 million.[59] House of Representatives campaigns were not immune either. The

average cost of a campaign there rose from $87,200 to $355,000 from 1976 to 1986.[60]

While some of the rise in costs can simply be attributed to larger electorates, the most revealing numbers are those that examine cost per vote. Back to the Senate campaigns discussed earlier, the average overall cost per vote rose from 67 cents in 1974 to $7.74 a decade later.[61] When those costs are figured in terms of cost per swing voter, the numbers become even more significant. As one observe has noted:

> The guy in Idaho was joking when he said it would have been less expensive in 1986 if . . . the two Senate candidates had just taken the undecided voters out to dinner . . . . The two candidates threw more than $5 million at the 25,000 undecided, or $200 per voter. That would buy a feast in Boise.[62]

The increase in costs is also reflected by the growth in the number of individuals and firms able to eke out a living in the campaign marketplace. In just six years, membership in the American Association of Political Consultants rose from 43 to 600, representing some 5,000 firms involved in the political industry at some level.[63] According to one source, at least $100 million of the $1.8 billion spent annually on party and elective politics finds its way to these strategists,[64] and that's in the U.S. alone. Individual consultants can earn as much as $25,000

per month.[65] Clearly, democracy is not only a growth business, it can also be a lucrative one.

Fundraising: The Politicians' Current Nemesis

Given the current high prices of today's politics, a related controversy has become the amount of time now required of politicians to raise funds to meet those prices. Politicians themselves have been the most vocal about this, especially those allied with the Democratic party in the U.S. Consistent in their attack on this aspect of modern electoral politics, numerous Democratic Senators expressed their concern during a U.S. Federal Election Amendment debate in February of 1988. Senator John Breaux summarized what appeared to be a consensus among his colleagues:

> I know when I considered running for this seat . . . the first thing I had to consider and the very first thing that professionals in this business came to me and asked was, "Can you raise the money? Do you have access to huge amounts of money that it is going to take to run a statewide campaign in Louisiana. I was told . . . you are going to have to raise about $8,000 a day . . . in order to be a member of the U.S. Senate. I said that is ridiculous.[66]

What the Democrats failed to address in this particular debate was that money spent on electoral campaigns doesn't necessarily equate with electoral win (a point which will be picked up again in this thesis). In discussing Ronald Reagan's time in office, advisor Ed Rollins makes the following observations:

> In the eight years that Ronald Reagan has been President, the Republican Party has raised and spent three-quarters of a billion dollars. But when Ronald Reagan leaves office, there will not be one more Republican in this country . . . the Democrats who have had nearly one-tenth of that money . . . are winning races everywhere.[67]

In fact, the evidence actually suggests "that money spent beyond a certain threshold level . . . does not correlate to a higher percentage of the vote."[68] The almost constant outspending by the Republicans of the Democrats and their inability to relate this to wins is noted in relation to the 1986 Senate elections:

> In the 34 races, Republican candidates spent $122 million, $33 million more than did Democratic candidates ($89 million); Republican candidates outspent Democratic candidates in 23 of the 34 races. But Democrats won 20 of the 34. In the 13 closest races, those decided by 6 percentage points or less, Democrats won 10 and Republicans won 3 Of those, Republican candidates outspent Democratic candidates in 11 out of 13.[69]

The fact that the Republicans always seem to have access to more money, and the subsequent resources however, raises a question that needs to be addressed, even if a satisfactory answer is unreachable: are elections democratic when all candidates do not have equal access to funds?

Those who minimize the role of money in today's elections campaigns put forward facts like "Proctor and Gamble spent as much as Bush and Dukakis combined just to test market one brand of soap."[70] Current U.S. Vice-

President Dan Quayle re-iterated this point as a Senator in the '88 U.S. Federal Election Amendment Debate referred to earlier:

> Surely educating the electorate about those who make critical national decisions is at least as important as one company's annual advertising budget for soap and toothpaste.[71]

Critics, however, see the issue as much more complicated than that. They cite the example of individuals like Nelson Rockefeller, who "can outspend any rival by margins of four and five-to-one." These same critics go on to note that in one of Rockefeller's more expensive campaigns, the 1966 race for Governor of New York, he outspent his competitors by 8 to 1;

> While Rockefeller won that campaign, it is estimated that each vote cost Rockefeller 74 cents. His opponent, Democratic candidate O'Connor, was able to spend only 9 cents per vote. Was this a democratic election?[72]

MEDIA

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, the relationship between media and privately commissioned research by political parties and candidates is a stormy and controversial one. The main issue is whether or not the findings of such research (primarily poll results), should be released to the media, and the subsequent consequences of doing so.

The political parties themselves are open about their use of "objective" numbers data to meet a variety of goals during election campaigns. Some of these goals are especially important in the early stages of a campaign, such as establishing a candidacy as serious, boosting volunteer morale, and fundraising.

The interrelationship of these goals with "numbers" data has been commented upon by many political observers. Edwin Diamond states that "news coverage closely follows the shifts in opinion polls . . . survey numbers moving in the right direction establish a candidacy as serious.[73] Sabato notes this same phenomenon, that is, "the leaking of surveys to generate momentum."[74] Dan Nimmo describes the whole interplay of media and research as a "vicious cycle." He states: "media exposure affects poll results; poll results affect fundraising; fundraising affects media exposure."[75]

Defenders of strategies such as these argue that such goals are not restricted to the late twentieth century. Again, in reference to American election campaigns in 1910, M. Ostrogorski notes that some form of straw vote has always been attempted early on in a campaign for a variety of purposes:

> A set of practices . . . tries to impress the imagination through the intellect. These are the charges, the claims, the bets and the straw votes. . . . The "claims" are forecasts backed by figures which predict success for the party; so many votes are "claimed" for it in advance . . . . These

> estimates or claims are always exaggerated with the object of stimulating the "ardour" of the workers and the generosity of the subscribers to the party funds.[76]

Another goal sought after early on is agenda setting. As referred to earlier, Ostrogorski notes that this is done by "priming", a strategy that "refers to changes in the standards that people use to make political evaluations." He believes it is another example of a technique transplanted from product marketing to the political arena:

> . . . opinion moulding efforts usually involve "soft" persuasive techniques, and have been common in the non-political marketplace for years. National advertisers, for example, frequently prime their potential customers before introducing a new product or service.[77]

Swerdlow goes on to note that "priming does not create public opinion; it locates, shapes and energizes pre-existing dispositions," but others disagree. Canadian pollster Angus Reid is one of them. Interviewed by journalist Claire Hoy, Reid states, "I'm not one of those who believe the measure of public opinion is a neutral force, I think it causes things to happen."[78]

Hoy concurs with Reid, and believes the media's "lack of responsibility" is the method by which "these things happen." One of those things is the determination of which issues or people to cover, the main criteria being where such issues or people stand in the polls.[79]

Hoy is not the only one to take this position. Indeed, one of the most controversial areas surrounding polling and media is the charge that journalists act irresponsibly by treating poll results as "serious" news. Sabato has noted that the "numbers (or polls) are used with reckless abandonment by the press," causing "today's polling prophecies to become tomorrow's headlines."[80]

Nimmo puts the release of polling results in the category of "pseudo-events."[81]

Democracy

In his book, Public Opinion, Polls and Democracy, Irving Crespi notes that the debate about the role of public opinion in representative democracies is as old as efforts to solicit that opinion. To illustrate key points in this debate, he summarizes the work of "two outspoken adversaries in the early years of polling"[82]: George Gallup and political scientist Lindsay Rogers. A review of these arguments is useful here as all subsequent literature on this subject can ultimately be traced back to one of these positions.

Gallup made his views known in a book entitled The Pulse of Democracy. According to Crespi, Gallup "believed in the collective wisdom of ordinary people and distrusted political intellectuals and experts."[83] The method through

which this wisdom could be obtained was through poll results, which he considered a " mandate from the people that should be followed by the nation's leaders because those results represent what the people want."[84]

Rogers, however, believed the goals of democracy were best obtained by "an enlightened leadership that would rise above the narrow interests, passions, and ignorance of the public at large."[85] According to Crespi, Rogers was fond of citing Edmund Burke's letter to the people of Bristol, England, "the classic eighteenth century statement that in a representative democracy it is the duty of a representative to vote his conscience and not merely to vote as instructed by his constituents."[86] He believed the public was uninformed and uninterested, so consequently, polling them to "ascertain what policies it favors . . . is an exercise in misguided futility."[87]

In concluding the summary of arguments by Gallup and Rogers, Crespi re-iterates the position that the issues they raise are still serious ones to consider. Again discussing polling specifically, but which applies to political marketing generally, he asks "whether polling has, in fact, strengthened democracy in our mass society or whether its critics are correct in saying that it has perverted traditional concepts of representative democracy."[88]

Having framed the question, Crespi is one of those who believe that democracy is enhanced by an ongoing dialogue between governments and the public. He argues that "by giving policymakers a better understanding of the public's thinking and making them more sensitive to the public's needs and aspirations, public opinion polls can contribute to a more effective democracy."[89]

His view is echoed by a number of other individuals concerned with the transferral of marketplace techniques to the political arena. The general consensus among these individuals is that research makes politicians more finely attuned and responsive to the electorate.

One of those who believe marketing research can accomplish this goal is Professor Gary Mauser. In a number of political marketing texts, Mauser maintains the position that "marketing research technology, by providing feedback about the electorate, acts primarily to clarify the situation rather than to corrupt or reform it."[90]

Philip Kotler also agrees with Mauser, and makes his views known not only in the introduction to one of Mauser's texts, but in his own numerous books on marketing as well: "a marketing orientation should lead candidates to better understand what voters want and to give voters what they want . . . . Candidates do not have to guess what voters think and want."[91]

This theme is consistent in a number of political texts as well. In The Political Image Merchants, Harry O'Neill states that "research is communicative, not manipulative."[92] Two other authors in that same volume agree. John d'Arc Lorenz believes it represents the only element of a modern campaign which is uniquely "of the people" and "by the people."[93] Walter DeVries states succinctly: "I find nothing Machiavellian about asking what problems bother people, or asking what they think ought to be done about those problems."[94]

Larry Sabato has discussed the issue in books he has both authored and edited. In one of his earlier works, The Rise of Political Consultants, he emphasizes the point that there is "nothing inherently evil" about the new tools of political campaigns. He argues that such tools are morally neutral, and as such, can be used for good or bad.[95]

Sabato re-iterates this point in his later works as well, citing the fact that there is really little evidence of technocracy impeding democracy:

> Inevitably, anyone who attempts to assess the effectiveness of modern campaign techniques is humbled by the scarcity of empirical evidence to support any hard and fast conclusions. There have been few solid election-day and post-election surveys, for example, and compared to the extensive privately supported research in product advertising, little thorough testing of the impact of political media advertisements during campaigns. The impact of any consultant or any technology, then, can usually only be guessed at. No one has the foggiest notion of what percentage of the

