

# [Four phases and rhetorical purposes](https://assignbuster.com/four-phases-and-rhetorical-purposes/)

Examples of the Four Types of Political Television Advertisements And Their Rhetorical Purposes Political figures have permeated the realm of television to carry out their campaigns. Because of the wide coverage of television, hopeful candidates became more assured that their commercials and ads would return them with higher turnouts. Trent and Friedenberg (2008) cited that Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, in their book “ The Spot”, argued that political advertising goes through four stages, thus giving rise to four types of ads. Phase 1 ads (ID Spots) are biographical in approach—usually used in the primary stages of the campaign—are intended to introduce or identify the candidate. Phase 2 ads (Argument Spots) exhibit what the candidate stands for, his causes, ideas and concerns. Phase 3 ads (Attack Spots) are direct and personal attacks aimed to lessen the credibility of the opponent. Phase 4 ads (Visionary Spots) are used to draw the campaign to a close by providing a reflective, thoughtful or dignified view of the candidate—leaving the impression that he has the qualities of a leader and has the vision to move the country, state or city to progress. Trent and Friedenberg also identified three rhetorical purposes of political advertisements: (a) to extol the candidate’s virtues; (b) to condemn, attack or question the opponent; (c) to respond to an opponent’s attacks. This paper shall elaborate on the four stages of political advertisements by citing examples of television commercials, one for each stage and draw out the rhetorical purpose used by each ad. Barack Obama ran for presidency in 2008 under the Democratic Party with Republican John McCain as his opponent. His “ Country I Love” (2008) ad was a Phase 1 ad. It showed Obama’s early years—that he was raised by a single mom and his grandparents. He stressed in the ad how his folks taught instilled in him their Kansas heartland values and how these eventually made him pass up Wall Street jobs and go to Chicago to help devastated neighborhoods upon the closing of steel plants. His television campaign used the rhetorical purpose of extolling the candidate’s virtues. He said in the commercial, “ That’s why I passed laws moving people from welfare to work, cut taxes for working families and extended health care for wounded troops who’d been neglected.” The ad made Americans aware that the standard of living of the working families and health care are within Obama’s priority list. Obama won the presidential race and became the first black president, biracial to be more accurate, of the United States. The “ Busing/Law and Order” television ad of third-party candidate George Wallace in 1968 was a Phase 2 ad. Wallace hinted in his commercial what his major concerns and stands are. He hinted that he was against busing. Busing was a hot issue and was often a topic of political debate. Desegregation busing or forced busing or simply busing is a practice of transporting students to school via a bus so as to remedy prior segregation of schools and to counteract the effects of segregation on local school demographics. Both white and black students were made to ride the bus. Politicians held different sides on this issue. Wallace specifically was anti-busing in his ad. A 1972 issue of Life Magazine disclosed Wallace’s reasons for opposing the busing system—to achieve racial balance. He said that more than 85% of Americans were against busing and yet the practice still goes on. He was pro a complete of involuntary busing for he was supporting the return to freedom of choice (How the Candidates Stand on Busing, 1972). The commercial for Wallace not only showed that he was anti-busing but also that he was against crime. He also indicates a need to end the war in Vietnam through massive bombing. The rhetorical approach used by the ad was also to extol his virtues—that Wallace held high regard for law and order by ensuring the eradication of crimes and the halt to war. The ad could also be used as an “ answer” to the teams of the other candidates who also had proliferated ads focused on the Vietnam War and the like. Nixon, however, won the race in 1968. Republican candidate for presidency George W. Bush used a Phase 3 ad called “ Windsurfing” (2004) which attacked and branded opponent Democrat John Kerry as a “ flip-flopper”. The ad used a photograph of Kerry windsurfing. The maker of the commercial thought it was the perfect metaphor for Kerry that he followed political winds and was very inconsistent—he did this by flipping the film horizontally over and over again. The commercial enumerated Kerry’s inconsistencies—how he switched to and from supporting and opposing the Iraq War, apportioning $87 billion for the US troops, and advances for education reforms and health care. The rhetorical purpose used by Bush was clearly to condemn or attack the opponent. The ad was, however, answered back by Kerry in his ad “ Juvenile”. This rebuttal states that Bush’s planned attack on Iraq was juvenile and that Kerry had a better plan in terms of training the troops and calling out allies. The party of Kerry used the rhetorical purpose of responding to an opponent’s attack. Despite the rebuttal, George Bush still won the presidential race in 2004. “ Prouder, Stronger, Better” was a Phase 4 ad produced by the Republican Party of Ronald Reagan in 1984. This is one of the ads in a collection known as “ Morning in America”—how Reagan envisioned a typical morning to be in his country if he gets elected as president. The ad shows bright and sunny scenes of the suburban life matched with a swelling music that is aimed to touch its viewers emotionally. Reagan’s consultant Philip Dusenbery said that emotional advertisements stay with the people longer and better. This ad particularly showed how Reagan wants to stir up optimism among the Americans. This ad particularly used the rhetorical purpose of extolling the candidate’s virtues in that it showed that Reagan envisions America to be prouder, stronger and better. Not only did show the idealistic side of Reagan but also the capability of America to achieve development. Reagan won the presidency in 1984. Television ads have been very useful for the candidates especially in the times of election. They allow them to introduce and present the stands and ideals of the candidates and what their edges are over their opponents. These commercials have been effective because they are mostly done in creative and clever ways, and sometimes also making strong connection to its viewers through emotions evoked in the videos. References: Busing/Law and Order [Video file]. (1968). Retrieved from http://www. livingroomcandidate. org/commercials/1968 Country I Love [Video file]. (2008). 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