

Television and politics essay sample

[Media](#), [Television](#)



Abstract

The present use of television in advancing the political aspirations of politicians during their candidacy can be attributed to its influential feature of transmitting a persuasive message through audiovisual delivery of messages upon presenting a noble and reputable image for these political hopefuls through paid advertisements and the expression of support from notable personalities. This is then used to leave an impression of opposing unquestionable successes and concealed failures. This is in contrast with the previous purpose of this medium as used by traditional politicians, which is substantially to inform those who have limited means to understand the news trends and current affairs. This has defeated the main purpose of serving the public good and interest. This paper gives an overview on how the television as a medium was perceived by the society and how it was used to advance such political aspirations. Such concepts and ideals are well supported by theories and principles from authors and notable personalities primarily involved in media research and politics.

How do politicians use television to advance their candidacy?

Vs. How they used it in previous generations.

How television works in the society: Its advantages

The societal impact of the television used as a medium of penetrating into the social awareness of people has been greatly attributed to its effectiveness in conveying a persuasive message through the audio and visual delivery, which draw out a high degree of recall among audiences. A

viewer would tend to remember short lines associated with people in action. This is primarily because people imagine sceneries as they calculate and analyze the messages from such information. People don't imagine things or events through words, instead, they envision how things would happen or change as they create a concept based on their perception. This proves to be the effect of its dominance in the media industry.

According to Enzensberger in his book "The Industrialization of the Mind," mentality is a product of the society with regard to the mind-making industry as a product of the last 100 years. Hence, it produces such consciousness which circles not just to sell a product as its main agenda, but rather, to sell an already established order, and to perpetuate the abounding relationship of man's domination by man in seek of power and prestige regardless of who runs the society, and such means to achieve such status. Such mentality can then be attributed to how influential the television as a medium can be in the formulation of political awareness in advancing the politician's political aspirations.

He also identified the role of "immaterial exploitation" versus "material exploitation," which proves to be insufficient in the continuity of society. This would be through the critical role of mass media which cultivates a less obvious exploitation of people's intellectual, moral, and political faculties. Because what is seen is the angle which gives the most edge to a politician's advantage based on their achievements and promising declaration of principles, policies, and objectives. These are magnificent drafts of immaterial, too-good-to-be-true aspirations, which the viewing public must

learn to cut and examine. The viewing public tends to be less critical and blinded by this impressive appearance of the political candidates who not only spend for political advertisements, but also receive endorsements from notable personalities to gain popularity. Such stage show can also be attributed towards the goal of achieving sympathy and concurrence amongst the public people.

And thus, the question of how such medium is used in advancing the politician's candidacy makes up for the vast number of exposure the television can offer in reaching the viewing public in terms of popularity and acceptance to gain their favor in sympathizing with their ideals. This is an effective way of extending the politician's agenda to reach people even those living in the most of remote places; though in a less personal and sincere level. This is also a way of subtracting monetary allotments during the campaign period. This fixated image of a politician deems to create a picture of consistency and reliability; a picture of a trustworthy leader, regardless of how they act within their domestic boundaries.

Television Studies and how it works in the Political network One can always argue as to the understanding and conceptualization of how television should be understood either from a methodological or a political discernment. The history of television and the early studies on its influential aspects were presented through sociological studies that are formulated through the archival research of historians.

In such studies, the television industry is "...conceptualized within frameworks" such as "...ownership; national and international regulation of

media production and distribution; professional ideologies; public opinion; [and] media audiences.” McLuhan suggested that mass media was increasingly creating a “ global village”. Like in the influences of Western media in Asia appears to be the driving force on the abrupt social change. Like a chain reaction on how to act and adapt to a fast changing norms and presentation of what is acceptable and proper. This can eventually lead to the lost of national personality and disorganization of traditional beliefs. Such studies also connote the implication of social ills out of “ distrust, fear and contempt”. This gave birth on how such medium was presented out of controlled regulations of the rich and the powerful because of their innumerable connections and financial resources. Much of these hold true in the present politics wherein politicians abound: the news and current affairs, public service announcements, and notable advertisements viewed by subordinate groups and people. This is a privilege that works for the politician’s advantage of giving a clean and noble picture of one’s self.

