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Presidential Communication to Children: An Analysis of Persuasive Strategies in Presidential Speeches

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION TO CHILDREN: AN ANALYSIS OF

PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES

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PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATION TO CHILDREN: AN ANALYSIS OF PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES IN PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES

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   This thesis explores the content of presidential communication to children, specifically the only three presidential speeches that have been designed for children. These three speeches are President Barack Obama's speech to children in 2009, George H.W. Bush's speech to children in 1991, and Ronald Reagan's speech to children in 1988. Through content analysis this thesis was designed to determine whether persuasive strategies were used in these messages to children, and if persuasive strategies were present, which ones were used. Through qualitative analysis conducting a focus group discussion with children exposed to one of the presidential speeches, this thesis also explored the speeches from children's perspectives. Political socialization theory is used as framework for developing the study, and three persuasive theories are used for analysis of the speeches.

   The findings provide insight into presidential communication to children and implications of future research in this area. Findings suggest that persuasive strategies are present and a variety of techniques are utilized in the speeches. The purpose and common topics of these speeches are also explored. Focus group findings support that children can identify persuasive strategies present in the speeches and provide insight into the knowledge children retain from exposure to the communication.

Chapter 1

Introduction

On September 8, 2009, President Barack Obama gave a speech from Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia. The main premise of President Obama's speech was to encourage children to work hard for their own futures and the nation's future. This particular speech was met with nationwide criticism and protests in the weeks before it was scheduled to occur. Even after the transcript of the speech was provided to the public, concerns and protests continued. The speech was planned to be broadcast nationwide during the school day to children. Amidst all of the controversy, some schools decided not to air the speech or gave students the option to choose not to watch the speech. The major controversy over the scheduled speech was not over the location the speech was to be given in, the day or time it was to be given, or even the specific subject of the message itself. Instead, the issue with this speech was the audience in which the communication was designed and intended for – children.

Political messages are typically for adults, as they are the ones who have a voice and a vote in our political system. There is usually not an issue concerning whether speeches or other political communication should be broadcast to or watched by the general public. President Barack Obama's September 2009 speech shows there can be an issue when a political leader wants to communicate specifically to children, regardless of the subject of the message. The act of the president communicating a formal speech to children was enough to create concern.

With all of the controversy, one might have assumed at the time that President Barack Obama's planned speech in 2009 was the first time a president gave and broadcast a speech to children; however, this was not the first. President Ronald Reagan in 1988 and President George H.W. Bush in 1991 each gave and nationally broadcast a speech to children. Even with past presidents going before him, President Obama faced controversy and debate over his speech to school children.

The controversy was surprising to the president's administration as they were forced to defend the intentions and purpose of the speech to school children. While several parents were convinced the president had a political agenda to communicate with children, President Obama's administration insisted the purpose of the speech was simply to encourage children to work hard in school. A debate began over whether a president should ever address children directly. While many parents and politicians were very concerned about the speech, many others could not understand why there would be any issue at all. The White House, in the president's defense, made reference to the two speeches by other presidents to school children that had been given before as justification for President Obama's speech (Silverleib, 2009).

President Barack Obama's speech faced more controversy than President George H.W. Bush's speech in 1991, just eighteen years earlier. One source explained the difference in society accounting for the widespread controversy over the president giving a speech to school children. The technology available, such as several cable networks and blogs, to voice opinions has the potential to blow a situation out of proportion (Silverleib, 2009) and those outlets were not available in 1991 or 1988. Another source

explained that the president's speech would make children have to admit the president

and the presidency was inspiring, and if children did not support the president's message

it would imply they were somehow behind the rest of the students because of the

emphasis on achieving goals (Miller, 2009). While the president faced more controversy

in 2009, the speeches given in 1991 and 1988 did not go unnoticed without any

controversy. President George H.W. Bush was accused of spending taxpayer dollars to

broadcast nationally his own "paid political advertising" (McKinley & Dillon, 2009).

President Ronald Reagan faced some criticism after his speech was given because of a

tangent about taxes that he went off on in the middle of the speech.

Whatever the reason was for the recent controversy over the nationally broadcast

presidential speech to school children, the issue was not that people were uncertain about

the speech because it was an action by the President that had never been taken; the issue

was simply its target audience of children. The influence that messages to children can

have on the rest of their lives causes the concern. Even though children do not have a

vote in our political system, they are still forming and developing political views (Easton

& Dennis, 1969). Close to two million children cast their votes in the 2008 Presidential

election through kidsvotingusa.org. As one study explains, childhood opinions follow a

person throughout their adulthood and ultimately affect one's behavior and development

of political perceptions (Mortimore & Tyrell, 2004).

Children are listening to the messages to which they are exposed. Even if a

president's speech given to children is intended to be bi-partisan and does not discuss the

president's political agenda, children may still be socialized by the speech. Political

socialization does not only refer to the development of specific political views or

opinions, but to a child's "acquisition of prevailing norms" or "political learning of any

type" (Renshon, 1977, p. 4). Easton and Dennis (1969) explain that the stability of a

political system is dependent upon "the success of a society in producing children most of

whom acquire positive feelings about it" (p. 5). Political socialization theory

encompasses all types of political learning; therefore, exposure to a formal message from

the president is a source of political socialization. Political socialization of children

affects our political system because it is the process through which political behavior is

developed and through which political stability is maintained (Renshon, 1977). The

theory of Political Socialization explains that presidential speeches to children, therefore,

affect our political system because they expose children to some type of insight into the

political norms of society. Recently there has been a call for "a revival of political

socialization research" to account for the more active roles that children play in the

process today (McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002, p. 282).

It is important to explore the extent to which political messages directed toward

children affect the process of political socialization in children. Studying whether

children's political opinions are affected and to what extent children retain such messages

can provide insight into whether political messages to children influence their political

socialization. Children are exposed to political messages even when the messages are not

directed to them. Such messages have already been shown to influence children into

their adulthood. Because of political socialization, the future of our nation is largely

dependent upon children and the messages to which they are exposed. While studies in

political socialization have focused on the effects of media, parents, schools, and other authority figures, they have not focused primarily on the content of messages that are specifically designed for children.

In order to understand the influence of messages to children it is beneficial to study the messages themselves. Analyzing the content of these messages provides a foundation for studying the effect of political messages designed for children, such as how the messages may be different from other messages children may hear and in what way children are influenced or socialized through such messages. It will also help to identify the true purpose of these messages and give some insight into why presidents choose to give nationally broadcast messages to children. Perhaps they do so to improve their image in some way? To get a message across that cannot be successfully conveyed to them through a message to their parents? Children are exposed to many messages and influences, but there are not many political messages given specifically to children. If presidents are reaching out to communicate with children, researchers should reach out to study what they are saying to children and the influence of those messages on the political socialization process.

Method Overview

A content analysis of presidential speeches to school children revealed insight into the communication of these specific messages to children. Going beyond the insights of a content analysis, a focus group discussion with children who had been exposed to one of the three presidential speeches provided information regarding what children retain from the messages and what they identify as important in the messages.

Because President Barack Obama's 2009 speech to children was recently broadcast and many children may have already viewed the speech or become biased to it as a result of the controversy they may have observed, middle school age children were asked to watch and listen to President Ronald Reagan's 1988 speech to school children. Data from content analysis of presidential speeches to children and their own feedback from President Reagan's message provided information about these speeches that had not been previously recorded.

The survey method may be the most commonly used method in political socialization research, but "content analysis is the most hallowed and most widely used method of political communication research" (Graber, 2004, p. 46). The current study, while using political socialization theory, analyzed political communication. The coding scheme was developed from persuasive theories to identify persuasive strategies used in presidential messages to school children. The analysis also enabled comparison between the speeches themselves. The following question will be answered through content analysis:

RQ1: What persuasive strategies do presidential messages to children contain?

A focus group was also conducted with school children after viewing former President Ronald Reagan's speech. After viewing the speech, students participated in a discussion guided by open-ended questions about the speech. A qualitative analysis was conducted on the focus group transcripts to identify codes and common themes from the discussion. This part of the study added to the data from the content analysis by providing the perspective of the audience the speech was intended for – children. The

following question will be answered through conducting the focus group and qualitative

analysis:

RQ2: Do children identify persuasive strategies used in the content of

presidential messages to children after being exposed to the messages?

Précis of Chapters

The first chapter of this thesis provides a rationale for this study and states the

research questions it will seek to answer. Chapter two provides a literature review of

political socialization theory, the framework for this study, beginning with literature from

its original definition and developing into literature explaining the expansion of the

theory. A review of the literature on three persuasive theories (Aristotle's Rhetoric,

Elaboration Likelihood Model, and Compliance Gaining), which are used to identify

persuasive strategies, is also provided in the second chapter. Chapter three explains the

methodology used to answer the research questions. Chapter four is an analysis of the

data collected from content analysis of the three speeches and the focus group discussion.

Chapter five is a discussion of the content of presidential speeches to children and the

results of the focus group. The discussion addresses the results, the applicability of the

theories to a study of children, and the question of purpose and motivation of these

speeches. Conclusions based on the analysis, implications of this study, and suggestions

for future research are also included in Chapter five.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This study explored the content of presidential speeches to school children and the use of persuasive strategies. To show the importance of studying political messages to children and to understand the influence these messages have on children, political socialization theory is explained. Political socialization research will be reviewed in this chapter from the beginning of the theory to more recent studies. The theory has evolved since its origin, so the literature review begins with the original premises of the theory and ends with the most recent studies and how political socialization has been redefined. Persuasive theories and studies that have applied the theories chosen for this study are then reviewed as they are the framework for content analysis. Political socialization theory is the framework by which the entire study is focused.

Political Socialization Theory

Political socialization theory has expanded its concept of political learning and influence since its origin. This review of the theory will begin by defining the original theory in order to develop knowledge of the theory, and then explain how it has evolved in recent research. The main ideas of the theory have remained the same, but have been expanded to include more ideas and concepts than were originally accepted.

A formal definition of political socialization is given in the *Handbook of Political Socialization* (1977) in which Greenstein (1970) is quoted; it explains that political socialization involves "(1) any study of children, (2) the acquisition of prevailing norms, (3) political learning of any type, or (4) actual observations of socialization in any of the

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preceding senses" (Renshon, 1977, p. 4). Definitions of political socialization before this definition have been developed, as well as many after, stemming from the basic concept of the above definition. Other definitions of political socialization have been divided in their focus on either process or outcome, but generally focusing on the process (Renshon, 1977). For example, Easton and Dennis (1969) define political socialization as "those developmental processes through which persons acquire political orientations and patterns of behavior" (p. 7).