> vote a consultant or a piece of new campaign technology can or does add to a candidate in any given set of circumstances.[96]

The lack of any "empirical evidence" is a point that defenders of the new technologies return to again and again. Consistently, they point out the fact that "campaign observers rarely even have a precise idea of what event or series of events produced the election result."[97] Even consultants are reluctant to attribute any great power to themselves. As Republican advisor Matt Reese noted recently, "after 187 campaigns, I know more about what not to do than what to do."[98]

The basic conclusion by many observers is that no amount of consulting, for purposes of research or otherwise, can drastically alter a candidate's chance of winning. Sabato makes this point when he notes there is no "foolproof magic that can transform a sow's ear into a silk purse."[99]

The most recent example of this was potential presidential candidate Joe Biden, a candidate "designed" to jive with the responses of the electorate. As Jonathan Alter and Howard Fineman recount, Biden "was cooked up by consultants and pollsters trying to find a specimen to fit their airy theories of the American electorate." But there seemed to be nothing else to Biden, and as a result, his campaign was a disaster. As William Schneider of the

American Enterprise Institute states: "Biden is the first victim of high tech."[100]

The argument that research alone does not guarantee a candidate's success is also taken up in Diamond and Bate's book, *The Spot*. They argue that there are many elements in a campaign that can't be controlled, such as the nature and disposition of the voters, and the strength of incumbency. In fact, incumbency is one factor which many political consultants believe will win a campaign, even without the appropriate research.[101] In reference to some specific elections, Fred Barnes states: "In 1984, there was nothing any consultant could have done to save Walter Mondale from defeat. There was nothing any could have done to cause Reagan to lose."[102]

Does this mean that consultants are totally ineffectual in today's electoral politics? Hardly, for even without "empirical evidence" to support their use, they provide election campaigns with extensive political experience. Joel Swerdlow notes:

> The consultants make it possible for campaigns to make the best use of limited resources, to transfer information to voters in appealing and potentially effective ways, and provide vital data about the preferences of individual voters and the collective electorate.[103]

The use of consultants by almost every political candidate today has caused one commentator to note that "in

the end, the consultants nullify each other in most races."[104] Leiss, Kline and Jhally make a similar point:

> Assuming, that two or more parties have roughly equal resources, and hence equal call on the talents of political consultants, any short-run advantage gained by one party as the result of a particularly effective strategy is likely to be cancelled out over time.[105]

This assumption of "equal resources," however, is one of the points that most concern critics of the application of marketing techniques to politics. The techniques are expensive, and as discussed earlier, are becoming more so everyday. Referring to the Rockefeller campaign of 1966 referred to previously, are elections democratic when once candidate is able to outspend another by a margin of 8 to 1?

Questions such as this are being raised again in the popular media as the United States begins to wind up for the 1992 presidential election. Journalist Christopher Hitchens addresses the issue in a recent issue of *Harper's* in an article entitled "Voting In The Passive Voice: What Polling Has Done To American Democracy."

Hitchens begins his article by recanting the arguments for and against the use of public opinion polls put forward by adversaries George Gallup and Lindsay Rogers, just as Irving Crespi did. Unlike Crespi, however, who basically sided with Gallup, Hitchens states "Rogers could not have imagined the way in which this particular malignancy [public opinion polls] would develop and advance."[106]

Hitchens main argument is that polls have become so prolific in our society that elections have become bogus, no more than a response to the manipulations of those who orchestrate and conduct such polls. Quoting from an interview he conducted with former American pollster Pat Caddell, Hitchens comments:

> Like many other technologies in politics . . . polling is essentially "an instrument for deception whereby the truth is obscured and the public will be excluded and ignored." Which is a former pollster's way of calling polling an increasingly dangerous substitute for democracy, if not the precise negation of it.[107]

Another charge levied by Hitchens, and one other critics echo as well, is that research causes politicians to follow rather than lead, as they were elected to do. Sig Michelson continues this line of argument when he notes it's possible that "the candidate and his party are simply building a program to cater to interests which they know are there, rather than to exercising any effective leadership."[108]

Claire Hoy also concurs. In statements similar to those expressed by Burke over two hundred years ago about the role of elected leaders in democracies, Hoy states:

> . . . the essence of parliamentary democracy is that we elect politicians to lead, to take risks, to stand for something more than the latest popular sentiment or the collective wisdom, which may be based more on short-term emotional or outright ignorance than on anything else.[109]

Whether or not these charges are indeed altering the state of democracy as we have come to know it is obviously the source of much speculation. Certainly the techniques through which democracy is implemented have changed, but whether this has affected the essence is something that still remains to be seen.

For most observers, the jury is still out. Leiss, Kline and Jhally state:

> . . . we are not persuaded that the rise of political marketing has facilitated the objective of effective control by citizens over the political process; but we would also say that it has probably not hindered it either.[110]

Sabato expresses a similar statement:

> The effectiveness of democracy depends in part upon how well representative government reflects the will of the people. There has been much concern in recent years that the trend toward technocracy has clouded that reflection. Our survey of the latest advances in political campaign technology suggests, however, that this concern is not justified, on balance.[111]

As stated in the introduction, the evolution of the "latest advances" is the subject of the next chapter. Democratic or not, we shall see how marketplace techniques have become the way of politics over the course of the twentieth century.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Philip Kotler and Alan R. Andreason, Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1987), 201. This definition is the same one used by Kotler in a number of marketing texts he has authored or co-authored.

[2]James Perry, quoted in Swerdlow, Media Technology, Introduction.

[3]This definition and those that follow have been compiled from a number of marketing and political texts discussed throughout this thesis. They include Kotler and Andreason, Strategic Marketing For Nonprofit Organizations; Ray Hiebert, ed., The Political Image Merchants (Washington: Acropolis Books, 1971); Dan Nimmo, The Political Persuaders (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Larry J. Sabato, The Rise of Political Consultants (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

[4]Howard Fineman, "How The Vote Brokers Operate," Newsweek, 10 November 1986, 22.

[5]Philip Kotler, Gordon H.G. McDougall, and Gary Armstrong, "Marketing Research and Information Systems," chap. in Marketing, Cndn. ed., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 91.

[6]As with the definitions provided in the section on quantitative research, those provided here have been drawn from a number of sources. For a particularly succinct summary of the methods, however, see Hoy, Margin Of Error, 109.

[7]Michael Malone, "The Evolution Of Electronic Data Collection: The Perception Analyzer," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 35.

[8]Suanne Kelman, "Consumers On The Couch," Report on Business, February 91, 53.

[9]John S. Wright et al. Advertising (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1984), 561-562.

[10]Larry Sabato and David Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke and Mirrors? Reflections On New Technologies In The Political Consultant Trade," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 10.

[11]Kelman, "Consumers on the Couch," 52.

[12]Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, The Spot: The Rise Of Political Advertising On Television (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 356.

[13]Malone, "Electronic Data Collection," 34.

[14]Ibid, 35.

[15]Jeff Mapes, "Instant Computer Polls Eyeball Candidates At The Speed Of Sight," The Oregonian, 30 October 1987, reprinted in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 153.

[16]Alan Bernstein. "Serving The Needs of Political Junkies," Online Access, Winter 1991, 30.

[17]Ibid., 30.

[18]Fees for the "Hotline" are actually determined by whether or not an organization simply subscribes or actually contributes data. For this reason, political consultants are charged the lowest fees, network t.v.news departments the highest. An actual breakdown of subscribers is as follows:

Media Outlets: 60%

Campaigns and campaign-related individuals, such as pollsters, analysts and consultants: 20%

PAC's, embassies, universities, corporations, political junkies: 20%. Larry Checo and Jeffrey Hallett, "The Presidential Campaign Hotline," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 24.

[19]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke and Mirrors," 6.

[20]Checo and Hallett, "The Presidential Campaign Hotline," 22.

[21]Ibid, 24.

[22]Ibid, 24.

[23]Bernstein, "Serving The Needs Of Political Junkies," 30.

[24]Checo and Hallett, "The Presidential Campaign Hotline," 24.

[25]Ibid, 24.

[26]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke and Mirrors," 8-9.

[27]Ibid, 8.

[28]Laszlo Bardof, "Making Data-Rich Maps With A PC," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 42.

[29]Ibid, 42.

[30]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke and Mirrors, 12.

[31]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 120.

[32]the American Assembly, Columbia University, "Campaigning Outside The Party Apparatus," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 162.

[33]Paul S. Herrnson, "Prospects For The Parties," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 169.

[34]Ibid., 169.

[35]Xandra Kayden and Eddie Mahe, Jr., "The Party Of The Future," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 164.

[36]the American Assembly, "Campaigning Outside The Party Apparatus," 162.

[37]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke And Mirrors," 5.

[38]Frank Luntz, "Campaign Technology and American Democracy," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 96.

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[42]M. Ostrogorski, "Democracy And The Party System In The United States: A Study In Extra-Constitutional Government, 1920," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 59.

[43]Sabato and Beiler, Magic...Or Blue Smoke And Mirrors," 5.

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[47]Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "The Evolution of Political Advertising in America," chap. in Linda Lee Kaid, Dan Nimmo and Keith R. Sanders, New Perspectives On Political

Advertising (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 20.

[48]David S. Broder, "The 'New Politics' And Party Responsibility," chap. in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 160.

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[50]the American Assembly, "Campaigning Outside The Party Apparatus," 162.

[51]Herrnson, "Prospects For The Parties," 170.

[52]Ibid., 170.

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[54]Herrnson, "Prospects For The Parties," 171.

[55]Ibid., 169.

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[57]Swerdlow, Media Technology, Introduction.

[58]Curtis Gans, quoted in Swerdlow, Media Technology, 81.

[59]Rothenberg, "The Boom In Political Consulting," 190.

[60]Ibid., 190.

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[63]Rothenberg, "The Boom In Political Consulting," 190.

[64]Ibid., 190.

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[74]Sabato, The Rise Of Political Consultants, 310.

[75]Nimmo, The Political Persuaders, 105.

[76]Ostrogorski, "Democracy And The Party System In The United States," 61.

[77]Swerdlow, Media Technology, 139.

[78]Ibid, 139; Hoy, Margin of Error, 161.

[79]Hoy, Margin of Error, 12.

[80]Sabato, The Rise Of Political Consultants, 103; Ibid., 318.

[81]Nimmo, The Political Persuaders, 108.

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[84]Ibid.,3.

[85]Ibid., 3.

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[97]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke And Mirrors," 5.

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CHAPTER THREE

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Political marketing research has had a long evolution. What is now sophisticated and routine, however, had very humble beginnings: the simple collection of statistics.