Such political act on their candidacies is likened to their presentation of propaganda, which is neutrally defined as a “ systematic form of purposeful persuasion that attempts to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of specified target audiences for ideological, political or commercial purposes through the controlled transmission of one-sided messages (which may or may not be factual) via mass and direct media channels”. This powerful medium has been a great tool for politicians in advancing their propagandas especially in the contemporary times through its baring in the public fondness of absorbing current affairs in the overall public service advocacies deemed as world trends. During their candidacy they embark on

a series of operations or tactics in order to achieve their political aspirations. This is where the television in the political candidacy takes lead.

According to authors Shaw and McCombs, the significant implications of mass communication are its ability to mentally impose order and take over such an idealistic organization of the world. It was then stated that, although media failed to tell the people what to think, they are still victorious in dictating the people what to think about. This is wherein the world is patterned in a stream where public relations and interaction are based from an accepted worldview. This can be said to be an effective way of injecting diminutive, yet explosive ideas of politicians looking for a way to delight the public and gain their trust.

Negative connotations of television

An influential American attorney who is in private practice concerning telecommunications, Newton Norman Minow, gave his 1961 speech which referred television as a “ vast wasteland”. Television was characterized as the “ boob tube”, a mindless occupation and time filler. How television now is being used as a means of presenting an aromatic image of the politician’s advocacies or other non-political advertisements, with all its negative connotations is well contradicted by the author Milton Shulman, who gave an example of television during the 1960s, where “ TV cartoons showed cows without udders and not even a pause was pregnant,” and on-air vulgarity was much more frowned upon. He also stated that even on the 1970s such propriety has been well adapted, and that TV can also create a comfortable

familiarity with and acceptance of language and behavior once deemed socially unacceptable as a particularly “ pervasive and ubiquitous” medium.

In influencing its viewers, television induces a derivative response from other competing media as they struggle to keep pace and keep hold of the viewers. These messages to the public embody a straining effect to a large number of people on their voting attitude. This can be attributed to how television in a sense can always present an angle which gives a better impression for a running politician. Such presentation of impartiality serves to influence the audience and sway them into siding with their beliefs and aspirations towards their political advancement. The selective presentation of facts through this audiovisual omission gives the higher probability of gaining popularity which would usually last only during the campaign period and quite a number of months thereafter. These information are fed to the public in an almost sincere presentation that would nonetheless fade as politicians go about their business agenda. In the political context of advancing the politician’s candidacy plots and tactics, television is evident in the sponsorship of governments and certain political groups with vested interests. During the early 20th century this was associated in the industrial aspects of public relations to fashion a more favorable and convincing image.

Television, nonetheless, serves the politician’s unquestionable successes; then, concealing failures, and finally delivering aromatic manifestoes. Even in the promotion of commercial products, it has undeniably turned into shaping the organizational perception, whether it be a person or a brand. This would almost always produce a less sincere yet emotional influence in

the targeted viewers; disregarding their rational discretion of weighing more pressing matters. Too much of these brilliant exposures leave the less critical public baffled with sound judgment on the politician's credibility and sometimes leads to indifference towards the logical view of reflecting on the features of a clean and reputable political candidate.

According to Jerry Mander, “ the atomised individuals of mass society lose their souls to the phantom delights of media. They fall into a stupor; an apathetic hypnosis; Lazarsfeld was to call the ‘ narcotizing dysfunction’ of exposure to mass media. Individuals become ‘ irrational victims of false wants’ – the wants which corporations have thrust upon them, and continue to thrust upon them, through both the advertising in the media media (with its continual exhortation to consume) and through the individualist consumption culture it promulgates. Thus, according to the Frankfurt School, leisure has been industrialized. The production of culture had become standardized and dominated by the profit motive as in other industries. In a mass society leisure is constantly used to induce the appropriate values and motives in the public. The modern media train the young for consumption. ‘ Leisure had ceased to be the opposite of work, and had become a preparation for it.”

Constructive Effects of Television

The negative connotation of television among the less critical as well as the skeptical public is well opposed by a theorist Joshua Markowitz, which argued that it has been less of a stranglehold, compelling its spectators, guiding their analysis to universal level of political matters wherein they

were previously denied access to. This medium paved way for a more open and transparent presentation of political matters and offered a more convenient way of obtaining information. This, thus, benefits not just the average viewer, but most especially the busy-working people deprived of time, and the less educated citizens delimited by their educational deficiencies; Times where political matters are narrowly distributed to the probing public.

Stuart Hall said that because of the good, impartial, and serious materials that the media produce, it has gained a high degree of respect and authority. However, in its application, such ethics of the press and television can be related to an identical establishment in support of the existing order. It can also be noted that such freedom proves not to be mere covers, but is central to the way power and ideology are mediated in societies. In this approach, media was not treated as crude agents of propaganda, and was even noted to establish public understanding.