The first definition above is a broad definition that generally encompasses the main focus of the field and covers the aspects of what a study of political socialization should involve. Renshon (1977) identified the one unifying aspect of the many definitions of political socialization: all definitions recognize that political socialization occurs when an adult in some way influences a "rising generation" to become like their own image (p. 5). While many political socialization researchers initially agreed with that and even believed the process of political socialization ended at adolescence (Sotirovic & McLeod, 2004), political socialization is now recognized as a process that occurs over time beginning in early childhood and continuing into adulthood. Researchers today also recognize influence is not always a downward process. Socialization influences the "future knowledge, values, and feelings of the persons involved" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 8). Research in political socialization tends to focus on where the outcomes come from, in other words, the causes of the process of socialization.

One concept used in studying political socialization theory is *tabula rasa*, which assumes human beings are born with a "blank slate" and knowledge is gained from the experiences they have and the messages to which they are exposed. Some political socialization researchers also use the concepts of environmentalism, where human development is based solely on their environment. Biological factors are also important to the study of political socialization, however, and should be considered in order to conduct more accurate research. Environmental and biological models have been considered in studies of political socialization. (Renshon, 1977).

There are two perspectives that are taken in the political socialization process: the teaching perspective and the learning perspective. To socialize someone "is to teach something to someone" (Beck, 1977, p.115), so the teaching perspective of political socialization emphasizes the effect of the socializer on the socialized. The effect of the socializer is created through "political communication or education" between the socializer and the one being socialized (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 325). The learning perspective emphasizes the socialized and the process of political learning. This perspective is focused on the process taking place within the individual being socialized as that person receives the political communication. Whichever perspective is taken, at the core of political socialization is that humans do not "inherit our political behavior, attitudes, values, and knowledge through our genes" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 13). Humans must learn these aspects of socialization in some way.

Political learning is also mentioned in the above definition and is extremely important to political socialization theory. Most political socialization research is

actually studying political learning (Renshon, 1977). Though the theory does not only

apply to children, political socialization studies tend to focus on what children learn.

Social learning theory can be useful in understanding political learning, which

emphasizes that learning occurs through reinforcement and reward (Renshon, 1977). The

extent that reinforcement and reward have on learning and what constitutes each of them

can be debated, but social learning theory can be beneficial to understanding political

socialization. Social learning theory adds to political socialization theory the

understanding of learning and why humans learn. The learning process involves certain

activities and interactions a child is involved in that teach them "who the authorities are

and what they are like" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 325).

Political learning is focused on and motivated mainly by extrinsic factors, such as

social norms, which may provide social reward. Beck (1977) explains the "role of

agents" on an individual's political socialization. These agents can include individuals,

institutions, or communication, such as a speech. Three preconditions for influence of

agents are given: exposure, communication, and receptivity. The first, exposure, means

that "the learner must come into contact with the teacher" for socialization to occur (p.

117). Exposure alone is not necessarily sufficient for influence. The second precondition

for political socialization is communication. Communication with political content must

take place between the agent and learner for political orientations to be influenced.

Finally, even with exposure and communication, influence may still depend on

receptivity of the learner. Two important factors to receptivity of the learner are "the

nature of the relationship between source and receiver" and "the timing of the

communication" (p. 118). While the timing issue has been debated, most research has focused on childhood years as the time in which people are socialized.

Extrinsic factors, such as parents, schools, and peers, are generally the agents of focus of political socialization research of the political learning process (Renshon, 1977). While parents, schools, and peers are not the only agents of socialization, they are "the only ones with near universal exposure to individuals in modern societies" (p. 134). The one agent also given notice with more universal exposure in the modern era is the mass media (Renshon, 1977). Most children now have exposure to television giving political leaders, such as the President, an outlet for exposure to children. Previous research has also focused on the process of political socialization and how differences in characteristics such as sex, race, or status impact the process (Dunbar & Taylor, 1982; Sherkat & Blocker, 1994; Fridkin & Kenney, 2007; Gimpel & Lay, 2008). Political socialization research has leaned toward a behavioral perspective studying how socialization affects one's political behavior (Renshon, 1977). Beginning in the 1950's, political socialization "died a premature death in the 1970's" due to "exaggerated premises and because of misinterpreted and misunderstood research findings" (Niemi & Hepburn, 1995, p. 7).

In recent years, there has been a revival of political socialization research, as it was somewhat abandoned in the past. Critics of political socialization theory have pointed to the theory's assumption that childhood experiences or learning predetermines adulthood political attitudes and behavior (Dowse, 1978; McDevitt, & Chaffee, 2002). It is now maintained that an individual's attitudes may change over a lifetime (Niemi &

Hepburn, 1995). A growing number of scholars have realized the importance of continuing to study political socialization, incorporating new ideas and approaches. Political socialization theory, at least in more recent research, does not assume childhood practices predetermine adulthood, but does maintain childhood practices greatly influence adulthood practices. Sapiro (2004) reiterates the importance of studying political socialization and specifically in studying political socialization of children and the origins of preference. She claims "political science is missing opportunities to understand the development of political orientations and practices if we abandon children" (p. 13). The stage of adolescence, particularly, is cited as important in developing "habits of political engagement" (p. 13). Two reasons why researchers do not study the first ten to fifteen years of a child's life are the belief children are cognitively incompetent and because politics are irrelevant in children's lives.

Sapiro (2004) counters childhood cognitive incompetency with information from studies of psychological development which show "by the age of five or six they [children] display the tendency to perceive and react to people through social-group categorization and they are certainly capable of developing social identities that are potentially politically relevant" (p. 14). Niemi & Hepburn (1995) claim researchers should focus on ages fourteen to mid-twenties because society educates children and young adults the most at those ages for civic involvement. While this may be a good argument, it does not explain why researchers should ignore children under the age of fourteen. Especially today, politics are relevant to children, even though children are not yet able to legally have a vote in the political system. Civic engagement campaigns, such

as Kids Voting USA, advocate for young children to be involved in politics. The long-term effects of political socialization make the experiences and learning in childhood politically relevant to study. The experiences a child has that influence political socialization in the long-term begin at home, with their parents and family.

   Parental influence. Several studies have focused on the effect of family, mainly that of parents, on the political socialization of children and how they can lead to a child's knowledge of politics, a child's feelings toward participating in civic duties, and a child's view of the political system in general. Davies (1977) argues the most important political lessons are instilled in children before they ever leave the home. Children are "predisposed to respond" to the political system they grow up in (p. 142). In the study of parental influence the early years are considered extremely important in the political socialization process.

   Parental influence on political socialization of children has been a major focus of studies. While media influence has become a more common focus more recently and a factor found to have growing influence on children, studies have shown and continue to show a correlation between children's political views and their parents' political views. Jenning, Stoker, & Bower (2009) conducted a longitudinal study among three generations as a follow up to a previous similar study on the influence of parents. The study measured different influences on political attitudes and knowledge among generations, and found strong similarities for political attitudes among the generations. The influences children experience from their parents during the first six years of life, and

even before birth as some researchers would claim, "underlie, for life, all later influences

shaping the political behavior of human beings" (Davies, 1977, p. 144).

McDevitt & Chaffee (2002) conceptualized a different perspective on the family

as an agent of political socialization. They claimed that adolescents "possess the power

to transform patterns of family communication" (p. 282); this reversal of influence is

referred to as "trickle-up socialization" (p. 285). Originally, political socialization theory

assumed that parents influenced a child's political socialization, which is true, but

McDevitt & Chaffee (2002) suggest the theory was incorrect in limiting influence to a

downward flow only. The development of family political communication research

explores a new and different approach to political socialization. They provide evidence

that children around adolescence age begin political discussions with parents, resulting in

the parent seeking out more political information and engagement. Their research shows

how messages children are exposed to are even more important to study than earlier

political socialization theorists may have realized. While parents and the family create a

foundation for political learning, parents may also one day be influenced by the extrinsic

factors to which their children are exposed. While parents are typically the first influence

in a child's life, one extrinsic factor that may begin to influence children is other

authority figures.

Authority figures as agents. Parents are usually the first agent in the political

socialization process for children, but the parental relationship also influences the effect

of other agents in the child's life, i.e. other authority figures. The authority factor in

political socialization theory becomes apparent in what children learn from parents, as

well as other authority figures. The psychoanalytic approach to children's political

socialization addresses their vulnerability to authority (Renshon, 1977). Because children

are vulnerable to authority (first from their parents, then from other figures) for physical

and emotional care, they do not criticize authority. Their parents and other authority

figures are superior to them.

Children develop this idea of authority from their early relationship with their

parents and then carry it over to other authority figures – such as political leaders

(Renshon, 1977). Parents may also have actually taught their children to listen to and

approve of political or other authorities. Children also learn from watching their older

siblings. Even with the influence of parents "children's attitudes toward the authorities

may also be formed partly through direct experience" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 11).

Children, therefore, can be highly influenced by a message from a political authority.

While the family does have a strong influence on the socialization of a child, political

socialization is different. For political socialization, agents other than the family may

have more influence, especially as the child gets older (Easton & Dennis, 1969).

Authority figures, such as teachers, role models, and political leaders, affect a

child's political socialization. Political leaders that children especially associate with as

authorities that lead them in their acquaintance with the political system are "the

government, the President, and the policeman" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 318).

Children recognize political leaders as authorities and as a result are influenced by them

because a child learns from those "whose authority he is most apt to accept without

question" (p. 322). Authorities, such as the President, who combine "simplicity,

palpability, visibility, and salience" (p. 323) provide the greatest opportunity for early political learning.

The President as authority.

People are influenced by messages from the President largely based on the image of the office itself. This image of the President is an image "we have possessed since childhood of the one institution that stands for truth, honor, justice, and integrity" (Trent & Friedenberg, 2004, p. 82). The presidency itself is "a focus of impressions and beliefs that exist in our mind" (p. 82). The President is the ultimate authority to most citizens from whom they learn and understand the political system. The President has a persona of power and holds a symbolic role that already gives him a legitimacy that influences people to listen to and learn from him.

Rottinghaus (2008) explains that the "implication for presidential leadership is that presidents should theoretically be able to motivate public opinion in a way most favorable to their own policy preferences" (p. 140). Rottinghaus, in studying speeches by U.S. presidents in times of war, found that presidents use persuasive rhetoric with the intention to influence the public. Presidents used "crafted talk" to tailor their language on policy messages to fit public interest in order to have greater persuasive power. The current study is concerned with discovering whether presidents also use similar persuasive strategies in their messages to children.

A majority of political communication studies have focused on presidential campaign messages and the candidate for president. The current study will focus on presidential messages not made during a campaign, but political communication

broadcast while the president is in office. McKay & Paletz (2004) explain the president's power lies within his ability to be persuasive, and his persuasiveness is largely dependent on his reputation. Mass media is "a significant resource" for the president to develop power (p. 323). The president must use mass communication to successfully perform his job and reach out to the public. Because the president has a purpose for the political communication he broadcasts to the public, presidential messages to school children must have had a purpose in being broadcast to school children; a content analysis could reveal insight into that purpose.