Such statistics were first gathered by governments as census data in the early to mid-nineteenth century. In fact, by 1839, the American Statistical Association had been founded, and while its concern was primarily with quantitative data, the preoccupation with how to make such data ever more precise was already there. In Canada, the first census was conducted in 1871.

Governments did not remain the sole collectors of data for long, nor were they the only body which saw a use for it. By 1860, the notion that data about a media audience could be collected and sold was under experimentation. This idea culminated in 1899 with the establishment of the Association for American Advertising. As Donald Hurwitz notes, this group was a "loose knit federation of regional and advertising clubs which began to gather information on press runs and the likely readership of publications.[1]

This historical point is noteworthy as it marks the beginning of the long affiliation between advertising agencies and what is now termed marketing research. It was a time when ad agencies set themselves up as the "experts"

on the audience that advertisers were now so desperately needing to reach in an era of rapid urbanization.

It was this migration towards the cities, along with rapid increases in newspaper circulation, which drove the ad agencies to collect more and more information. Between 1890 and 1920, the collection of data proliferated, which was only encouraged by World War I.

The data collected during this period of time was still quantitative, which by now primarily took the form of public opinion polls. More important than the form, however, was the validity which business was now attaching to such polls. As Hurwitz again notes, it was the era when the customer first became king and "businessmen were exhorted to use research to discover and organize as yet unknown markets in the pursuit of new opportunities."[2]

The Marriage of Ad Agencies and Market Researchers

Although the affiliation of ad agencies and market researchers had begun decades earlier, it wasn't until the 1930's that such researchers became a fundamental component of the ad agencies themselves.

The first of these researchers was the now legendary George H. Gallup, Sr. A well known statistical professor at the time, Gallup was lured by the advertising agency Young

and Rubicam to head up the first, formal agency research department.

Almost simultaneously, the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), prodded by the ad agencies, began their own extensive, formal research, primarily to service the ad agencies' growing appetite for facts and figures. Under the direction of Dr. Daniel Starch, NBC conducted a major study based on 18,000 interviews. It was the start of an era Hurwitz describes as "scientific promotion," for it was the first time that specific information on program audiences, such as economic status, and the geographical location of radio ownership, was noted.[3]

Other ad agencies and media outlets were soon to follow NBC and Young and Rubicam. In fact, the proliferation of research departments in both industries soon led to the founding of organizations specifically concerned with market research. By the mid-1930's, both the American Marketing Association (AMA) and the Advertising Research Foundation were well established. Simultaneously, the National Opinion Research Centre was founded, along with the journal, "Public Opinion Quarterly."

By 1935, the industry was confident enough to broaden its horizons. The increasing use of telephones was making large scale polls both easier and more cost efficient. It

was then that the application of market research to political campaigning was born.

Polls And Politics

By the mid-1930's, the goal of predicting election results was seen to be achievable. It wasn't the first time polling attempted to do this, the Harrisburg Pennsylvanian had been publishing polls since 1824, but it was the first time such polls had been thought "scientific" enough to actually mean something.

The first pre-election polling was actually done privately by George Gallup for his mother-in-law in 1932; she was running for Secretary of State in Iowa. But Gallup wasn't alone for long. By 1933, the first professional campaign management company, Campaigns, Inc., had been founded by Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter. The new firm was a natural outgrowth of its founders' prior experience in both public relations and advertising activity, with a new application of their skills to the political arena.

Whitaker and Baxter were quick to make the most of polls (they have boasted that between 1933 and 1955 they won seventy of the seventy-five campaigns they managed.[4]) for by 1936, George Gallup and others were now claiming that election polls were, indeed, "scientific." The illustrious

MIT, under the guidance of Political Science Professor Ithiel de Sola Pool, agreed. Even with such expertise, however, predictions for the 1936 U.S. presidential election turned into a disaster that has since become known as the "*Literary Digest* Debacle."

The Crossley and Gallup organizations, *Fortune* Magazine and *Literary Digest* all issued results that forecast victory for Republican nominee Alfred Landon over Franklin Roosevelt. The blunder was the result of unrepresentative sampling: polling had been restricted to automobile owners and telephone subscribers, and while the average American fitted neither category, many Republicans did.

The researchers were quick to learn from their mistake, and by 1946 the first privately commissioned poll on behalf of a political candidate was conducted.[5] By 1948, however, the pollsters were forced to learn another hard lesson; polls were accurate only if conducted at specific points in the campaign.

George Gallup discovered this when he wrongly predicted the loss of Harry Truman to Thomas E. Dewey in the 1948 presidential election. In that fateful forecast, Gallup stopped interviewing October 15, eighteen days before the election was held. As Gargrave and Hull note: "A post-election analysis showed that a minimum of 4.5 million votes, nearly one out of five in Truman's total vote, were

based on decisions by voters after the middle of October."[6] The pollsters had been humbled again.

The 1950's

By the 1950's, the advent of television made the need for audience data even greater than before, and agencies were again quick to step in. Agencies at this time were also closely tied to the Republicans, and in 1952 this affiliation changed the face of political campaigning forever.

The presidential election in that year was notable for two reasons. First, television was the new game in town, and politicians saw it as an effective tool for their campaigns. Second, campaign managers had little knowledge of the new medium - but the advertising agencies did; the politicians needed the ad agencies' expertise, and the agencies saw political campaigns as a vast new market to be exploited.

In the 1952 presidential election, Republican General Dwight D. Eisenhower ran against Democratic candidate Adlai Stevenson. Taking advantage of the Republicans' close ties to the ad agencies, Eisenhower had both an advertising strategist on his campaign team (Rosser Reeves) and an "Agency of Record" (BBD&O).

Reeves made it a habit to follow Eisenhower around and listen to his speeches. Something was wrong, Reeves felt, but he could not figure out exactly what it was. He described his dilemma, and how he solved it, as follows:

> Ike made a speech in Philadelphia and he covered thirty two separate points. I sent a research team down the next morning. We got a thousand people to interview, as I recall it, and said "Did you hear Ike's speech?" Then we said, "What did he say?" Nobody knew.[7]

Reeves knew that voters' memories would be improved if Eisenhower narrowed his focus to several primary issues. To determine what those issues should be, Reeves visited George Gallup, who after extensive polling told the strategist: "corruption, rising taxes and inflation, and the Korean War."[8]

This was probably the first time that what we now call "hot-button" issues had been identified in an election campaign through public opinion polling. It was polls such as Gallup's that inspired Reeves to situate Eisenhower as the "Man of Peace."

Well, as we all know now, the Man of Peace won a resounding victory. The questions surrounding that victory, however, have lingered.

Reeves apparently believed that Eisenhower would have won with or without market research and the T.V. spots based on that research - a view shared by the Republican National

Committee, which not only refused to allow Reeves to conduct any post-election surveys, but also rejected even the suggestion that Eisenhower won for any other reason than Eisenhower himself.

Others were not so sure. The mushrooming campaign costs incurred in the 1952 election, primarily by the Republican candidate, first raised the question that has been with us ever since: can money buy votes? More specifically, could money buy the expertise that would guarantee the votes?

The Democrats were particularly concerned about this issue because, as Diamond and Bates note, the "Democrats believed that Madison Avenue was, well, Republican."[9] In fact, these authors state that "in 1955, when the Democrats started talking to ad agencies, no one wanted their business."[10]

Meanwhile, the tools of Madison Avenue had been spreading to other campaigns as well. As early as 1950, the race for governor in New York was characterized by extensive surveys of voters' attitudes and interests. Sig Mickelson writes:

> The 1950 Dewey campaign for the governorship of New York was a classic. . . . the Dewey staff pioneered in developing strategies and techniques which were to set the pattern for the . . . decades which have followed.[11]

Clearly, political marketing research was here to stay.

The Post-1960 Period

By 1960, a number of significant developments were changing the face of political marketing research. These included a move from quantitative to qualitative research, more precise demographics, the extension of the pre-campaign periods during which market research was undertaken, and a generation of politicians who had grown up on polls.

The 1960 U.S. presidential race saw the culmination of all these factors, primarily in John Kennedy's campaign, which was notable for its extensive research, as well as for the extended time period during which such research was conducted:

> John F. Kennedy . . . began campaigning for election the day after he lost the vice-presidential race in August of '56. This was four years and two months before his ultimate election in November of 1960.[12]

Kennedy's campaign team hired two of the best researchers in the country: Lou Harris and Professor Ithiel de Sola Pool of MIT. The independent findings of both these men convinced Kennedy to take a proactive approach to what was then known as the "Catholic issue."

Harris and de Sola Pool based their findings on what had been the largest sample of public opinion polling to date - 23,000 voters in Wisconsin alone.[13] They used this

polling to develop campaign themes, and kept on polling to see if such themes required modification. Continued research throughout the campaign was seen as fundamental to the Kennedy momentum.

Shortly thereafter, increasing numbers of political candidates were following suit. By 1962, two thirds of all U.S. Senate candidates were using surveys, and by 1966, this proportion had risen to eighty-five percent.[14] In fact, opinion polls had acquired such prominence by the time of the 1964 presidential election that Democratic candidate Johnson "liked to carry opinion poll results in his pocket to show reporters."[15] The 1964 campaign was also notable because it was based on one of those "hot-button" issues. In fact, analysts generally agree that this campaign saw the birth of hot-button politics. Ironically, it was the Democrats who uncovered them. Research had shown that voters were concerned about nuclear war, and, more specifically, that Republican candidate Barry Goldwater might be likely to start one. That seemed like the only "hot-button" the Democrats needed.

By the mid-1960's, technological changes had greatly enhanced the attractiveness of market research, just as the telephone had done in the 1930's. The significant innovation was the computer, and before long political

consultants saw its strong applicability to political campaigns.

Computers quickened the pace of information gathering and made the results easier to analyze. More sophisticated manipulation of data meant that it was now possible to obtain virtually any combination of psychographic or demographic data. The mass audience could be broken down into smaller and smaller components, ushering in the era of specifically targeted campaign themes for different groups of people. In fact, the era of the mass audience/market had ended:

> Thanks to computers and survey research, the rating services like Nielsen and Arbitron no longer just informed advertisers how many people were watching their programs; now they told viewership by age, sex region.[16]

The sophistication of marketing research by the 1960's meant that campaign teams who did not employ experts in this area would fall behind. Indeed, as a result of the explosion of information relating to political marketing research and campaign management, even the ad agencies could not stay on top of developments. Thus emerged a new breed of business - independent political campaign consultants. Their presence was so well established by 1969 that two organizations were formed: the American Association of Political Consultants, and the International Association of Political Consultants.

By this time, politicians were increasingly favouring independent consultants over their own party workers. Political campaign management required the best that market research could offer. The research itself was becoming more meticulous than ever, particularly with respect to its timing; public opinion polls commissioned by both the Republicans and the Democrats were moving from a weekly to a daily basis, and campaigning routinely started at least a year prior to the formal inception of the campaigns themselves. Both sides in the 1968 U.S. presidential campaign were heavily oriented toward market research.