In the contemporary popular culture such industrial and social development proved to have been caused by the emergence of mass media development. It can be said that it has played a crucial role in the formulation of public opinion in their reflection on political ideologies and concepts. Critiques in the early-to-mid twentieth century viewed media which delimitates the personal partiality of a person. . McCombs and Shaw exhibited the agenda-setting effect at work in a study during the 1968 presidential elections. The outcome of which proved such evidence that voters tend to share the dictates of media on how they view current issues and trends. On the other

hand, the pragmatic studies during the mid twentieth-century suggested the narrowness of how media can affect such an individual. This presented a more complex relationship of media and society upon generating information and influences with the individual's analyses and observation of the provided information, as well as those outside of the media contexts. These implications can also be attributed to the massive amount of cultural influences that operate through the media.

The revolutionary impact of television to viewers

How television penetrates the minds of people can be well associated with how it has presented equal opportunity for women who are traditionally isolated in the confines of their households; and men who presented the good image of financial providers. It can nonetheless be said, that even men were struck by the emotionally invocative nature of television shows and programs. This, on the other hand had also inculcated a mentality of dissatisfaction among the women who are displeased with their household internment which previously conformed to such stereotypical image. This revolutionary realization of roles in the society can be said to have played such a significant role in the formulation of feminist movement; another political objective of getting themselves involved in the political and complicated matters of power and authority. They have begun to understand their roles in the society and their vital participation in the political issues and affairs of the state.

Television has been commercially eminent in the 1930s. An American feminist, activist and writer, Betty Friedan asserted that “ television has

represented the American Woman as a “ stupid, unattractive, insecure little household drudge who spends her martyred mindless, boring days dreaming of love; and plotting of love nasty revenge against her husband.”

It can therefore be concluded that television was able to inflame an aspiration that long lies within a person’s belief which initially plant seeds of egotistic ideals molding it into a much greater and more complicated ambition of freedom to achieve recognition and later on drive for wealth and power. This is how potent such medium can be when used even in the noblest of intentions.

The intrinsic connection of television creates an imaginary pattern of how things ought to be; what is deemed acceptable from those which are not. An illustration would be an actor politician who gave up his showbiz career. His academic credibility was condoned out of popularity. It can be noted that John F. Kennedy’s presidential victory in the 1960s was attributed to his enormous media exposure brought about by his more handsome and good-looking appearance in television compared to Richard Nixon. The same goes for actors Ronald Raegan as US president, and Arnold Schwarzenegger as governor.

Even politicians solicit endorsements from famous and influential personalities. One good example of present politics is Oprah Winfrey’s expression of support for US presidential candidate Barack Obama, and all other celebrities who also stumble on opportunities to advance their connections and careers. The defiance of such norms contributes to an evolutionary effect on human communication and interaction as what

happened to the feminist movement. To this point of time since the invention of television, though this medium was initially used to suspend a traditional impression of women confinement on their political aspirations, present times have now proven how such medium can be effectively used as an agent of change, and transcendence of power and responsibility open for both men and women. Even through advertisements nowadays, it can be said that these politicians have already made use of their resources to set a skeptical ideology of one moving shot from advertisements and political promotions in current affairs. In addition, a lot of television has been charged with presenting propaganda, political or otherwise, and being pitched at a low intellectual level.

Overview of the Role of Television in Politics

In the contemporary world of media and politics, it is evidently through the use of television which definitely boosts the popularity rate of a campaigning politician. This is accounted for the effectiveness of such medium can very well be attributed as to how it leaves an impression to the inquisitive public in the course of audiovisual delivery. The broadcasting power of television has the muscle to influence the content of what the society would watch at specific hours or times, wherein programs are viewed to reach the largest chunk of its targeted viewers. It can also be said that it has lifted the restrictions on public knowledge in the political affairs through diverse political opinions, social and cultural differences and the participation of consumers. This is in a way perceived as sociological freedom to express one's opinions, and beliefs to apply and reflect on self's interpretation of

societal events and its implications. Through television the society tend to be fashioned out of the spheres of public authority.

This is what happens in the field of political ascendancy in the field of media presentation. Such opportunity can provide involvement of the people in governmental affairs. One can always contend to the ill effects of such medium, but what counts in present and future politics with regard to the advancement of the politician's candidacy is the impartial approach of dealing with the realities of political contamination. This is in order to filter inevitable pretenses among these political hopefuls.

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