Media use and influence. Trent & Friedenberg (2004) define mass as "consisting of people representing all social, religious, and ethnic groups, from all regions of the country" (p. 119). Mass media "refers to the primary means of mass communication" which is the television for most of our nation's population (p. 119). Televised presidential messages were first introduced to the public in 1952 by President Eisenhower. By 1956, political television messages were considered a "necessary part of the [presidential] campaign effort" (p. 148). Four years later in 1960, "most American households contained a television set, and television soon became the main source of political news" (Rogers, 2004, p. 9). Since then political leaders have been using television to broadcast persuasive messages to the public. The effect of the media on a child's political behavior has been a debate among researchers, but exposure to political communication via the media does introduce children from a young age to the political system and to political opinions (Chaffee et al., 1977). Though children may not yet have an accurate understanding of the political system, children of the television era are

influenced by political communication when the "television news is available" and even when "information that is neither sought nor of much immediate usefulness" is given (p. 223).

Chaffee et al. (1977) discuss the lack of research focused on children concerning the effect of mass communication on political behavior. Most research at that time had focused on mass communication and the effect on adult political behavior. Since then research has shown evidence for the effect of media on a child's political learning. Now that the media is a larger part of the majority of the population's everyday lives, more research has focused on the media as an agent of political socialization. Stanyer (2007) reports "the media is now the main point of connection between citizens and the world of representative politics" (p. 139). Trent & Friedenberg (2004) state that "no other nation in the world consumes so much mass communication" as we do in the United States (p. 117). Of all mass media, television is the "major source of entertainment and information" (p. 117). While mass communication is a major part of political communication, "the influence of mass communication on political behavior remains uncertain…largely because the findings of one generation of scholars are frequently challenged by the next" (p. 118). Majority of the research using political socialization and the mass media has focused on the effect of exposure to political messages on political behavior, rather than focusing specifically on the content of the political communication that is broadcast.

Research on political advertising has become popular as "political advertising has become a staple of communication in democracies" (Kaid, 2004, p. 155). C.K. Atkin

(1977) studied the effects of political and nonpolitical advertising on young children. The hypothesis was "children who view political commercials for a candidate will hold more knowledge about that candidate and have greater liking toward the candidate, than those who are less exposed to these messages" (Atkin, 1977, p. 505). A distinction was made between younger and older children, hypothesizing younger children would gain less knowledge because of less cognitive development, but be more influenced by political advertisements than older children because of less development of attitudes. Using the Michigan Presidential Primary election elementary school students in third through sixth grades were given a survey in class one day after the elections. The survey tested for frequency of exposure to political advertisement viewing on television, for the knowledge gained about each candidate in the campaign, and the affect exposure and knowledge had on the children's opinions of the candidate.

The study found that children, even at young ages, pay attention to, retain knowledge, and develop attitudes about politics from exposure to political messages. This study did not focus on the content of the political communication to children, but on the effect of exposure to political communication via the media had on the children tested. Other factors may have an influence on the effect of media on children, such as earlier influences in the child's life (Chaffee et al., 1977). Children may pay more attention to particular messages because of some predisposition to political learning in their lives, but even with these other factors, it is clear that children do pay attention to and learn from political messages via the media in some capacity; therefore, the media is an agent in a child's political socialization process.

The definition of political advertising has evolved over the years, but Kaid (2004) gives two major distinctions for political advertising. First, the politician must have control over the message. Second, a mass communication channel must be used for distribution of the message. Kaid (2004) also suggests that political advertising must promote a candidate or political party. A distinction is made between political speeches and political advertising; Kaid (2004) explains a speech is different because it is "subject to interpretation or filtering by news media or other participants in the political process" (p. 156). The current study is different from majority of the research on media and political communication in that presidential speeches are being analyzed instead of political advertisements; however, the presidential messages in the current study to school children are not that unlike the requirements for political advertisements.

The speeches were broadcast at a specific time reserved by the President and the President had the attention of many classrooms full of students who tuned in to the broadcast, as well as control over the message presented. These particular speeches were also broadcast through a mass channel. The presidential speeches to school children, therefore, have the same potential as political advertisements to influence their audience. Political advertising research "falls into two basic categories, research about the content of political advertising and research that focuses on the effects of political advertising" (p. 160). A common area of studying political communication using content analysis is candidate image.

Candidate image framework. With the rapid growth of television use, the issue of image arose for political candidates. In candidate image research the policies a

candidate stands for and a candidate's personal qualities are explored using content analysis of a candidate's communication. Benoit & McHale (2004) define image in political communication as "the impression of a candidate for office held by voters" (p. 49) which is based on the messages they have been exposed to from the candidate. An image is "an imitation or copy…a construct developed by voters, based on messages from the candidate and other sources" (p. 49). Other sources may be other agents of political socialization discussed above, such as parents or teachers. A candidate's image can be a form of persuasion as it influences voter's preferences and opinions.

Louden & McCauliff (2004) explain that voters depend on the media and their own experiences to determine the character of a political candidate, which ultimately develops the candidate's image to them. Candidate image is important to the political socialization process in that the image a person develops of a candidate, or any speaker, may determine how the message will influence the person's socialization. Beniot & McHale (2004) argue candidate image is really based primarily on personal qualities more than it is on a candidate's policy. They report that voters identify personal character of the candidate as the "most important determinant of their presidential vote" (p. 50). Voting is one way to show influence on political behavior. The President specifically is typically associated with an image of power, legitimacy, competency, and charisma (Trent & Friedenberg, 2004). While they focus on presidential candidates' strategies in communication during their campaigns, Trent & Friedenberg (2004) identify typical strategies used in political messages which can apply to presidential messages in general. They explain the emphasizing of accomplishments, calling for change, and

optimism for the future as strategies used in presidential messages. These strategies explain how the President maintains his authoritative and trustworthy image.

Benoit & McHale (2004) coded for specific words used in candidate's messages that were representative of the personal qualities of morality, sincerity, empathy, and drive to see how frequently each of these personal qualities are used in political messages. A computer was used to conduct the content analysis, using a list of search terms. In addition to their content analysis, they used a questionnaire to find what personal qualities of the four voters identify as most important to them. The results showed that morality by far was used by candidates in their messages most frequently of all four qualities; however, sincerity was identified by voters as the most important quality in a political candidate. Sincerity was the least frequently used quality in the messages that were studied. The results of this study show how a content analysis can reveal data that may help political leaders identify strategies they should use in their messages.

Other measures of candidate image may also be used. Stephen et al. (2004) conducted a study of the effects of interpersonal communication styles of political candidates through their messages on participants' attitudes towards the candidate. While personal qualities are most often used in such studies and content analysis is the typical method, this study used the survey method to see how the use of interpersonal communication styles by political candidates in their messages effected participants' perceptions of the candidate. Stephen et al. (2004) found interpersonal communication is an agent of influence and does affect candidate choice. While not using content analysis,

this study is relevant in revealing yet another agent of influence in political socialization. Personal qualities and interpersonal communication styles are both important factors in the influence of an agent of political socialization that can be identified in messages through content analysis. The extent to which a person (or child) may be socialized by a political leader's message may depend upon their portrayal of personal qualities and use of interpersonal communication in their message.

Since past studies of political socialization of children have focused on the effect of exposure to political messages, this study will focus on the content of the messages. To the knowledge of the current study's researcher there have been no studies content analyzing presidential messages to children. This study is concerned with identifying persuasive strategies used in presidential messages to children. In order to conduct a content analysis of such messages codes must be developed to identify persuasive strategies.

Persuasive Strategies

Many studies have used persuasive theory as a framework for the method of research in analyzing communication. Moran (2005) used two of Kenneth Burke's four major tropes to analyze commercial communication in England through reports dating back to the 1580's; Berry et al. (2007) used the elaboration likelihood model as a guide to analyze media health messages; Brader (2005) content analyzed the use of emotional appeals, which were identified in Aristotle's Rhetoric, in political advertisements to persuade voters; Weatherby and Scoggins (2005) used two persuasive techniques from compliance gaining theory; Larkey and Hecht (2010) studied how health promotions use

narrative theory to change behavior and relate to an individual's culture. The current study will use Aristotle's Rhetoric, the elaboration likelihood model, and compliance gaining theory to guide the development of a coding scheme for analysis of presidential messages to school children. While these theories were developed based on and mostly tested on adults, youth are discussed in Aristotle's Rhetoric and compliance gaining techniques have been used in studies involving children. The elaboration likelihood model evaluates the cognitive ability of the audience, accounting for age as a factor to cognition and persuasion. Because there are no other studies of presidential speeches to children to the knowledge of the researcher, these persuasive theories have not previously been used in this context with children; however, these particular persuasive theories seem most applicable to a study involving children.

Aristotle's Rhetoric. In *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle identified three means of persuasion: ethos (which refers to the character of the speaker and the audience), logos (which is the development of a logical argument), and pathos (which refers to appealing to or arousing emotions). Presidential messages would be defined by Aristotle as deliberative rhetoric because the topic of the messages is political and advice about future action is usually discussed (Aristotle, trans. 2007). Rhetoric is defined as "an ability in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (p. 37). A presidential message is, therefore, a medium of political persuasion. This study will focus on what means of persuasion are used in presidential messages addressed to children.

Logical persuasion occurs through the use of enthymemes or paradigms "and by nothing other than these" (Aristotle, trans. 2007, p. 40). An enthymeme is a logical

syllogism that implies the major premise, leaving it to the audience to decipher, which is considered to be a rhetorical strategy; it is also an argument. This means an enthymeme is developed through strategy and content. An enthymeme is used "to show that if some premises are true, something else [the conclusion] beyond them results from these because they are true, either universally or for the most part" (p. 40). A speaker gives two minor premises that make true the third premise – the major premise. As a result of the first two premises, the third must be the truth. Logical reasoning is used as strategy in an enthymeme because what may seem to logically be the conclusion may not necessarily be actual truth, though they are "mostly true [only] for the most part" (p. 42). The speaker may use content concerning the topic to provide information and evidence to support the enthymeme, which ultimately makes it more like an argument than a rhetorical strategy. A paradigm is a "rhetorical induction" (p. 40). A speaker would use a paradigm "to show on the basis of many similar instances that something is so" (p. 40).