The 1970's

By the mid-1970's market researchers were discovering that quantitative research could not provide all the answers for the successful management of political campaigns. Indeed, the diminishing success of many political consultants (in 1970, they lost as much as they won) made the need for new research techniques imperative, and, once again following the lead of product marketing, these consultants turned to focus group interviews.

As stated earlier, focus groups, like many market research techniques before them, grew out of the behavioural sciences, specifically, psychiatric group therapy. Also known as group depth interviews, the procedure for such

interviews is to gather together eight to twelve people who are homogeneous in their voting patterns. As John Wright notes, "the participants are encouraged to engage in conversation about the topic under investigation."[17] In political campaigns, that means their reactions to issues, messages, candidates, and indeed, every possible facet of a political contest.

The focus group's greatest strength is its ability to discover motivational factors, a point that was not wasted in the Reagan campaign era. In fact, it was focus groups conducted by Republicans and Democrats alike, that, as Diamond and Bates note, "pointed to an electorate that was ready to give Reagan his chance to get governments off our backs."[18]

Reagan's researchers also used focus groups to explore whether or not his former career as an Hollywood actor would hurt his chances at the presidency; their fears were alleviated when only 3 percent of those polled even mentioned Reagan's acting background.[19]

The Canadian Experience

Public opinion polls appeared on the Canadian scene for the first time in 1865, in New Brunswick. Premier Leonard Tilley had been convinced by the lieutenant-governor of the

day, Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, that the time was right to call an election, based on Gordon's "polling of many citizens." Gordon was wrong, however, and Tilley lost by a landslide. It turns out that Gordon had almost certainly introduced a bias in choosing the people he polled:

> He may have held discussions only with upper class New Brunswickers, such as himself. Perhaps he conducted his poll in his private club and neglected to talk with the waitresses and bartender. The good Sir Arthur was likely an Anglican; perhaps he overlooked the opinions of the large Roman Catholic community in New Brunswick. . . . Perhaps he erred on all these counts.[20]

In any event, while polling took some time to prove its usefulness, the use of ad agencies by political parties was well established by the 1930's. In fact, by this time both the Government of Canada and the ruling Liberal Party had an agency of record - the firm Cockfield, Brown. While it appears that at first this agency did little more than take "orders from their political masters," such as buying radio advertisements as requested, it was only the reluctance of the leading politicians of the day which prevented Cockfield, Brown from taking a much larger role than it did. Apparently, Prime Ministers Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent just didn't trust the new techniques.[21]

Nevertheless, by the 1950's, the relationship between Cockfield, Brown and the Liberal Party was one of mutual dependence, so much so, that in the 1953 campaign the agency

"donated" one of their principals, Bill Munro, to the Liberal cause. As Jeffrey Simpson states: "The agency provided research assistance for ministerial speeches, wrote some of them entirely, and organized free time political broadcasts."[22]

The agency was especially helpful in fundraising during campaigns, where as Simpson again notes, they "collected money from companies which - by contributing to the Liberal Party through Cockfield, Brown - wrote off the costs as a business expense."[23]

Obviously, ad agencies were proving immensely useful to both parties and governments, for a variety of services. By the late 1950's and early 60's, Simpson notes that the "admen had arrived in the inner circles of the Liberal Party," and with a parallel development in the Tories, the invasion of the pollsters had begun.

The 1960's In Canada

By the 1960's, advertising agencies were shaping political messages as much as they were buying the time to air those messages. They were also deeply involved in both the structures of parties and governments in Canada.

Two of the men most notable in this regard have been Dalton Camp and his brother-in-law, Norm Atkins, a twosome

otherwise known as the New Brunswick Mafia. For years, they advised the former Premier of New Brunswick, Richard Hatfield. Both members of the Progressive Conservatives, Camp became especially famous when, as the owner of a Toronto ad agency, Camp Advertising, he engineered the downfall of Diefenbaker as the Tory leader, and helped elect Robert Stanfield in his place. As Jonathan Manthrope notes, "these men knew that collectively they were the most sophisticated political organization in the country."[24]

Camp and Atkins formed the basis of what was known as the "Big Blue Machine," a group of strategists brought together when William Davis was running for leadership of the Ontario Conservative Party in 1972. Inattentive to crumbling Tory riding associations, Davis knew that a leadership coup was possible only with the most sophisticated campaign tools available. Having achieved such a coup, he went on to woo Ontario in the same way, with the same success. It was Norm Atkins who had engineered all this, and as Rosemary Speirs states:

> He [Atkins] borrowed American electoral techniques to give the Ontario Tories their first, highly polled, carefully controlled campaign. . . . The campaign cost $4.5 million and produced a harvest of 78 Conservative seats - to 20 for the Liberals and 19 for the New Democrats.[25]

By the time the Big Blue Machine repeated their win in 1975, election campaigns in other provinces were using the

same techniques. For example, the provincial election held in British Columbia the same year was managed by ad agencies for both the New Democratic and Social Credit parties. It is unknown which party initiated the use of the new research methods, but as Terence Morley states, "the advent of Bill Bennett marked . . . the end of the dominance of the pure amateur in provincial politics."[26] He goes on to note, "one of the first things younger Bennett did, was hire a Vancouver advertising executive to reshape the party image."[27]

It was research that helped shape this image, and it made B.C.'s politics look more and more like Ontario's:

> Regular opinion polling throughout the province [of B.C.] - and in other western provinces - was carried out to provide a steady stream of political intelligence. The reconstruction began in '73 . . . transformed Social Credit into a western version of the Ontario Conservative Party's Big Blue Machine.[28]

The election of the Parti Quebecois in Quebec in 1976 was also not without its streams of intelligence, although interestingly enough, much of it was contradictory.

Both the PQ and the Quebec Liberals did extensive polling before this historical election even began. Contradictory results were published by the Centre de Recherche sur l'Opinion Publicque (CROP) and the Institut Quebecois de l'Opinion Publicque (IQOP). The reason for the

contradiction? According to Pierre Dupont, CROP had been infiltrated by the PQ.[29]

The 1980's And Beyond

By the 1980's, no politician needed convincing about the use of "admen and pollsters." The party rank and file were a different matter, however, for what the pollsters allowed the leaders to do, was operate without consensus among the party's grassroots.

The resentment of the pollsters by party members was voiced by both the Ontario Conservatives and the federal Liberal Party in the early 1980's. Under Pierre Trudeau's leadership, Liberal delegates actually pushed through a "resolution condemning the influence of polls, propaganda, and patronage orchestrated by a small elite" at the 1982 Liberal convention.[30] Such a resolution was provoked by Liberal communication strategies based entirely on polling data.

William Davis also used research on the electorate to bypass the wishes of party members. As Speirs again notes, Davis was renowned for "listening only to Toronto admen and pollsters," and by the Ontario election of 1981, had pollster Allan Gregg of Decima Research churning out daily tracking data. Speirs points out that such data allowed

"Davis to pitch his policy announcements, and his handouts, to precisely chosen targets. This centrally controlled campaign (was) a triumph of organization and technology."[31]

The trouble with such technology was that increasingly, it made the party rank and file feel left out. More significantly, it was widening the gap between the political agenda sought by party members and what the leaders knew was politically palatable to the electorate.

Davis sensed this growing division, and in an attempt to make his election campaign and members' wishes more congruent, brought in pollsters to "educate" party members at the Tories' first policy conference held in October of '81. Speirs recounts how Allan Gregg of Decima Research attempted to bring this education about:

> With a slide show of charts on demographic and public opinion trends, he lectured the largely white, largely middle-aged, Protestant and anglo audience on the growing ethnic diversity of the province, the surge of women entering the workforce, and the dangers of straying from the political middle.[32]

The polling, which directed all politicians toward the middle road, also became an issue in leadership campaigns. For example, when Davis stepped down as leader of the Ontario Conservative Party in October of 1984, the leading contenders for his job were all faced with the same dilemma - the mood of the party and the mood of the electorate just didn't match. For example, pollsters for Larry Grossman's

nominating team told them party delegates were much farther to the right than the electorate. If Grossman acceded to delegates' right wing agenda in order to win the leadership campaign, he couldn't possibly stick to that agenda and win the general election.

Grossman attempted to sway delegates to this reality by releasing a policy paper based on Allan Gregg's interpretation of polling results. Entitled "The Realities: Ontario's Changing Political Culture," it was Grossman's last ditch effort to get the Conservative Party to move towards the centre.

Other leadership nominees were attempting to do the same, and were importing American political skills in order to do it. It was a surreptitious importing, however.

As early as 1979, twenty-one year old Michael Perik began orchestrating the leadership campaign of Frank Miller. As Speirs states, "he began by writing a detailed step by step strategy paper, modelled on Jimmy Carter's nomination campaign, and anonymously titled, in case it should fall into the wrong hands, 'Donald Duck For Leader.'"[33] By 1983, Perik actually brought a political strategist, Tony Corrado, from Washington to work on Miller's campaign. As Speirs goes on to note, however, "fearful of adverse publicity about an American politico in Miller's camp, Perik carefully kept Corrado backstage."[34]

Whether Corrado was responsible for Miller's eventual win is difficult to say, but when Miller decided to call an election, it was based strictly on polling results, again from Allan Gregg of Decima Research.

By this time, Gregg was also heavy into focus group interviews (pollsters Martin Goldfarb and ABM Research were doing the same for the Liberals and the NDP, respectively). Along with opinion polls, focus groups were telling the researchers two things: the environment was a major concern of the electorate, and Ontario didn't want to move to the right.

Allan Gregg was particularly concerned that the Tories pay attention to these findings, for their political agenda was already the most suspect by the electorate in these areas. His statement to the Miller campaign team reflected this concern: "If Miller doesn't like those NDP ideas, Bob Rae will be Premier."[35]

Unfortunately for Miller, the Liberal candidate, David Peterson, did like these ideas. Extensive focus group testing by Michael Kirby of Goldfarb Associates allowed Kirby to "spell out in detail for Peterson just how badly he was doing and how much he needed to change."[36]

Peterson was also helped by the extensive public opinion information made available to him by federal Liberal polling. Conversely, it appears Miller's campaign was hurt

by the flight of the Big Blue Machine to Ottawa where it helped engineer the win of Brian Mulroney as Prime Minister.

Although Miller won the election of February '85, it was a tenuous win based on a minority government. With his back against the wall, Miller made one last attempt to salvage his government. Concluding that perhaps he hadn't paid enough attention to any of the market research conducted on his behalf previously, he hired one of Ronald Reagan's pollsters to show him the error of his ways. Again, the fact that an American was conducting polls in Canada was hidden - the bills for Arthur Finkelstein's polling were sent through a Canadian firm: Research Spectrum.

Finkelstein gave Miller his money's worth. His conclusion was that if Miller played his cards right, he could hold on to his government, but he would have to stay almost left of centre to do so. For Miller, his philosophical alignment couldn't allow him to do this. His government quickly went down to defeat.

Summary

This chapter has traced the origins of political marketing research back to the nineteenth century. It has shown how the use of market research has evolved primarily from a business tool employed by ad agencies to an integral component of modern political campaigns.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Donald Hurwitz, "The Culture of Business and the Business of Culture: Social Research, Scientific Management and the Collection of Media-Audience Data." Paper presented at the 1985 American Marketing Association Workshop "Historical Research In Marketing," 6.

[2]Ibid., 3.

[3]Donald Hurwitz, "The Early Efforts to Promote Broadcasting Advertising." Paper presented to the 1984 Convention of the American Academy of Advertising, 49.

[4]Nimmo, The Political Persuaders, 36.

[5]The Elmo Roper organization polled the 21st Congressional District of New York for Jacob K. Javits' first campaign for political office. See Nimmo, The Political Persuaders, 86.

[6]Gargrave and Hull, 144.

[7]Diamond and Bates, The Spot: The Rise Of Political Advertising On Television, 55.

[8]Ibid., 56.

[9]Ibid., 46.

[10]Ibid., 78.

[11]Mickelson, The Electric Mirror: Politics In An Age of Television, 48.

[12]Ibid., viii.

[13]Nimmo, 85.

[14]Sabato, The Rise of Political Candidates, 69.

[15]Diamond and Bates, 141.

[16]Ibid., 150.

[17]Wright, Advertising, 562.

[18]Diamond and Bates, 289.

[19]Ibid., 228.

[20]For a more detailed discussion of this election, see Mary Anne Comber and Robert S. Mayne, The Newsmongers: How The Media Distort The Political News (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 63-65.

[21]Much of the information relating to the early use of ad agencies by politicians in Canada is taken from Jeffrey Simpson, Spoils of Power: The Politics of Patronage (Toronto: Collins, 1988), 123-145.

[22]Ibid., 143.

[23]Ibid., 143.

[24]Jonathan Manthrope, The Power And The Tories (Toronto: Macmillan, 1974), 81.

[25]Rosemary Speirs, Out Of The Blue: The Fall Of The Tory Dynasty In Ontario (Toronto: Macmillan, 1986), 6-7.

[26]J. Terence Morley et al., The Reins Of Power (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1983), 97.

[27]Ibid., 97.

[28]Ibid., 99-100.

[29]For a broader discussion of the role of research in the Parti Quebecois electoral victory of '76, see Pierre Dupont, How Levesque Won (Toronto: James Lorimar and Co., 1976), 10.

[30]Simpson, The Spoils of Power, 349.

[31]Speirs, Out Of The Blue, 17.

[32]Ibid., 15.

[33]Ibid., 36-37.

[34]Ibid., 37.

[35]Ibid., 125.

[36]Ibid., 76.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDIES

As stated in the Introduction to this thesis, the three Case Studies to be reviewed here include the 1988 Presidential Election in the United States, the Canadian General (Federal) Election of 1988, and the 1991 British Columbia Provincial Election.

As also stated previously, these particular elections were chosen because of the ideological nature of the winning parties. In the 1988 federal elections in both the U.S. and Canada, those parties traditionally placed on the "right," namely the Republicans in the U.S. and the Conservatives in Canada, won the race. Critics who believe in the absolute power of the new technologies and methods maintain that these outcomes were inevitable. They argue that because these parties have always maintained close ties with the private sector, these parties have, historically, always had access to more money and to the techniques of marketing and advertising so well established in that sector.

In summary, critics believe this access causes parties to win. But does it?

An examination of the elections won by the "right" certainly documents the continued borrowing from the private sector. It cannot, however, be isolated and identified as the factor which caused the wins.

The other Case Study confuses the matter even further. It was won by the New Democrats, and illustrates a number of factors which critics seem reluctant to discuss.

The first is that regardless of political persuasion, all parties seek to make use of the "tools of Madison Avenue." For better or worse, in an era when mass communication is necessary, they have become accepted as the way of doing things.

Another point which cannot be ignored, one which has been discussed earlier, is that even with access to all the "tools", it doesn't necessarily lead a party to winning, or even make a sizeable showing. As stated by many observers, there are simply too many variables in an election outcome to trace the win to even one or a combination of those variables. This point was made dramatically in the 1991 provincial election in B.C., where the traditional "right-wing" party was decimated, the "left" won the election, and a new coalition with access to almost nothing during the election campaign became the official opposition.

In concluding the introduction to this section, I would like to say my Case Studies prove a number of significant points, either for or against the use of research in politics. Unfortunately, they prove nothing. Yes, they document research as an integral component of modern day election campaigns (although even this statement is open to

question - the B.C. Liberals managed to do without it). What they can't show is just how that research factored into the win. Since many political analysts have lamented the inability to isolate variables in any election campaign, I know this is not a unique problem. My own conclusion? Research probably helps win campaigns, but no more or less than one of at least a dozen other variables.

1988 U.S. Presidential Election

By the late 1980's, focus groups had superseded the public opinion poll as the most talked about technique of political marketing research. And, while public opinion polls still played a very large part in the 1988 U.S. presidential election, it was focus groups that appear to have been the ultimate factor in determining how this election was played out.

Both the Republicans and Democrats were making extensive use of focus groups and polls as early as May of the election year, or at least that's when journalists picked up on them. Both parties were getting the same results: Dukakis was seen as tough and competent; Bush was plagued by a "wimp" image.

The poll numbers in the early stages of the campaign had Bush trailing Dukakis from anywhere between 14 and 28

points.[1] The so-called "gender-gap" was especially alarming to Republican strategists, for as one pollster noted, "Bush reminds every woman of her first husband."[2]

Bush's negative image was also confirmed by the Republicans use of the "Perception Analyzer" early on in the campaign to measure voter response to various policies. According to columnist Jeff Mapes, one of the Analyzer's first sessions for the Republicans went like this:

> Vice-President George Bush was in trouble. He was explaining how he would hang President Reagan's picture in the White House Cabinet Room when he took over, and the 45 Portland Republicans attentively watching Bush on television in the darkened research room of Columbia Information Systems were not buying any of it. Their reactions were instantly turned into a graph on a computer screen, and Bush's approval rating was dropping faster than the stock market on Black Monday.[3]

Early campaign research also uncovered the issues that were used so effectively by Bush against Dukakis. It showed that American voters had particularly strong reactions about the death penalty, gun control, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the Pledge of Allegiance.[4] These reactions became the "hot-button" issues of the 1988 presidential election. Summed up, Americans were concerned about "law and order."

The next step was for either party to claim an alliance with these issues, and it was the Republicans who seized this initiative. Again, however, it was focus groups (and a

motorcycle gang) which told Lee Atwater, the Republican Campaign Manager, how such an initiative could be carried out:

> "Focus groups" of swing voters were exposed to the likely lines of negative attack: Dukakis's record on furloughs, the death penalty, the Pledge of Allegiance, voluntary school prayer, defense spending and taxes. Then, using an actor to play "anchorman," the Bush handlers presented a mock "newscast" of Dukakis's views, and his likely responses, to a selected group of viewers equipped with "people meter" dials to measure their reaction. The result was the Attack Man campaign Bush has been using, in Jekyll and Hyde alternation with the "kinder, gentler" theme.[5]

The "Attack Man" campaign orchestrated by Atwater was severely criticized in the early days of the campaign. At the time, it was considered "especially dumb for a candidate whose 'negatives' were so high." The "Wall Street Journal warned the attacks could make Bush look weak."[6]

Unfortunately for the Democrats, they believed the Wall Street Journal (who had obviously ignored the successful "negative" campaigns in product marketing), and made no attempts at combat, at least initially. By the time they did, the poll numbers for Bush had begun to improve.

Another key component of the Republicans negative campaign was their use of symbols. According to Elizabeth Drew, Atwater understood their significance. She notes that "the myths and symbols Reagan had manipulated so well were a gift to Bush." Conversely, "Dukakis just didn't understand their importance."[7]

It was a coincidental event, however, that provided Atwater and the Republicans with the best symbol ever: Willie Hornton.

Willie Hornton's name became synonymous with the 1988 presidential election, when as a prisoner, he was released through the furlough program and brutalized a Maryland couple. His fame came not only through this horrific event, however, but with the Republican's ability to lay the blame for this personally on Dukakis.

Atwater confirmed the tremendous potential for this on the July 4th weekend at a Chinese restaurant in a small Virginia town. His focus group this time - a group of motorcyclists: "The bikers volunteered the one thing they knew about Dukakis; he was the guy who had let Hornton, who was black, out of jail."[8]

Atwater also knew from focus groups that "liberal" had become a dirty word, and that the release of Hornton confirmed Dukakis was a liberal. To Atwater's delight, it was Dukakis himself who personally identified himself with the liberal label. Ironically, the Democrats tried to invoke the power of polling as the reason for this:

> When Dukakis called himself a liberal, his aides tried to convince the press that the mistake was actually a strategy. They tried to give the impression that there was something they knew from their polling that made this a smart move.[9]

By September, the Republicans were conducting nightly tracking polls. They had laid claim to the hot-button issues, and the tracking was showing continuously, increasing support for Bush.

Dukakis and his campaign team were not lacking in information either, but it appears Dukakis was unwilling to take advantage of it. As one journalist stated, "If Bush and Quayle are the quintessential product of handlers, Dukakis errs on the other extreme."[10] Consultants to the Democrats consistently complained that Dukakis would not act upon their advice, advice that was based on research equally as reliable as that obtained by the Republicans. As one media consultant lamented: "I get these orders on the phone to do an ad. . . . I feel like they're shouting through the window to a short order cook."[11]

When the election was over and the Republicans were once again firmly esconced in the White House, analysts made some interesting observations.

As usual, the sheer number of polls conducted during the campaign were commented upon, but with an interesting twist - how invalid they were as anything but a snapshot at a given point in time. As one columnist noted, "week after week, what seemed obvious to every respected analyst on Monday morning looked ludicrous by Tuesday night."[12]

Another point noted by some was that while the Democrats had been consistent in their protests against the "attack strategy" employed by the Republicans, Dukakis himself had not been above using it in his own race for the Democratic presidential nomination. In that race, it was Democratic hopeful Joseph Biden who was on the receiving end of the attack.