Another strategy for persuasion is pathos. An audience can be persuaded "when they are led to feel emotion by the speech" (p. 39). There are several emotions a speaker may appeal to in order to invoke such emotions into their audience to persuade them. Aristotle specifically lists some of them, including anger, defined as "desire, accompanied by [mental or physical] distress, for apparent retaliation because of an apparent slight that was directed, without justification, against oneself or those near to one" (p. 116). Calmness is the opposite; people are calm "in the absence of pain and in reasonable expectation of the future" (p. 122). Friendly feeling and enmity (hate) are considered to last longer than anger and calmness. Fear is defined as "a sort of pain and

agitation derived from the imagination of a future destructive or painful evil" (p. 128) that must be imminent and have a remedy. Confidence is the opposite of fear. Shame, shamelessness, kindliness, and unkindliness are also identified by Aristotle.

Pity is "a certain pain at an apparently destructive or painful event happening to one who does not deserve it and which a person might expect himself or one of his own to suffer, and this when it seems close at hand" (p. 139). Pity is an emotion younger people are more apt to feel. Being indignant and being envious are opposites of pity. Emulation is similar to envy, but described as a positive emotion instead of a negative one. These are the emotions Aristotle identifies for persuasion.

Aristotle also identifies the importance of not only looking at the content of a speech to influence persuasion, but also at the speaker and the audience. The speaker's character (ethos) can determine their persuasiveness. Three reasons a speaker is persuasive are "practical wisdom [phronesis] and virtue [arête] and good will [eunoia]" (p. 112); according to Aristotle, "a person seeming to have all these qualities is necessarily persuasive to the hearers" (p. 113). Qualities of the speaker are also addressed in candidate image, discussed earlier.

When referring to the importance of character, Aristotle also discusses the audience; he particularly mentions the age of the audience which is pertinent to the current study. The character of the young is described as impulsive, naïve, and trusting. The young are trusting "because of not yet having been much deceived" (p. 150). They are naïve "because of not yet having experienced much failure" and "they live for the most part in hope" since they look to the future because their future is longer than their

past (p. 150). Young people are impulsive because they do not have fear since they have not had all of life's experiences yet. They are sensitive to shame, believe they are capable and worthy of great things, they live by natural character meaning they do not yet make calculated plans for their life, and they do not judge. Aristotle also describes youth as "inclined to pity, because of supposing [that] everybody is good or better than the average; for they measure their neighbors by their own innocence, with the result that they suppose them to be suffering unworthily" (p. 151). He also says they like laughter and are witty.

While Aristotle's Rhetoric is an ancient theory, it is still applicable to modern political communication. Political messages have been shown in recent studies to contain and use the persuasive strategies Aristotle identifies. Brader (2005) content analyzed the use of emotional appeals in political advertisements to persuade voters. Brader found that emotional appeals that were positive or enthusiastic and emotional appeals that were negative or appeals to fear both had a strong persuasive power over voters' preferences and opinions. Marietta (2008) looked at political rhetoric and the use of appeals to values. The study found that most of the arguments were constructed using convictions that went directly to the public's moral values that no one could argue against, rather than reasoned, logical arguments with specific consequences.

Gibson (2008) defends the relevance and usefulness of Aristotle's enthymemes and analogical approach to arguments even in the scientific field. Using an Avon campaign as an example, Edwards (2006) conducts a qualitative study using Aristotle's Rhetoric as a framework for developing persuasive arguments by anticipating the

audience. Ethos has also been used in recent studies, such as Leff and Utley (2004).

Conducting a rhetorical analysis, Leff and Utley show how a speaker uses ethos as an

instrument of persuasion, but also uses ethos to develop the identification of the speaker.

A speaker's use of pathos, ethos, and logos and the audience's cognitive capacity is

further explained by the elaboration likelihood model.

   Elaboration Likelihood Model. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) state "the ELM

deals explicitly with exposure to persuasive communications" (p. 3). The elaboration

likelihood model (ELM) defines two routes to persuasion: the central route and the

peripheral route. The central route occurs "as a result of a person's careful and

thoughtful consideration of the true merits of the information presented in support of an

advocacy" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 3). The other type of persuasion, the peripheral

route, occurs "as a result of some simple cue in the persuasion context (e.g., an attractive

source) that induced change without necessitating scrutiny of the central merits of the

issue-relevant information presented" (p. 3). The central route of persuasion involves

high cognitive effort from the audience to think about the arguments being used in the

persuasive communication they are exposed to. The peripheral route does not involve

active thinking about the logic of an issue or argument, but instead persuades an audience

through other means.

   Petty and Cacioppo (1986) state seven major postulates to the ELM. First, people

are motivated to hold correct attitudes, and second, the extent to which people are willing

or able to process a message varies with individual and situational factors. Third,

variables can affect attitude change as persuasive arguments, peripheral cues, and/or

affect "the extent or direction of issue and argument elaboration" (p. 5). The fourth and fifth postulates state that variables can affect motivation to process a message in a biased or objective manner either positively or negatively. The sixth postulate refers to peripheral cues, stating that peripheral cues are less important when argument scrutiny is increased and more important when motivation and/or ability to process an argument are low. The seventh postulate states that persuasion through the central route has "greater temporal persistence, greater prediction of behavior, and greater resistance to counterpersuasion" (p. 5) than persuasion through the peripheral route.

Persuasive communication and the role of the audience, as Aristotle's Rhetoric discusses, is also shown in this model. To be more persuasive, according to the ELM, a speaker should take into consideration the cognitive abilities of their audience and the relevance of their issue to the audience. The model begins by asking whether the audience is motivated to process the persuasive communication, focusing on personal relevance and need for cognition as determinants for motivation. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) explain personal relevance of an issue is "perhaps the most important variable affecting the motivation to process a persuasive message" (p. 81). Personal relevance, also referred to as personal involvement, is the "extent to which an advocacy has personal meaning" and involves whether "people expect the issue to have significant consequences for their own lives" (p. 81). As personal relevance increases, motivation to process arguments increases. Need for cognition "represents a person's level of intrinsic motivation to engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive endeavors" (p. 105). If need for cognition is high, individuals are "consistently more likely to base their attitudes on a

diligent analysis of relevant information, whereas individuals low in need for cognition should be more likely to utilize cognitively less taxing peripheral processes" (p. 54). Motivational factors also include personal responsibility, number of sources, forewarning of message content, forewarning of persuasive intent, and excessive message repetition.

If it is determined that motivation does not exist, the persuader would move to using peripheral cues. If motivation exists, the ability for the audience to process the communication is determined, which includes considering distractions and knowledge. Motivation is dependent upon many factors, which may be individual or situational (Hoekstra & Segal, 1996). In their study of U.S. Supreme Court decisions, Hoekstra and Segal (1996) focus on how motivation for processing through the central route increases with personal involvement with or salience of an issue. They found "the proximity of the issue to one's daily life and encounters will affect the Court's ability to attract attention to its activities" (p. 1088). In other words, personal salience is a factor in motivation for processing persuasive communication. While individual factors such as age may determine ability to process, motivation seems to be determined more by situational factors.

Distractions can affect the cognitive processing of an argument, resulting in more peripheral cues being used. There are some factors that may be distractions in some instances, but may enhance persuasion in others. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) identify rhetorical questions as one of these factors. When motivation to elaborate is low, rhetorical questions may enhance persuasion, but when motivation to process is high, the questions may distract the processing of the argument. While most distractions are

identified as external factors, sometimes the message itself can be the distraction (Kang et al., 2006). Knowledge may motivate individuals to pay more attention to a message, but prior knowledge is likely to cause biased processing of a message. While objective processing is possible with prior knowledge it is more likely that "prior knowledge will enable biased scrutiny of externally provided communications" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 111).

If motivation exists, then it must be determined if the audience has the ability to process the communication. If they do, then the type of cognitive processing is considered, which depends on the argument quality and initial attitude of the audience. Kang et al. (2006) explain that, according to ELM, "one's motivation and ability to process the message are the key predictors of one's attentional focus" (p. 353). Initial attitude of the audience refers to prior knowledge affecting objective elaboration or biased elaboration. Argument quality "refers to any information contained in a message that permits a person to evaluate the message target along whatever target dimensions are central for that person" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 16). It is important to the central route to develop strong arguments in order to have a positive persuasive effect. A strong message contains "arguments such that when subjects are instructed to think about the message, the thoughts that they generate are predominantly favorable" (p. 32). Weak arguments result in a negative response or an indifferent response which causes no change in attitude or behavior.

When the audience may be either unmotivated to process the communication or unable to process the communication, the peripheral route may be the best means of

persuasion to use. Peripheral cues typically refer to the credibility of the speaker, the reaction of others, and external rewards. A peripheral cue is "a simple cue in the persuasion context that affects attitudes in the absence of argument processing" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 33). According to Griffin (2009), "most messages are processed on the less effortful peripheral path" (p. 198).   While peripheral persuasive strategies are successful, they do not persuade an audience to necessarily believe in the message, but to accept it based on something unrelated to it. For instance, providing the audience with a tangible reward in exchange for agreement is a peripheral cue. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) and Berry et al. (2007) acknowledge that the number of arguments used in a message may influence persuasion as a peripheral cue. Though not necessarily exhaustive, six cues are listed by Griffin (2009), which may signal the use of the peripheral route to persuasion: reciprocation, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Petty and Cacioppo (1986) divide cues into three categories: source cues, message cues, and other cues that influence attitude. Source cues that they particularly identify are source expertise, source attractiveness, source likeability, and source credibility.

A major peripheral cue is the speaker's character and credibility, or image, according to candidate image, or ethos, according to Aristotle. Berry et al. (2007), acknowledging the importance of the perception of a message's source, state, "in general, highly credible sources, such as experts, are more persuasive than less credible sources," (p. 37). Keys et al. (2009) conducted a study on the effect of character appeal, specifically the race and celebrity status of the source of persuasive communication, and

audience motivation on the audience's attitude change. Keys et al. (2009) found that message content by itself did not create motivation toward the persuasive communication, but character appeal had a strong impact on attitude change. When high involvement or motivation was present and the message came from an admired celebrity, persuasion was more effective. According to the ELM, if a person (or any source) is likeable and an expert on the topic of the communication, then they "can have a persuasive impact regardless of what arguments they present" (p. 198). Persuasion through the peripheral route does not create the same impact that the central route is capable of; "attitude changes via the central route appear to be more persistent, resistant, and predictive of behavior than changes induced via the peripheral route" (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 217).

Palmer and Carpenter (2006) used the ELM to study food and beverage advertising to children. They show that in ads for candy and cereal consuming the product is associated with fun and excitement and usually the presence of some "celebrity" character, like Ronald McDonald. Missing from these advertisements are "any references to product content, nutrition, quality, or price" (p. 170). This finding shows companies employ peripheral cues when sending persuasive communication to children. The current study will explore whether presidents employ the same persuasive strategies to children.

Kang et al. (2006) examined persuasive communication in the form of public service announcements about drug use directed toward adolescents. The study was designed to explore the "interaction between content and format on audience's message

evaluation" (p. 352) – argument quality being the content and message sensation value

the format of the message. Their results showed that ads low in message sensation value

increased in effectiveness as argument quality increased, ads with high message sensation

value decreased in effectiveness as argument quality increased, and ads with low message

sensation value and low argument quality were the least effective ads. These results

show that while children can be effectively influenced by peripheral cues, peripheral cues

themselves may be a distraction to children. The effectiveness of argument quality can

depend on the distraction of peripheral cues; while children may be capable of processing

a strong argument through the central route, they may be distracted by peripheral cues

and unable to process the argument for that reason. The current study will seek to

determine which route presidents appeal to in addressing children.

Compliance gaining. Liu et al. (2006) define the focus of compliance-gaining

research as "strategic processes used by a speaker in an attempt to change people's

attitudes and behaviors toward a predetermined goal" (p. 210). Compliance gaining

strategies have been studied in presidential messages before. Petrow and Sullivan (2007)

discuss the unique persuasive power of the president of the United States. As discussed

earlier, the president is a very effective agent of persuasion as an authority figure. Petrow

and Sullivan identify three major persuasive strategies used by modern presidents:

strategic advantages, compliance gaining, and sequencing. The current study will use the

concept of compliance gaining to identify persuasive strategies in modern presidential

messages. One major distinction between strategic advantage and compliance gaining

given by Petrow and Sullivan is "strategic advantage theory suggests that presidents

persuade by calling on shared responsibilities, compliance gaining suggests that politicians rely on shared values" (p. 42).

The first strategy identified in compliance gaining that presidents have used is the "use of inducements" (p. 42). With this strategy the president "will rely on offering inducements (promises, threats, etc.) or underscoring previous debts" (p. 42). Another strategy is "appealing to shared characteristics" (p. 42). Petrow and Sullivan explain that the president "will rely on shared ideology, party, and region to persuade" (p. 42). Being knowledgeable about the issue being presented is also a persuasive strategy used by the president; this strategy is labeled "citing policy details" (p. 43). This strategy is particularly important in their study because they look at presidential persuasion to members of Congress; it is defined as "technical explanation and policy-specific justification" (p. 43). The last compliance gaining strategy identified for presidential messages is persistence. According to this strategy, "the president will have more success the longer the persuasive encounter" in persuading their audience (p. 43).

Petrow and Sullivan (2007) classify two other compliance gaining strategies commonly identified as sequencing techniques. These two strategies were used in Weatherby and Scoggins' (2005) content analysis of white supremacist websites; these are foot-in-the-door technique and door-in-the-face technique. Using foot-in-the-door the president "will seek a lesser commitment in order to set up a broader or bigger commitment" (p. 43). Using door-in-the-face the president "will ask for a greater commitment from a member in order to retreat to and secure a lesser commitment" (p. 43). Their study found that in addressing members of the Congress, presidents do not use

sequencing at all. Presidents use strategic advantage the most, but also use compliance

gaining strategies in their persuasive communication.

All of the strategies described that presidents use for persuasive power are

grounded in the five major premises of compliance gaining theory. The five premises are

referred to as power bases because they are strategies to gaining persuasive power. These

power bases of compliance gaining are: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power,

referent power, and expert power. All of these power bases are dependent upon the

audience's perception of the speaker to have such power. Reward power is the

"perceived ability of the speaker to give positive consequences or remove negative ones"

(Liu et al., 2006, p. 210). Coercive power is the opposite of reward power in that it is the

"perceived ability of the speaker to punish those who do not comply" (p. 210).

Legitimate power is the "perceived organizational authority of the speaker" (p. 210).

Referent power occurs when there is a perception of some connection or association of

the speaker with people who have power. When the speaker is perceived to have

"knowledge, expertise, or skills" about the issue or topic expert power is achieved (p.

210).

Not only have compliance gaining strategies been studied specifically in

presidential messages, but the persuasive effect of compliance strategies on children has

also been studied. Turman (2007) conducted interviews with children and parents about

the persuasive strategies parents used to encourage their children to participate in sports.

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of gender (of the parent and

child) on the likelihood the parents would use compliance gaining strategies and how "a

family's sport orientation can predict parental compliance gaining techniques" (p. 152).

The five basic principles of compliance gaining identified by Turman (2007) are

rewarding activity, punishing activity, the use of expertise, the activation of impersonal

commitments, and the activation of personal commitments. They do not address referent

or legitimate power. Impersonal commitments refer to one's self-esteem or moral

appeals, for instance if you do something people will be impressed with you. Personal

commitments refer to persuasion through debt or obligation, for instance because

someone has done favors for you, you owe it to them to comply. Children were asked to

identify which compliance gaining techniques they perceived their parents were most

likely to use or did use. While their findings on the effect of gender on use of compliance

gaining techniques is interesting, the most important aspect of the study to the current

study is that children are able to identify compliance gaining techniques.

Marshall and Levy (1998) also studied messages using compliance gaining and

children's perceptions of the strategies. Their study focused on a child's ability to not

only identify compliance gaining strategies, but to use them and identify things that

prevent these strategies from being successful. They claimed "with maturation, even

young children should demonstrate improved ability to identify barriers to compliance"

(p. 344). Marshall and Levy provide two factors that determine or lead to a child's ability

to identify compliance gaining barriers: sensitivity to contextual cues and degree of

social-cognitive awareness (p. 344). Children in the study ranged from kindergarten to

second grade and were interviewed using scenarios in which children explained how they

might handle the situation and why. The findings showed that children are capable of

identifying barriers to compliance and changing strategy in certain situations; this ability increased with age. All three of these theories will guide the content analysis in the current study.

Purpose of Study

Few studies have focused on the content of messages that affect the political socialization process in children. This study will focus primarily on the "what" rather than the "how." Using political socialization theory as the foundation this study examines the content of political messages to children because of the impact the messages have on their political behavior and development. The purpose of the study is to assess the persuasive communication, using Aristotle's Rhetoric, elaboration likelihood model, and compliance gaining to identify strategies in presidential messages to children.

Since studies have shown exposure to political messages does have an effect on children's political views and development, this study will not focus on showing that messages have an effect on children, but instead will focus on the content of the messages. Specifically, the content of formal political messages intended for children from the President of the United States. A speech by former presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush and a speech by President Barack Obama will be used to explore and analyze the content of such messages. Using these speeches will set this study apart from other studies of political socialization of children because they are messages designed for children, not adults, and are not political advertisements or media messages, but formally given speeches.

Chapter 3

Method

The purpose of this study was to determine whether persuasive strategies are used in presidential messages to children. Three presidential speeches were selected to be content analyzed for persuasive strategies in order to make this determination. A focus group of middle school age children was conducted in which the children viewed former president Ronald Reagan's speech to school children and then discussed the content of the message to determine what children identified about the speeches.

Content Analysis

The current study conducted a content analysis of presidential messages to school children. The current study's purpose was concerned with studying content only and not influence, thus content analysis is an appropriate research method to use. Content analysis was conducted to identify persuasive strategies used in the speeches.

The method of content analysis is defined as "systematic, quantitative analysis of communication of message content" (Hacker, 2004, p. 225). Its focus is on "visible communication content" (p. 225) only. A content analysis study does not answer the question of motive or reason behind the content or of the effect of content on political behavior. Content analysis researchers analyze texts; a text "is any kind of communication message in which symbols are used" (Baxter & Babbie, 2004, p. 233). The communication messages may be mediated, nonmediated, private, public, scripted, or spontaneous. The symbols analyzed in the communication may be verbal or

nonverbal. Content analysis researchers look for indicators of issue or image, positivity or negativity, partisan appeals, emotional tone, and fear appeals, among many others (Kaid, 2004, p. 160).

Content analysis is used when researchers "want to enumerate the details of communicative messages" (Baxter & Babbie, 2004, p. 231). Data in content analysis is "tabulat[ed] countable data in the form of words, images, phrases, speech acts, meaning units, sentences, or whatever other kind of unit of enumeration the researchers consider most important" (Hacker, 2004, p. 225). A content analysis measures and reports the "frequencies with which certain message features are present" (Baxter & Babbie, 2004, p. 234) in a sample of texts. This analysis is called distributional structure (Baxter & Babbie, 2004).

A coding system is developed in order to record the frequencies of certain features the researcher is looking for in a text. Benoit & McHale (2004) used what they refer to as the "three hallmarks of content analysis" (p. 54) in their own content analysis study for developing their codes. These three requirements for codes are that code categories must be relevant, exhaustive, and mutually exclusive. Once a coding scheme is developed, the researcher can look for the presence of them in the messages (Baxter & Babbie, 2004).

Now that television has grown as a major source of political messages, it would seem that content analysis of "audiovisual media" would also have grown, but it has not (Graber, 2004, p. 57). Graber (2004) cites the difficulty of coding as the main reason for this; however, some researchers have found audiovisual content analysis approachable.

Researchers analyze the "videostyle" of a candidate (or political leader), meaning they focus on the "content of political spots and suggest that it is possible to understand a candidate's mode of self-presentation in spots by analyzing the verbal, nonverbal, and production characteristics of the candidate's political advertising" (Kaid, 2004, p. 165). Other studies have been conducted specifically examining the content of political messages as well (Fridkin et al., 2007; Lewis, 2003; Banwart & McKinney, 2005). None of the above studies content analyzed presidential messages to children.

Several studies have also used content analysis to identify what messages contain and whether persuasive strategies were used in those messages (Berry et al., 2007; Rahn & Hirshorn,1999; Weatherby and Scoggins, 2005). While the messages were not political speeches by political leaders, as in this study, they are relevant in showing the use of content analysis to identify persuasive strategies in messages.

Sample. Three presidential speeches were used for this study: Ronald Reagan's speech to school children in 1988, George H.W. Bush's speech to school children in 1991, and Barack Obama's speech to school children in 2009. These three speeches made up the sample for the study. The transcripts of these speeches were obtained from various Internet archives (http://www.reagan.utexas.edu; http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu; http://www.whitehouse.gov).

The selection criteria for the speeches chosen were speeches given by presidents in the modern era. The modern era of presidents was defined as presidents that had access to a large number of the public via television broadcast. Once those presidents were identified, the selection of speeches was then limited to speeches that were intended

for and given to school age children. Three speeches fit these particular criteria, and those are the three speeches this study used for content analysis. These presidential speeches were the sample for this study.

  Procedure. The codebook and codesheet for this study were developed according to persuasive strategies established in Aristotle's Rhetoric, elaboration likelihood model, and compliance gaining. These three theories help to identify the unit of analysis – persuasive strategies. After applying the theories for coding, a careful examination of the speeches was conducted in order to further define coding categories.