Dukakis's team accepted the premise that "it's an accepted game to spread negative research about one's opponent, as long as it's accurate."[13] They did this by releasing "video press releases" during the fight for the Democratic presidential nomination:

> Two officials of Dukakis's campaign released a tape which interspersed segments of a debate performance by rival Senator Joe Biden with an earlier Campaign commercial for British Labour party chief Neil Kinnock. By powerfully demonstrating Biden's rhetorical plagiarism, this "attack video" set in motion a chain of events that helped drive its victim from the race in 11 days.[14]

The final note to be made about the 1988 U.S. presidential election was the sheer magnitude of the costs. The Republican's total campaign expenditures were $46 million (U.S.) on direct campaign expenses, and another $50 million on "soft" expenses (the category where research is usually placed).[15] Expenses for Dukakis were almost identical.[16]

The Canadian General Election Of 1988

Analysts of the 1988 federal election in Canada generally agree it was an unusual one because of the dominance of one single issue: whether or not Canadians should sign a Free Trade Agreement with the United States. The governing Conservative Party believed the agreement was good for Canada, and maintained that position throughout the campaign; both the Liberals and the New Democratic Party (N.D.P.) took a stance against it. This began an avalanche of rhetoric unusual in Canadian history as each party attempted to convince Canadians of the consequences of either accepting or rejecting "the deal."

This election was also unusual because of the amount of "third party spending." As the campaign geared up, both business and labour groups jumped into the fray to make clear their position. How much this spending actually amounted to is debatable, but estimates range "from $2 to 3 million (the Liberal estimate) to $10 million (Labour movement) to a whopping $56 million calculated by Nick Fillmore in This Magazine."[17] Whichever figure is correct, most of it was spent on ads of one form or another, based on research which indicated what might sway individuals to vote either for or against the deal.[18]

The "swing vote" was particularly important in this election because surveys had shown a much higher percentage of the vote was undecided during the campaign than was usual. Alan Frizzell notes that "in the '88 campaign . . . 3 out of 5 voters were making their decision during the campaign period."[19]

Perhaps this was part of the reason for the unprecedented amount of polling and focus groups conducted on behalf of the three parties during this election. According to Claire Hoy, the Tories spent about $5 million on polling and related research during the campaign period; the Liberals "well over $600,000," and the N.D.P., $300,000.[20] The N.D.P. was openly criticized for their use of research both during the campaign and after by then Canadian Auto Workers President Bob White: "Maybe . . . senior strategists should have pulled themselves away from their sophisticated databanks and knocked on some doors with labour."[21]

Those within the party felt it was an unfair criticism, especially given the limited resources of the party when compared with both the Liberals, and especially, the Tories. Indeed, critics have stated that this election was one of the most "scandalous" in Canadian history, because while advertising counts as an election expense, "massive polling operations" do not.[22]

The last point of note about this campaign is the degree to which the "marketing vernacular" had penetrated the strategy sessions of all three parties. Graham Fraser comments that while such vernacular was "old hat" to both the Liberals and the Tories, "many in the N.D.P. found (*the language*) foreign and offensive to the Methodist socialism of the party's tradition."[23]

This vernacular was continued by the N.D.P. in post campaign analyses by N.D.P. Campaign Director Robin Sears:

> We attempted to move in marketing terms from a niche marketer into a national brand name without examining what the costs and consequences of that would be. . . . Our resources were smaller . . . and our anticipation of the ferocity of the attack which would be launched against us was naive.[24]

Besides, as Sears lamented in an interview with Claire Hoy:

> . . . our polling has consistently shown that if you scratch every Canadian deeply enough, you'll find a Grit. They're the most resilient, the Coca-Cola of Canadian politics.[25]

The New Democrats

By the time the election writ had been dropped, N.D.P. Leader Ed Broadbent had topped the polls "as the leader the public would most prefer to have as Prime Minister."[26] During that same time period, the party had watched the "virtual disintegration" of the Parti Quebecois, while

membership in the Quebec wing of the N.D.P. went from 500 to 10,000.[27]

The combination of both factors led the N.D.P. to launch their first national campaign. The N.D.P.'s confidence in this launch was also enhanced by the fact that for the first time, the "N.D.P. had built a substantial database of polling material."[28]

This information convinced N.D.P. strategists that the budget for the '88 campaign be raised from $4.7 million to the $7 million dollar range. Of that amount, $3 million would be set aside for advertising and an additional $330,000 for opinion research.[29]

One of the party's first moves was to hire Washington based pollster Vic Fingerhut to direct spending of those funds. In conjunction with the polling data already obtained, it was decided that $100,000 be spent in the immediate pre-election period and just over $200,000 during the campaign.[30] Because this amount was still rather limited in what it could accomplish, an "electronic triangle" was set up to get the most out of their research budget:

> The bulk of N.D.P. polling data was gathered by Access Survey Research, a Winnipeg based company linked to pollster Angus Reid. However, the N.D.P. opted to do its own Ottawa in house analysis of the data under the supervision of Brian McGee. Thus a computerized electronic triangle emerged with data gathered from Winnipeg, detailed analysis occurring in Ottawa, while

> under the supervision of a polling specialist in Washington.[31]

For the first time, the N.D.P. also made extensive use of focus groups in selected cities. The discussion in these groups revolved around party ads, and arguments for and against voting N.D.P. were tested.

What party strategists found from these groups was that "voters don't expect and don't want very drastic changes under a New Democratic government."[32] These findings were backed by a major poll undertaken for the N.D.P. in an attempt to find out more about the swing vote. Within party circles, this poll became known as the ACM Soft Vote Survey, and as was noted at the time, the "ordinary Canadian" theme tested well in the survey.[33]

Research had also convinced Fingerhut that the N.D.P. was seen as "weak on the economy" and that "the issue of free trade was a non-starter for the party."[34] As a result, Broadbent's opening statements for the '88 election did not even mention free trade.

It was an omission that angered the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), a key supporter of the N.D.P., and so began an "internal split on election strategy" between the CLC and the N.D.P. As Claire Hoy notes:

> The Canadian Labour Congress wanted the party to fight the election on free trade, but party officials argued that their polling showed they should concentrate on Mulroney's lack of credibility. . . . "And then they wonder why our people vote Liberal," says one labour

> leader. "We bust our guts, and our bank accounts, to fight this bloody deal, and they say, lay off it. Worse, the advice comes from an American pollster, for god's sake."[35]

The "American pollster" also provided the basic grist for individual ads within the N.D.P. advertising campaign through the N.D.P.'s agency of record, Michael Morgan and Associates (as we shall see later, other pollsters were providing the same services to their parties as well). One of the party's ads, whose subject was medicare, was so closely based on research that "every line of the text was drawn from Vic Fingerhuts's polling research."[36] It was the same research that convinced the N.D.P. to refer to the Free Trade Agreement as the Mulroney deal or the Mulroney/Reagan deal. It was a strategic decision made by the Liberals as well.

Liberals

On July 20, 1988, over two months prior to the "official" start of the Canadian General Election, Liberal Leader John Turner announced that the Liberal dominated Senate would block passage of the free trade deal until after an election.

It was an announcement that was precipitated by a $200,000 public opinion poll conducted by Liberal pollster Martin Goldfarb. Conducted exclusively in Quebec, it showed

that the public supported such a move by John Turner and the Liberal Party.[37]

The polling had also convinced Goldfarb that the "sovereignty issue was on the rise," and that "the public was looking for leadership."[38] He framed his advice to the Liberal Party like this:

> Free Trade should be used as a device to demonstrate that Mulroney cannot and should not be trusted. The central theme of the Liberal campaign should be that you cannot trust Mulroney.[39]

Like the N.D.P., the advice was discussed and bandied about by focus groups over the summer prior to the election. In total, over 70 ads were developed in conjunction with Goldfarb's input. The scripts were developed by Red Leaf Communications, "the Liberal advertising team put together for every English language Liberal advertising campaign."[40] All 70 ads were sketched and laid out on storyboards; the reaction of the focus groups determined the five that would make it to the commercial stage.[41]

One of the major debates in the focus groups was whether John Turner should be used or avoided in the Liberal commercials:

> At the focus groups during the summer, people said they didn't want to see Turner much, but they wanted to see Mulroney. "Oh, show me more of Brian," said one woman in a focus group. "I love to hate him."[42]

Ironically, the absence of Turner in the Liberal ads resulted in one of the most notable of the '88 election, by any party:

> The Liberal party's t.v. spots were particularly effective in casting doubts on the government's free trade initiative. One ad in particular, which showed the government removing the boundary between Canada and the U.S. as a result of the free trade policy, tugged on the nationalist heartstrings of Canadians.[43]

The ads were directed at "men, younger Canadians and middle-income earners," because "Goldfarb's polling showed that Liberal support was already strongest amongst women, ethnics, and people over 35."[44]

They were emotional ads, and as shall be seen shortly, were in direct contrast to the "Just The Facts, Ma'am," ad campaign of the Tories.

The polling itself was done on a rolling sample of two hundred people a day. The Liberals targeted $500,000 for research, but like the N.D.P., the money didn't go very far. As a result, their strategy was to depend on their own analysis of published polling. As Liberal National Campaign Director John Webster noted:

> . . . the party didn't do national samples because we knew the media would be doing a ton of them. Our polls enabled us to measure the rolling samples against the national media samples.[45]

The Tories didn't have that problem, however. Indeed, they were even doing focus groups on Liberal ads.

Conservatives

Claire Hoy notes that "the Tories actually started getting serious about this election in 1986, when Senator Norman Atkins set up his strategy group, with pollster Allan Gregg as an important component."[46] With a budget of $8.1 million[47] set aside for the election campaign, the Tories also hired a separate polling consultant in Quebec: SECOR.

By January of the election year, both Gregg and Marcel Cote of SECOR were advising the party on strategy, based on what were to be the first of many polls and focus groups conducted during the election year.

For English Canada, Gregg coined the term "managing change," which "Gregg had picked up as a perceived source of Tory strength."[48] It was a theme Gregg believed was particularly important to those groups which polling research had revealed "were soft in their support of the party - women and low-to-middle income earners."[49]

Claire Hoy claims that Gregg and his colleagues at Decima called this group the "open-minded confused," or, less charitably, "the urban stupid."[50] Whatever the group was called, it meant the Tory ad budget was spent on "t.v. and radio buys . . . directed to a great extent to the soaps and mass orientated programmes."[51]

The ads themselves were prepared only after extensive focus group discussion:

> The focus groups proved responsive to some negative advertising, but they resisted other ads. One commercial of the perhaps fifty that were made (only thirty-four were used) showed a man tearing up a document with a voice saying, "If John Turner gets elected, he'll rip up the Free Trade Agreement. Currency will flee the country," the voice said, and a hand snatched money on a table, "and tear the heart out of Canada." The strategists . . . loved the ad; Decima's focus group members said, "Now you're lying. John Turner lied before about social programs, and now you're lying." Such ads were never shown.[52]

Focus groups were also a key component in the redesign of the party logo:

> Focus groups of voters had been asked a series of questions designed to probe how they viewed the party at present, and more crucially how ideally they would like to visualize the party in the future. From the responses to the questions a series of prospective logos had been constructed, and after testing by focus groups, a new forward-looking party logo was created.[53]

The culmination of Gregg's research, both polling and focus groups, was that people were more worried about the "effect of free trade on social programs than they were about the possible impact of losing free trade."[54] As a result:

> The net effect of the advertising campaign was to produce a series of election advertisements which tended to be more re-assuring to voters than hard-hitting or emotional, stressing the government's records and the general competence of the prime minister and his party team.[55]

In Quebec, SECOR's research resulted in findings similar to Decima, but advised on a different strategy. The them here became "Continuer dans le bons sens," or "Keep

following your good instincts."[56] Cote believed this was necessary because research showed that 40% of the Quebec electorate was either a "soft PC voter" or a potential switcher to the PC's. This group wanted security emphasized, not change.[57] Cote felt Quebec voters were especially wary because focus groups here "showed that ordinary people felt that they (*politicians*) were all a corrupt bunch of crooks."[58]

By August of the election year, Gregg was providing the Tories not only with their own strategy, but with a "strategic appraisal of what the Liberals were likely to do":

> Gregg predicted that the Liberals would position themselves as, in his words, "more practical New Democrats" . . . he expected Liberal themes stressing nationalism, economic questions involving compassion such as illiteracy and working women, and protection questions like health and the environment . . . we are the only practical alternative.[59]

This "strategic appraisal" was backed up by even more focus groups, but this time done with Liberal ads. The "map ad" was one that particularly troubled Gregg:

> Gregg showed the commercial to a focus group: the first time they saw it, they laughed; the second time, they were eerily silent. "They said, 'You know it's obvious that they're exaggerating; the border's not going to go away, and we're not going to become Americans, and we'll never become Americans,' Gregg recalled. "But it tells us that we're going to lose something in free trade, and that really worries me; I wonder if the risk is worth it."[60]

By the time the writ had been dropped, the Tories had conducted one national poll with a sample of 1500, and smaller weekly polls throughout the summer. During the course of the campaign, they would conduct three more national polls of the same size, national "rolling" polls of 500 samples a night, and "tracking" polls in 25 selected ridings across Canada.[61] These latter polls were used mostly by constituency organizations to advise on local strategy. As Alan Frizzell notes, the combination of all these polls allowed electoral trends to be deduced and the fine-tuning of both local and national election strategy on almost a daily basis.[62]

When the ballots had all been cast on November 21, the Tories had won another majority, but with a significant loss of seats. In 1984, the Tories received a majority with 211 seats, the Liberals, 40, and the N.D.P., 30. In 1988, the Conservative Party won only 169 seats. Liberal numbers had more than doubled to 83, and the N.D.P. won 43 seats.[63]

British Columbia Provincial Election - 1991

The 1991 British Columbia election dispels two popular notions about current election campaign practices.

The first is that such practices are only employed by those on the right of the political spectrum. Clearly, this was an election where those on the "left," the New Democrats, used those practices as effectively as the ruling "free-enterprise" Social Credit Party. Indeed, hindsight indicates the N.D.P. actually outdid the Socreds in the employment of these practices. As columnist Ian Mulgrew noted: "Harcourt understood that a political party is a multimillion dollar corporation whose product is not ideology but management skill."[64]

The second myth is that it's impossible to mount an effective campaign today without using these techniques. In contrast to this popular wisdom, this election showed a third party rising out of complete obscurity to become the Official Opposition, without benefit of these techniques. This third party was the B.C. Liberals, who accomplished this without access to either significant research technology or advertising. Newspaper reports referred to them as "a cash-strapped party, with no province wide advertising; no t.v. ads."[65]

As will be seen shortly, the peculiarities of this particular election shed some light on how the Liberals were able to do this. More importantly, however, it illustrates a point made earlier by observers of modern campaign techniques; there are many variables that affect election

outcomes, access to modern technologies is only one of them. Political columnist Vaughn Palmer noted that the only campaign theme Harcourt needed in this election was, "Hi there, I'm not the leader of the Socreds."[66]

The Campaign

When Social Credit Premier Rita Johnston called an election for November 21, a number of polls had placed the N.D.P. at least 18 points ahead of her party.[67] Obviously, it was an inopportune time for her to call an election, but the party's mandate had almost expired. Worse than that, the party had been "plagued by a series of scandals"[68] that only seemed to culminate in the first weeks of the campaign.

The first of those scandals was a court appearance by former Social Credit Premier Bill Vander Zalm, on charges of conflict of interest over the sale of his family business, Fantasy Gardens. The second was the resignation of Richmond East Social Credit candidate John Ball, after the Vancouver Sun revealed he had ties to Neo-Nazi groups. These two events were the final crown to an election term that had seen the resignation of twelve cabinet ministers.[69]

Still, the Socreds had put together their well oiled election team, a group of experienced people who had overseen numerous Socred wins. They included Jess Ketchum,

campaign manager; advisor and private consultant Jerry Lampert, and senior strategist Patrick Kinsella. It was Kinsella who, at the appropriate times, "bundled up the latest numbers and shipped them off to Allan Gregg."[70]

The New Democrat team was equally impressive. First and foremost was a "top Democrat advertising consultant based in Washington D.C."[71] named Karl Strubel. It was Strubel who "co-ordinated and piloted"[72] the N.D.P. campaign. His main partner was another Washington based consultant, "media wizard" Michael Sheehan.[73]

Strubel and Sheehan worked in conjunction with a number of key research and advertising people and/or companies in Canada. These included Dave Gotthilf, President of Viewpoints Research, who conducted nightly tracking polls and focus groups for the N.D.P., the Vancouver public relations firm Scali McCabe Sloves, and Shane Lunny Productions, who created all of the N.D.P. ads.

The N.D.P. had actually hired Strubel and Sheehan in the early spring of the election year. N.D.P. Campaign Communication Director Ron Johnson says they were brought on board specifically to provide the N.D.P. with "the ability to be flexible during the course of the actual campaign."[74] The inability to change course during mid-campaign had been seen as a major stumbling block in the party's campaign at

the federal level in the 1988 General Election, and the provincial party was not anxious to repeat the same mistake.

The N.D.P. thought they needed that flexibility to deal with Social Credit, but even before the writ was dropped, it became clear it was actually the Liberals. Research conducted on behalf of Social Credit was picking up the same trend:

> . . . as early as August, Socreds knew something was up. (*They*) watched B.C. Liberals climb to 17% in their internal polls - a level unseen since before 1979, when the party lost its last legislative seat. "No one was talking about it," campaign manager Jess Ketchum said.[75]

The trend turned into a tidal wave after the October 8 debate between the three party leaders. The two major parties were stunned, as was Decima's Allan Gregg when reviewing the most recent polling numbers after the debate:

> Gregg took one look, then another, and said in all his years of surveying Canadian electorates, he'd never seen anything like it. The Liberals, who'd been slouching along in the also-ran position for years, had rocketed upward by something like 20 percentage points in less than a week.[76]

Ketchum states "they thought Liberal support would level off within a few days."[77] The "pundits" agreed with him saying "it was a blip and that support would soon drop."[78] But the N.D.P. weren't taking any chances. They conducted focus groups immediately following the debate, and "decided the issue of growing support for the Liberals had to be confronted head on."[79] Within days of the Debate, the

N.D.P. had changed both their radio and t.v. advertising to focus on the Liberals.

Social Credit was using focus groups too, but as Ketchum noted, "while the party's ads were effective in turning targeted voters away from the N.D.P. . . . they had also made up their minds about Social Credit. . . . We couldn't overcome the past."[80]

According to the N.D.P.'s Strubel, the party's internal polls showed the Liberals could have formed the government had the election been held a few days earlier. As it was the "Liberal surge crested, retreated, and was waning"[81] by the last week of the campaign. By Thursday, October 17, the day of the election, however, Liberal support was still strong enough to engineer "a collapse of the vaunted Socred election machine."[82] It was a collapse that ended almost 40 years of Social Credit rule, interrupted only from 1972-1975 by the N.D.P.'s only former win in B.C. Out of the province's 75 ridings, Social Credit won in only 7; 14 cabinet ministers had been defeated. The Liberals became the Official Opposition with 17 ridings, after being totally absent from the Legislature since 1979. The New Democrats became the electorate's choice for a new government, winning 51 of the 75 ridings.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Jonathan Alter and Mickey Kaus, "Reign of Errors," Newsweek, 31 October 1988, 24.

[2]Ibid., 24.

[3]Mapes, "Instant Computer Polls," 152.

[4]Larry Martz et al., "The Smear Campaign," Newsweek, 31 October 1988, 17.

[5]Howard Fineman, "Why Bush Is Winning," Newsweek, 24 October 1988, 19.

[6]Alter and Kaus, "Reign of Error," 24.

[7]Elizabeth Drew, "Letter From Washington," The New Yorker, 12 December 1988, 132;123.

[8]Howard Fineman, "Poppy the Populist," Newsweek, 7 November 1988), 60.

[9]Drew, "Letter From Washington," 125.

[10]Jonathan Alter et al., "The Big Questions," Newsweek, 7 November 1988, 56.

[11]Howard Fineman, "Why Bush Is Winning," Newsweek, 24 October 1988, 19.

[12]Alter and Kaus, "Reign of Errors," 22.

[13]Alter and Fineman, "The Fall of Joe Biden," 28.

[14]Sabato and Beiler, "Magic...Or Blue Smoke and Mirrors," 9.

[15]Colin Mackenzie, "U.S., Canadian Campaigns Alike On Surface Only," Globe and Mail, 24 October 1988, A1.

[16]Drew, "Letter From Washington," 120.

[17]Graham Fraser, Playing for Keeps: The Making Of The Prime Minister, 1988 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989), 325.

[18]James P. Winter, ed., The Silent Revolution: Media Democracy And The Free Trade Debate (Ottawa, University Of Ottawa Press, 1990), 74.

[19]"The Voters Reflect, Conflicts In A Post Election Poll," Maclean's, 5 December 1988, reprinted in Alan Frizzell, Jon H. Pammett and Anthony Westell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988 (Ottawa, Carleton University Press, 1989), 24.

[20]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 69.

[21]Ibid., 76.

[22]The specific terminology here was coined from Claire Hoy, but much post election debate has focussed on this issue.

[23]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 168.

[24]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 75.

[25]Ibid., 76.

[26]Alan Whitehorn, "The NDP Election Campaign: Dashed Hopes," chap. in The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 43.

[27]Ibid., 44.

[28]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 73.

[29]Whitehorn, "The NDP Election Campaign," 44.

[30]Ibid., 45.

[31]Ibid., 46.

[32]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 128.

[33]Ibid., 131.

[34]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 4.

[35]Ibid., 74.

[36]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 320.

[37]Hoy, Margin Or Error, 2.

[38]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 102.

[39]Ibid., 103.

[40]Ibid., 313.

[41]Ibid., 313.

[42]Ibid., 313.

[43]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 22.