  Several studies have used theory to develop codes for analysis; the current study used three persuasive theories to develop coding of the speeches. Because this study focused on discovering whether presidents use persuasive strategies in speeches to children, a variety of persuasive theories were needed in order account for any instance of a persuasive strategy. Aristotle's Rhetoric was chosen because it specifically addresses political speeches and political persuasion. Aristotle also specifically acknowledges youth as an audience to persuasive speeches. Elaboration likelihood model provided a framework for determining the way presidents used persuasion with children. The model is focused on how a message is cognitively processed by an audience, so it was important to include this model for coding to determine what route presidents use for persuasion when appealing to children. Compliance gaining was used because of specific literature applying the techniques to the president of the United States and literature applying the theory in studies with children, so it was extremely relevant to this study.

Using these three persuasive theories the codebook was developed to identify

persuasive strategies. The topics discussed in the speech and whether the purpose of the

speech was clearly identified were coded for in the beginning of the analysis. Whether

the salience and personal involvement of the audience to the topic was explained was

coded for based on elaboration likelihood model. The use of emotional appeals was

coded for, listing and defining each emotion identified by Aristotle in *On Rhetoric*. The

use of argument was also coded for from enthymemes to evidence based facts to moral

values to create the argument and the number of arguments the speech contained.

Development of speaker character and identification through strategies such as familiar

connection and power perceptions was coded for. Finally, peripheral cues, compliance

gaining techniques, and candidate image were all coded for.

For the most reliable data possible and to protect against researcher bias, two

independent coders were used to conduct the coding analysis. Coders were current

Communication graduate students who had taken two research methods courses. A

training session was conducted to instruct coders on the process of content analysis and

explain coding categories for the study. A folder containing the codebook, three code

sheets, the transcripts for the three speeches used in the study, and a manila envelope in

which to return code sheets was prepared before the session for each coder. The training

session lasted two hours. After the principal investigator reviewed the codebook with

them, the coders were given a speech not used in the sample for this study to code

individually during the session. Once they had filled out their code sheets analyzing the

practice speech, their coding was compared and intercoder reliability was calculated

based on percent agreement; reliability was .74. A review of all instances where coding did not match was conducted to clarify coding categories. Since satisfactory inter-coder reliability was attained with the practice speech, the principal investigator gave the coders each a folder with their coding materials; coders were given one week to return the code sheets. Once data was collected, it was recorded in a spreadsheet document to determine percent agreement for intercoder reliability. Intercoder reliability in this study was .85.

Analysis of Results. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the frequencies and the presence or absence of the variables (persuasive strategies used) in all three presidential speeches to school children. Because the sample in this study was three formal speeches, comparison of the texts was possible. The frequency of variables was calculated for each speech, and a comparison of the results for each of the speeches was conducted.

Focus Group

A focus group was also conducted in the current study to further explore presidential messages to children. Since this study was focused on the identification of persuasive strategies used in messages to children, as a follow up to the content analysis a focus group with middle school age children was formed to see if they identify persuasive strategies in a presidential message. The speech by Ronald Reagan to school children was chosen as the unit of analysis for this part of the study. This particular speech was chosen because it was the least likely of the three speeches to have been viewed previously by the students, as it was given in 1988, and there would be less chance of any bias due to prior knowledge. There was concern that the date of the speech would affect

the relevance and acceptance of the speech to the students; however, because all three speeches were given by presidents to students they were very similar in nature. The presidents were dressed similar and discussed general topics that are relevant across generations. Nothing was found in Ronald Reagan's 1988 speech that would distract students in the study based on the fact that it was given in 1988. While President Barack Obama's speech was the most recent given, using President Barack Obama's 2009 speech presented greater concern for distraction because of the recent controversy and possibility of bias. There may have also been some distraction simply due to fact that he is the sitting President of the United States and students may have already developed an opinion of him that would bias their participation.

President Ronald Reagan's speech was also the first of its kind to have been given, so the presidents who gave speeches to school children after Reagan may have used his speech as an example or reference in addressing school children. For that reason, using the original speech made sense for this study.

Participants. The participants in this study were children between the ages of eleven and thirteen. Middle school age school children from a private, Christian school were recruited for this study. Middle school age students were chosen for this study because by the middle grades a child "begins to shift to a more institutionalized interpretation of [political] authority" (Easton & Dennis, 1969, p. 318). According to Easton and Dennis (1969), by the "fifth grade [a] child is normally in his sixth year of exposure to the educational system but in his eleventh year of direct family influence and probably in his ninth year of heavy exposure television" (p. 321). Since the extent to

which a child has been politically socialized, influenced by their family, and their exposure to television are all relevant to the purpose of this study it was important to choose students that were not so young they had not had these experiences, but still young enough for the purposes of this study to be defined as children.

After permission from the school's principal and school board was obtained for this study, a letter to students and parents explaining the project was sent home with students in the sixth and seventh grade classrooms at the school to recruit participants. Two copies of an informed consent form for participation in the study were sent home with the students for parents and students to sign. Parents were instructed in the letter to keep one copy for their own records. Students were given two weeks to return the other copy of the informed consent form in order to participate in the study. Only those students who returned the informed consent form participated in this study. Thirty-four letters and permission slips were sent home with students, and seven students, two female and five male, returned their permission slips to participate in the study.

Procedure. During their study hall period at school, participants viewed Ronald Reagan's speech to school children in a classroom at the school. Before viewing the speech, students were given an assent form and the researcher read the form to the students and reminded them it was completely optional to participate in the study. Students signed the assent form if they still wished to participate. All of the forms emphasized participation was voluntary, that the participants could decline from participating in the study at any time, and that they would in no way be penalized for choosing not to participate.

After viewing the speech, a focus group was conducted by the researcher to discuss what the students observed about the speech. The discussion was audio recorded and the researcher took notes during the discussion. Open discussion was encouraged and it was emphasized to the students that each of their independent answers and thoughts were important to the study. Viewing the speech took approximately twenty minutes and the focus group lasted approximately twenty-five minutes. Altogether the study accounted for forty-five minutes of the participants' time, which was the duration of the study hall period.

In order to ensure confidentiality the names of the students were not used in the data for the study. The principal investigator instructed students not to use each other's names during the focus group discussion and names were not recorded in the discussion notes. To distinguish between responses or quotations, the participants were referred to using pseudo names which they made up themselves; students wore name tags with their pseudo names to remind each other not to use their real names. Even if students accidentally used their real names during the discussion, the names were not transcribed from the audio recording or used in any other way for purposes of this study.

Focus group discussion questions were created to guide the discussion. These questions were open-ended and used only for directing the students. Qualitative research is "an inquiry approach useful to exploring and understanding a central phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). The inquiry approach provides a rich, in-depth study in order to understand the meanings which affect human beings' actions. The researcher's purpose is to study the participants' experience through their eyes (Baxter & Babbie, 2003). A

focus group discussion was relevant to this study because it adds to the data from the content analysis in trying to experience the presidential message to children from the actual responses of children. The closest way to explore children's perceptions of presidential messages to them is to learn about their experience directly from their explanation of it.

One study in particular that shows the advantage and use of focus groups with children is Elliot (2009), which studied the "fun" campaign tactics of food targeted towards children – specifically the packaging. A focus group of children from grades one to six was conducted to determine how children interpret the child-friendly appeals made through the packaging of food products directed to them and what meaning the appeals have to them. Especially for research topics that have not previously been explored with children, Elliot states that "focus group research is designed to help understand what people think and why" (p. 363) and is ideal for discovering children's interpretations and perspectives. From the focus group transcripts a list of codes were developed based on the research questions in the study and the framework of the study. Just as a focus group with children was relevant and beneficial to Elliot (2009), it is relevant and important to the current study.

Analysis of Results. While the process of analysis in qualitative research is not a "structured, static, or rigid process" and is instead a "free-flowing and creative one," the analysis followed a thematic structure of analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 58). The transcript was read in its entirety once. The second time, in a line-by-line analysis of the transcript, codes were underlined based on the theoretical framework of this study

outlined in Chapter Two. These consisted of words or phrases made by the participants that may be data categories or themes emerging from the discussion. The transcript was read for a third time, based on the underlined words and phrases, possible themes were written in the right-hand margin.

I then created a word document and typed all the themes from the right-hand margin; the underlined codes and important quotes were copied and pasted under the themes. Data was arranged into categories according to recurring patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Finally, after revising and reorganizing the data, six major themes were developed from the focus group transcripts.

Verification. For qualitative research, verification of data follows a different process than quantitative analysis. I used thick, rich description to support the credibility of the findings. Details of participants, data collection, data analysis, and findings described "the setting, the participants, and the themes" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 128). I included several quotations from the focus group discussion to give the reader actual insight into the discussion. These details "help readers understand that the account is credible" and "enables readers to make decisions about the applicability of the findings to other settings or similar contexts" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 129).

Chapter 4

Findings

The content analysis conducted on the data in this study supported the idea that presidents use persuasive strategies in direct communication to children. The content analysis results also revealed information about the topics discussed in presidential speeches to school children and the structure of the messages. In response to this study's first research question, the analysis suggested presidential messages to children contain persuasive strategies and those particular strategies are discussed below. The results of the focus group discussion conducted in this study provided support that children retain knowledge and learn from direct messages to which they are exposed. In response to this study's second research question, the children in this study identified and recognized certain points made by the president that indicate persuasive strategies after viewing Ronald Reagan's speech to school children. The children also displayed an understanding of political socialization in their discussion; the results from the focus group are discussed below as well.

Content Analysis

The results from the content analysis revealed what topics were discussed, what emotional appeals were used, how arguments were used, how speaker character and identification was developed, what peripheral cues were used, what persuasive techniques were used, and what image was developed in presidential speeches to school children. In answer to the first research question, the specific results of the content analysis are reported below.

Topics discussed. The topics discussed in the presidential speeches to school children ranged from patriotism to finances. Patriotism, education, change, and future appeared in all three speeches to children. Other topics existed either in two of the speeches or in one of them. Barack Obama's speech included, in addition to the topics common in all three, war, national history, and the nation's importance. President Obama used national history to encourage students to work hard in school by explaining America's story is "the story of students who sat where you sit two hundred and fifty years ago, and went on to wage a revolution and they founded this nation." George H.W. Bush's speech included policy, drugs, violence, fitness, and national pride. As an example of how children have control over their lives George H.W. Bush asked the children to think about the decision to take drugs: "But you know and I know that all the drug prevention programs, all the pledges, all the preaching in the world won't pull you through the critical moment when someone offers drugs."