[44]Gerald Caplan, Michael Kirby and Hugh Segal, Election: The Issues, The Strategies, The Aftermath (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1989), 83.

[45]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 72.

[46]Ibid., 72.

[47]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 15.

[48]Hoy, Margin Of Error, 72.

[49]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 22.

[50]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 421.

[51]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 22.

[52]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 422.

[53]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 15.

[54]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 421.

[55]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 22.

[56]Ibid., 16-17.

[57]Fraser, Playing For Keeps, 185.

[58]Ibid., 142.

[59]Ibid., 100-101.

[60]Ibid., 315.

[61]Reports of the frequency and type of polls conducted by the Conservative Party in the 1988 election year are available in a wide variety of published material. The numbers quoted here are from Hoy (72), Frizzel (16,17) and Grey (17).

[62]Frizzell, The Canadian General Election Of 1988, 17.

[63]Ibid., 133.

[64]Ian Mulgrew, "The Making Of A Premier," Vancouver Magazine, December 1991, 38.

[65]Deborah Wilson, "Is The Party Over?" Globe and Mail, 19 October 1991, A6.

[66]Vaughn Palmer, "Premier-elect Harcourt Stayed Out Of Way Of Socred Loss," Vancouver Sun, 18 October 1991, A1.

[67]Carol Adams, "28 Days To Election Victory," The Democrat, November/December 1991, 8.

[68]"NDP Storms In," Vancouver Sun, 18 October 1991, A8.

[69]Ibid., A8.

[70]Voters Hunted Down And Destroyed Socreds," Vancouver Sun, 19 October 1991, A5.

[71]Tom Barrett, "Smear Tactics," Vancouver Sun, 14 September 1991, D9.

[72]Mulgrew, "The Making Of A Premier," 42.

[73]Ibid., 37.

[74]Ron Johnson, "Who Are These Liberals Anyway," The Democrat, November/December 1991, 14.

[75]Wilson, "Is The Party Over?" A6.

[76]"Voters Hunted Down And Destroyed Socreds," A5.

[77]Wilson, "Is The Party Over?" A6.

[78]"The Upside Down Campaign," Vancouver Sun, 18 October 1991, B4.

[79]Johnson, "Who Are These Liberals Anyway," 14.

[80]Wilson, "Is The Party Over?" A6.

[81]Mulgrew, "The Making Of A Premier," 46.

[82]Ibid., 46.

CONCLUSION

Reflecting on the goals outlined at the beginning of this thesis, there is little doubt that research is, indeed, an integral component of modern day election campaigns. It also seems evident that such a condition has come about directly as a result of the prominence accorded it by ad agencies in product marketing.

The case studies illustrate the degree to which research is integrated into modern election campaigns. Regardless of political persuasion, all parties seek to make use of the "tools of Madison Avenue." Technological innovations such as personal computers, campaign management software, and computerized network communications now allow even the most leanly financed candidate or party to make use of the new tools. Additional services offered by the parties themselves have also enhanced the accessibility of such services to all who seek them.

The types of research employed by modern day campaigns range from a variety of quantitative survey instruments to those arising out of psychiatric group therapy, primarily focus groups. This latter technique achieved special prominence beginning in the late 1970's when Reagan strategists used it to formulate and pre-test all campaign themes. Today, their significance is such that campaign spots are rarely aired without their approval.

Focus groups themselves are one more example of a technique appropriated by ad agencies to serve the needs of product marketing, and then transferred to the political marketplace. As numerous observers have pointed out, there are few, if any, techniques used in political campaigns, which were not first used to market products.

The degree to which the marketing vernacular has penetrated both the strategy sessions and post-campaign analyses by political parties is another illustration of this. As pointed out in one of the case studies, terms like "niche marketer" and "brand name" are being applied to politicians and parties. If some of those within the parties flinch at their use, strategist now accept them as "de rigueur." Perhaps this is because many of the strategists move regularly between corporate and political accounts. Not only do agencies regularly provide research services to their clients, but research firms regularly offer advertising and creative services to theirs. The distinction between research and creative has been blurred.

Another goal of this thesis was to explore the implications of research in political campaigns. Chapter Two provided an extensive review of the defences and criticisms levied against the use of market research in politics, but generally, the arguments fall into two main camps.

The first is that the use of market research by politicians is an enhancement to the democratic process. This is a view that extends back to George Gallup and his book, The Pulse of Democracy. Many contemporary observers concur with Gallup's original premise that the "collective wisdom of ordinary people" be sought and used to guide politicians and governments. Crespi, Mauser, Kotler and Sabato are some of those who would agree with Gallup.

The other camp has its roots in the eighteenth century with the now famous Edmund Burke letter. Contemporary journalists are especially fond of citing Burke, charging that the current dependence by politicians on research findings makes such politicians followers, not leaders.

The problem with both sets of arguments is the lack of empirical evidence to support either one of them. Indeed, as was pointed out numerous times, empirical evidence to support any variable(s) in an election campaign is difficult to come by.

Does this mean the use of market research in political campaigns is ineffectual in the outcome of those campaigns? Hardly, for as numerous observers have again noted, they provide such campaigns with much needed expertise and experience. The practitioners of the art and science of market research have probably worked on more campaigns in a year than most politicians will in a lifetime.

Has the employment of these practitioners, then, affected the democratic process, as critics charge? Is the use of market research "usurping the power of the people?

The issue has once again been taken up by the Government of Canada in the recently released Royal Commission On Electoral Reform and Party Financing. Charged with the mandate of how to reform the electoral process and develop recommendations for electoral reform, the Commission noted as one of its concerns the unregulated use of opinion polling as a threat to electoral democracy:

> The reporting of public opinion polls during campaigns has . . . been controversial in recent elections. These concerns involve the validity of polls, their effect on media coverage of campaigns, the quality of media reporting of polls, the publication of 'polls' that do not meet accepted professional standards, and the effect of polls on the decisions of voters and voter turnout.[1]

The controversies surrounding the use of polls during election campaigns were elaborated upon in a series of studies commissioned as part of the research program of the Commission. The concerns raised stemmed not from the use of opinion polls per se, but rather with the reporting of those polls by the media. Professor Frederick J. Fletcher, a Research Coordinator for the Commission, outlined how both he and the Commission's hearings perceived opinion polls affecting democracy.

The first concern expressed was the trend towards increasing prominence of opinion polls as a major news item:

> Polls were mentioned in 20 percent of all network television election items in 1984. . . . These figures are all higher than in 1979 and 1980. . . . The trend continued in 1988 and deserves careful scrutiny.[2]

Fletcher believes much of this coverage was at the expense of substantive issues, and leads to a type of "horse-race journalism" where "undue importance is given to the relative fortunes and standings in public opinion polls of leaders and parties."[3]

Particularly distressing, notes Fletcher, is that major gains in the polls, whether valid or not, will bring about coverage by journalists. Poll standings will also often leak into other forms of coverage, for example, background commentary and issue analysis.

Another concern raised by the Commission was whether or not opinion polls lead to a "politics of expectation" during election campaigns. In reference to both the 1984 and 1988 federal election campaigns, Fletcher noted:

> . . . the electorate was so volatile . . . that several observers have speculated that the poll results played a critical role in the outcome. As one journalist put it, "the party that was able to persuade the voters it was going to form a national government might emerge as the winner." The 1988 National Election Study found evidence that a "politics of expectations " was at work and that the polls contributed to strategic voting."[4]

It is a contribution, however, that is difficult to quantify. As Fletcher himself noted, "the influence of news coverage and comment is . . . difficult to specify . . . the pattern of influence remains uncertain."[5]

In making legislative proposals to the Canada Elections Act regarding opinion polls, the Commission reflected Fletcher's concern that "it seems unreasonable to deprive voters of information available to party strategists (and to anyone else who can afford access)."[6] As a result, the recommendations are not that opinion polls be banned during election campaigns,[7] but rather that details regarding all polls published or broadcast accompany the poll and be made available to anyone who requests them. This would include information such as the sponsor and size of the survey, method, margin of error, etc.[8]

The Commission seems to accept the premise that public opinion polls and other methods of market research are here to stay. Accordingly, they are simply seeking to integrate such practices into democratic law. It is an attempt to acknowledge a change in the way democracy is practiced, a change that is a reflection of broader societal changes, not an isolated factor. As observers have pointed out, current realities such as the sheer size of the electorate, make the old style of two-way communication between politician and voter obsolete. By reviewing existing legislation and

making recommendations for change, the Commission addresses this very point.

It is a significant point, for as Leiss, Kline and Jhally have noted:

> The true significance of political marketing lies in another dimension, namely in the observation that, after about forty years of experience with its increasingly adept strategies, it is unlikely that, at least for the foreseeable future, we will be able to conduct our political business in any other way.[9]

The consequences of this for democracy are still being explored. Like those involved with the Commission, I do not believe democracy is enhanced when the results of public opinion surveys are in the hands of an elite few. However, the more basic question seems to be whether or not such surveys influence the vote, and on that point, the evidence is far from conclusive. As stated earlier, polls and other forms of market research are one more variable analysts have been unable to isolate. Does this mean their use should go totally unregulated? Is that an enhancement to democracy?

Leiss, Kline and Jhally make reference to these last questions while discussing the broad implications of political marketing generally:

> In democratic political systems, the difficulty faced by citizens in making their representative institutions serve the best interests of the citizens themselves is a perennial one."[10]

In the late twentieth century, that perennial search has once again been undertaken, and erring on the side of caution, it appears likely that regulations such as those proposed in the Commission protect the democratic rights of individuals as well as provide a reasonable opportunity for political parties to communicate their messages. As Fletcher himself noted:

> The objectives of election campaigns are best served when regulations and practices strike a balance between the freedom of the parties to market their candidates and programs as they see fit and the need to provide voters with sufficient information to make a reasoned choice. . . .[11]

In a democratic society, surely that is the best we can do.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Royal Commission On Electoral Reform and Party Financing. Reforming Electoral Democracy: Final Report. Volume 1 (Ottawa and Toronto: Minister of Supply and Services Canada/Dundurn, 1991), 17.

[2]Frederick J. Fletcher and Robert Everett. "Mass Media and Elections In Canada," chap. in Media, Elections and Democracy, ed. Frederick J. Fletcher. Volume 19 of the research studies of the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing. (Ottawa and Toronto: Minister of Supply and Services Canada/Dundurn, 1991), 213.

[3]Ibid., 199.

[4]Ibid., 202.

[5]Ibid., 183.

[6]Ibid., 212.

[7]The Commission does propose, however, that opinion polls be banned from either broadcast or publication on the day prior to election day and election day itself.

[8]For specific legislative proposals, see the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, Volume 3, Section 317, Subsections 1 and 2, and Section 318.

[9]Leiss, Kline and Jhally, Social Communication In Advertising, 404.

[10]Ibid., 404.

[11]Fletcher and Everett, 209-210.

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