Ronald Reagan's speech included war, finances, policy, drugs, how the political system works, national history, national pride, and the nation's importance. The majority of Ronald Reagan's speech focused on the United States government and the privilege Americans have in choosing their government. In the very beginning of his speech he tells the children: "What we in America take for granted is something that's rare in history and all too remarkable on this globe." He then goes on to explain how the political system works throughout most of the speech. The comparison of topics discussed in the three speeches is shown in Table 1.

Regardless of the topics discussed, all of the speeches had an overall positive tone. For instance, even as George H.W. Bush discussed negative statistics on the mathematic aptitude of eighth grade students in the United States, he followed with a positive perspective: "In spite of troubling statistics like this one, I don't see this report, however, as just bad news…it gives us something to build on." He, like the other presidents, kept a positive tone focused on the future and improvement. Of all the presidents, George H.W. Bush was the only one to make the purpose of his speech explicitly clear. Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush both explained the salience to the students of the topics discussed in their speeches. All three speeches explained the audience's personal involvement with the topic being discussed. Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush included a human interest story related to the speech, which are used to peak an audience's interest. President Obama talked about a girl named Shantel Steve from his hometown of Chicago, Illinois who grew up in many different foster homes in bad neighborhoods, but was able to find a good job, start a program to keep young people away from gangs, and graduate with honors from high school.

Table 1

Topics Discussed in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Education	Education	Education
Change	Change	Change
Future	Future	Future
Patriotism	Patriotism	Patriotism
War		War
	Policy	Policy
		Pol.system
National history		Ntl. history
	National pride	National pride

Nation's importance		N. importance
	Drugs	Drugs
		Finances
	Violence	
	Fitness	

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Emotional appeals. Identified by Aristotle, emotional appeals are also used to generate interest and invoke an emotion. Emotional appeals present in all three speeches were calmness and emulation. Friendly-feeling was an emotional appeal used by Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush. Enmity, or hate, was appealed to by Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. George H.W. Bush was the only president to appeal to fear in the audience. None of the presidents used anger in their speech to school children. Barack Obama was the only president to appeal to shame, kindliness, and pity. The three emotional appeals not used in any of the speeches were anger, indignation, and envy. Emotional appeals present in the speeches are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Emotional Appeals Present in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Calmness	Calmness	Calmness
Emulation	Emulation	Emulation
Friendly-feeling	Friendly-feeling	
	Enmity	Enmity
Kindliness		
Pity		
Shame		
	Fear	

Use of argument. In addition to emotional appeals, arguments were also present in the three speeches to school children. Both enthymemes and paradigms were present in all three speeches. Factual evidence, logical inference, and moral values were all used

to support the arguments used by each president. George H.W. Bush provided statistics

for the rate of drop outs from school and states the need to change those statistics. In his

argument for changing such statistics he tells the students that Americans should be "first

in the world in math and science," so students' abilities should be tested regularly. The

audience is left to infer or believe that testing students' abilities has some effect on their

being the smartest in math and science. Ronald Reagan uses a paradigm as he describes

America's founding fathers and the values and traditions they passed on for generations.

Because the ELM identifies the number of arguments used in a speech to be relevant, the

amount of arguments present in each speech were recorded; Barack Obama used thirteen,

George H.W. Bush used nine, and Ronald Regan used fourteen. The presence of

arguments supports that the central route to persuasion was used by the presidents.

   Speaker character and identification. As the ELM and Aristotle both posit, in

order to further persuade the audience a speaker develops their character and

identification with the audience. All three presidents in the speeches to school children

attempted to develop their character and identification with their audience. Virtue and

good will was used by all three to develop character. The mention of wisdom was

present in Barack Obama's speech and Ronald Reagan's speech. President Obama

portrayed his wisdom in explaining he knew goals were possible because of

accomplishing his own, while Ronald Reagan stated his age was what made him wise: "at

my age, when I tell you something is the oldest in the world, you can take my word for

it." In reference to compliance gaining, all three used legitimate power and expert power.

Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush also used referent power. Reward power and coercive power were not present in the any of the three speeches.

All three presidents attempted to develop identification with their audience. Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush did so through establishing a familiar connection to the children. For example, George H.W. Bush told the story of the students' teacher at the school he was actually speaking at. He referred to their teacher by name and described the teacher's personal career path as if he knew her. Barack Obama and Ronald Reagan both tried to develop identification with the audience through relating to their interests, hobbies, or any aspect of their lives. President Obama talked about iPods and Ronald Reagan mentioned Eddie Murphy movies in their attempt to relate to specific aspects of the children's lives. All three presidents directly addressed and involved the audience. Direct questions to the audience were present in all of the speeches. George H.W. Bush instructed the students to ask themselves questions like: "Where will I be, where will I be 5 years from now? Will I be on a college campus, or out running the streets?" in addressing the audience. The audience's specific role in the topics discussed was identified by all three presidents and the power of the audience was emphasized by all three. The results in this section are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Speaker Character and Identification Emphasized in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Virtue & Good Will	Virtue & Good Will	Virtue & Good Will
Legitimate power	Legitimate power	Legitimate power
Expert power	Expert power	Expert power
Direct questions	Direct questions	Direct questions
Audience role	Audience role	Audience role

Audience power	Audience power	Audience power
Referent power	Referent power	
Wisdom		Wisdom
Familiar connection	Familiar connection	
Relating to audience		Relating to audience

Peripheral cues. While the power or ability of the audience was emphasized and the central route of persuasion was developed through use of arguments, peripheral cues were still present in the speeches to the school children. The peripheral cues present in all three speeches were expertise, celebrity status, and intangible reward. A tangible reward was introduced by Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush. Barack Obama and Ronald Reagan turned to the peripheral cue of consistency to persuade the audience with the explanation that because it has always been done one way, it should be followed. Similar to consistency, Barack Obama also included social proof, a cue that persuades the audience to do something or believe something because everyone else is. Ronald Reagan did not include social proof, but George H.W. Bush did. The likeability cue was used by Barack Obama only. Reciprocation, persuading the audience because they owe something to the speaker, was used only by George H.W. Bush. The authority cue, or the "because I said so" cue, was not present in any of the speeches. Scarcity was also not present in any of the speeches. The peripheral cues present in each of the speeches are listed in the table below.

Table 4
Peripheral Cues Present in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Expertise	Expertise	Expertise
Celebrity status	Celebrity status	Celebrity status
Intangible reward	Intangible reward	Intangible reward

Tangible reward	Tangible reward	
Consistency		Consistency
Social Proof	Social proof	
	Reciprocation	
Likeability		

Persuasive techniques. Specific persuasive techniques identified by compliance gaining theory were also present in the presidential speeches to school children. Foot in the door technique, in which the speaker seeks a lesser commitment from an audience to set them up for a larger commitment, was used by all three of the presidents. As an example, President Obama told the students to do their science projects because they may be the inventor of the next iPhone, and must do the first task to accomplish the bigger one. These tasks were considered commitments in the context of the speech because President Obama discussed what the children would do with their futures in terms of what they could do for the nation's future. Door in the face technique, which is the reversal of foot in the door technique, was present in Barack Obama's speech and Ronald Reagan's speech. Low-ball technique, attempting to hide the truth of a message by not giving the whole story, was not present in any of the speeches.

Two of the presidents, Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush used promises or threats, or use of inducements, to persuade their audience. An appeal to shared characteristics was made by Barack Obama and Ronald Reagan in their speeches. Personal commitments, where the speaker appeals to obligation or responsibility to persuade, were appealed to in all three speeches. Ronald Reagan provided an example of personal commitment in the last lines of his speech: "All we can do to earn what we've received is to dream large dreams, to live lives of kindness, and to keep faith with the

unfinished vision of the greatness and wonder of America." Reagan appealed to the

obligation the next generation has because of what generations before them have

provided to them. Impersonal commitments, an appeal to self-esteem or moral values,

were used by two of the presidents – Barack Obama and George H.W. Bush. A necessity

for compliance was described in all three of the speeches. The common necessity

described was the future and success of the United States of America. The anticipation of

responses technique was present in Barack Obama's speech and George H.W. Bush's

speech. President Obama anticipated his audience's response to the beginning of the

school year: "And no matter what grade you're in, some of you are probably wishing it

were still summer and you could've stayed in bed just a little bit longer this morning."

Ronald Reagan was the only president of the three to cite policy details, mentioning tax

laws and economic reform. All of the techniques used in each speech are also shown in

Table 5.

Table 5
Persuasive Techniques Present in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Foot in the door	Foot in the door	Foot in the door
Personal commitment	Personal commitment	Personal Commitment
Necessity for compliance	Necessity for compliance	Necessity for compliance
Door in the face		Door in the face
Use of inducements	Use of inducements	
Shared characteristics		Shared characteristics
Impersonal commitment	Impersonal commitment	
Anticipate responses	Anticipate responses	
		Cite policy details

Image developed. In addition to using persuasive techniques, all three presidents

attempted to develop a positive image through their speeches to school children. Barack

Obama, George H.W. Bush, and Ronald Reagan all emphasized their power, their

authority, charisma, optimism for the future, and the need for change for the better.

Barack Obama was the only president who emphasized his own accomplishments in his

speech and the only one who seemed empathetic. George H.W. Bush was the only

president to show legitimacy and competency in developing his image. George H.W.

Bush also associated himself with being driven. Ronald Reagan was the only president

who emphasized his morality. Sincerity was portrayed by Barack Obama and George

H.W. Bush. George H.W. Bush and Ronald Reagan portrayed trustworthiness.

Humor was not used by Barack Obama, but George H.W. Bush and Ronald

Reagan both used humor in developing a positive image with the audience. Ronald

Reagan used humor as a way for the audience to better understand his position, while

George H.W. Bush used humor simply for a positive response from the audience. None

of the presidents emphasized their standards of responsibility or professional conduct to

create an ethical image. Table 6 shows the aspects of image developed by each president

in their speeches.

Table 6
Image developed in Presidential Speeches to School Children

Barack Obama	George H.W. Bush	Ronald Reagan
Power	Power	Power
Authority	Authority	Authority
Charisma	Charisma	Charisma
Optimism for future	Optimism for future	Optimism for future
Need for change	Need for change	Need for change
Emphasize own accomplish.		

Empathetic

	Legitimacy	
	Competency	
	Driven	
		Morality
Sincerity	Sincerity	
	Trustworthy	Trustworthy
	Humor	Humor

The results from the content analysis show that when addressing school children in formal speeches presidents do use persuasive strategies. Some of these strategies were specific to such speeches as they were used in all three speeches given to school children; however, there were many differences in the three speeches and types of strategies present. While the content analysis provided data concerning the content, the focus group study went a step further to explore what children identified in the speeches.

Focus Group

In answer to the second research question, children identified and retained aspects of persuasive strategies in presidential speeches designed for them. Without having any technical knowledge of persuasive theories and strategies, the aspects of former president Ronald Reagan's speech that the children in this focus group discussed described or were related to some of the concepts developed in political socialization theory and the persuasive theories that were used as a framework in this study. The themes that emerged from the focus group included: political learning, emphasis on audience role and power, personal relevance shown, identification with the audience, use of argument, and positive image development. The following is a detailed description of these themes, including quotations from participants. Quotations will be referenced by using the

participant's pseudo name, followed by the transcript page number and line number in parentheses where the quotation was found.

Political learning. The participants in the focus group identified national pride, how the United States government functions, and the importance of teaching younger children about the nation as the political knowledge they gained from viewing Ronald Reagan's speech to school children.

National pride emerged as a subtheme to political learning through the children's responses that they learned how great our country is, how we are privileged to be living in this country, and how our national government is a model for so many other countries in the world. In explaining the purpose of Ronald Reagan's speech, Albert stated, "So America can keep surviving as a country – the great country that it is" (1:3). In this case, the student retained the knowledge from the speech describing the United States of America as a country set apart from all others. Another student, Kasey, said the speech taught her that as Americans "we're really privileged to live in the country we're in" (2:41-42). All of the students commented on learning that the United States is a model for other countries, that our products are used all over the world, that people travel from all over the world to come to our attractions, and that countries attempt to imitate the United States.

Learning how the United States political system operates represented another important subtheme. Jack said he learned how the United States chooses their government from viewing the speech. Several examples stemmed from Ronald Reagan's speech. The students discussed the importance of the phrase "we the people" in our

constitution, which was emphasized by Ronald Reagan in the speech. As one student, Carter Lynn, remembered: "The first three words [of the constitution] is what our government goes by" (6:101-102). Larry, one of the other students in the focus group, said he learned that "the people are the most important" (5:92) in the United States. Regarding how our political system works Albert explained: "We tell our government what to do, other governments tell their people what to do" (6:104).

The children themselves also identified the original premise of political socialization theory from Reagan's speech. The students discussed how they felt the president was telling them their responsibility was to learn about the country and its political system so that they could teach younger people about it. A specific example of this comes from Albert who explained that they needed to "teach the people who are younger than us how to build it [the country] so we can – so America can keep surviving as a country" (1:2-3). While this concept showed political learning specifically related to the process of socialization, this particular result was also an indication of students recognizing the president's appeal to their role and power as an audience.

Emphasis on audience role and power. The children's role as teachers to younger generations was identified by the students as what Ronald Reagan was assigning them, as discussed in the paragraph above. Discussion also showed that the students interpreted the emphasis on "we the people" to include themselves in the "we." Jasper demonstrated this in the following statement: "Like he said 'we the people,' *we* are our nation" (1:16).

A metaphor used by the president to show the children their role and power was also discussed by a few of the students. As Jack said, "He talked about that painting, and he said we could be the faces that were in it" (4:79); to which Larry explained, "He implied that we could be a part of something because this country's not done yet; [we can] fill the empty spots" (4:80). Not only did the students recognize the president was telling them they could be a part of something, but they had a large responsibility in it, as Albert understood: "It's up to us the build the country" (1:1). The students recognized that not only did they have a purpose, but they were very important in the process, as it is up to them.

The children agreed that the president gave this speech because he recognized the importance of children. Kasey responded that Ronald Reagan gave this speech "because kids are important, too, not just adults" (1:12). Their role, as the children identified, in the political system is to learn about the country because they are "the next generation that will eventually lead this country and we should know about it" (Jack, 1:13-14). It was clear the children retained and identified the role and importance or power given to them by the speaker.

Personal relevance. Explanation of the children's role also showed their personal relevance to the topics of the speech. They acknowledged their place within or relevance to the topics discussed and the nation as a whole. There was also discussion not only on the personal relevance shown to them as children, but also about the personal relevance this speech still held to them even though it was given to middle school children in 1988. Albert explained that "it [the speech] did matter to me, like he said, he

also said, machines change, people don't change, and what mattered then to the kids, still matters to us" (1:18-19). So, while the speech in general showed personal relevance, the students themselves identified the fact that the speech was even relevant over time.

Identification with the audience. What students seemed to like most about the speech was actually a persuasive strategy used by speakers – relating to the audience. Jasper said that he liked how the president described "how he learned as a child and what he learned, against now…what we're learning as kids" (3:49-50). Ronald Reagan attempted to relate to the audience through his experience in the same point in life as the children, which the students acknowledged and were positively receptive to. The students also discussed how the president related to their level of understanding by avoiding "big words." The following explanation was given by Carter Lynn: "I think it was easy to understand; he didn't use a lot of big words that we wouldn't know" (2:26-27); It was just on our level" (2:29). Jasper agreed and went further to say, "Yeah, if you noticed he kind of after he said a big word that he thought the kids didn't know he would, he would explain it" (2:30-31).

The difference between this speech and speeches primarily intended for adults that students identified also shows their acknowledgement of how Ronald Reagan was relating to them in his speech. Not using "big words" was discussed in the above paragraph, but students also mentioned the speech was more entertaining, it kept their attention, it was easy to listen to, and they felt the speech made a connection to them. Kasey described the difference in this speech by saying "it wasn't just like complete boring" (3:47). Carter Lynn agreed and said "it was more entertaining" (6:106) than

speeches she had heard that were meant for adults. Kasey went on to explain: "He got it [the point] across pretty quick, and it was more understanding - like he didn't use big words and you could tell it was directed to kids and not adults" (6:112-113). By tailoring his speech to his audience, Ronald Reagan was able to relate to the children and the children noticed.

Use of argument. The students agreed that even though the speech was made easier to understand, arguments were still developed by Ronald Reagan in the speech. One particular argument Albert identified and discussed was people do not change even though the environment and technology do. Albert noticed Ronald Reagan used his own personal experience to support this argument: "Uh, uh, he was talking about the horse and buggy and how the machines in the country really have changed, like we went from horse and buggy to cars. The people have not changed, but our technology has and we've been open to a lot more" (2:37-39). Another argument indicated America is such a great country other countries look to it as a model. Carter Lynn noticed Ronald Reagan used examples of other countries modeling America, American products being consumed in other countries, and even other countries being interested in American entertainment to support his argument. The children's understanding of some of the arguments that were made in the speech showed the central route of persuasion was at least activated.

Positive image development. While the students discussed use of argument and the other aspects of the speech reported above, they talked the most about Ronald Reagan himself after viewing the speech. The children developed a very positive perception of Ronald Reagan, mostly based on his use of humor, his sincerity, and the simple fact that

he was the president. All of the students identified and laughed about Ronald Reagan's joke about how horses were fuel efficient and could be supercharged by giving them an extra bag of oats. His humor kept the students' interest and attention, and increased his likeability among them. His sincerity gained the children's trust and increased his believability among them. Finally, his role as the president (or past president in this case) gave the students reason to listen to him and increased legitimacy and competency.

All the students said Ronald Reagan's humor made them want to listen to what he had to say. Carter Lynn commented that "It [humor] made it [the speech] easier to listen to" (5:85). Dwayne explained that the humor in the speech made the speech easier to listen to because "it helped make a connection to topics" (5:88). Not only was the speech easier for them to listen to, but the humor "kept our attention, definitely" (5:87) according to Kasey who strongly agreed with the other students making this point. Ronald Reagan's humor was appreciated by the children as one student very honestly stated, "He put some spice into it. He wasn't just blluuhhh bllaahhh. I actually listened to him because he was funny" (Albert 4:70-71).

Ronald Reagan's sincerity was also discussed by the children. Larry commented that "he seemed like he believed in what he was saying; he was passionate" (4:73). The students thought Ronald Reagan showed concern and care for their future because he considered children and he considered what would happen in the future; as Dwayne put it: "He cares about what's going to happen to the next generation" (4:67). All the students felt Ronald Reagan's act of giving the speech at all showed his concern for them.

The students were so impressed that he gave this speech to children because he was the president. His role as president seemed to enhance their opinion that he truly was sincere because he did not have to give this speech, but chose to take the time to do so. One student, Jack, was particularly impressed: "I think every president should give this speech for each generation of kids (2:21). Every president should give a speech like this because it shows what type of president they are (3:54-55). It [the act of giving the speech] shows the adults how much the president cares by giving a speech to kids and it shows the kids" (3:62-63). Jack may have also identified a motive or purpose of a presidential speech to school children in this statement. Other students also commented on the same point.

A president giving a speech to school children is not common, and the uniqueness also added to the image the students had of Ronald Reagan. Larry said, "A lot of presidents give speeches about things that adults have to deal [with], but like you [the principal investigator] said only three presidents gave speeches like this" (3:58-59). Albert also commented, "He [Ronald Reagan] was the first president ever to do this, I mean he was opening a pathway for other presidents to do it, I mean we do matter, we can be competent" (4:64-65). The simple act of the president speaking to students made them feel special and important, and as a result gave them a positive perspective of that president.

The findings from the content analysis revealed an overall positive perspective of the presidents as well. Power, authority, charisma, optimism for future, and need for

change were all part of the image each president portrayed through their communication.

The findings in this supported that persuasive strategies were utilized by presidents in

their communication to children, and children were able to identify those strategies and

retain the information they were given. Education, change, future, and patriotism were

common topics in all three speeches. Calmness and emulation were the common

emotions appealed to by the presidents. The speeches were most alike in speaker

characterization and identification; virtue and good will, legitimate power, expert power,

direct questions, audience role, and audience power were present in all three speeches.

Expertise, celebrity status, and intangible reward were the common peripheral cues used.

Persuasive techniques common in all three were foot in the door, personal commitment,

and necessity for compliance. The findings suggested that there were several

commonalities of presidential communication to children, but also some differences. The

focus group findings helped to support the results the content analysis.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the content of presidential speeches to school children in order to identify persuasive strategies and image development within such speeches. In addition to this purpose, this study also sought to explore the application of persuasive theories to the analysis of speeches designed for children. Political socialization was used as a framework for the purpose of the study to support that these speeches could have a specific influence on their audience. From the content analysis, this study's purpose was also to compare the similarities and differences among the three presidential speeches to school children. Finally, the study also included the perspective of children through the results of a focus group discussion.

Overall, the results of this study suggest that persuasive strategies, based on persuasive theories developed for adult application, are used in presidential speeches to school children. Many persuasive strategies were common in all three speeches, but the study also showed differences in the three speeches. The study also suggests that the presidents used image development in their speeches to school children, developing overall positive and authoritative images with some differences in specific characteristics. Children added interesting insight to the data as they identified persuasive techniques used in Ronald Reagan's speech, the image he portrayed to them, and the influence of political socialization from their exposure to the speech. A discussion of the results of this study follows in order to fully understand the implications of this study.

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Content of Presidential Speeches to School Children

The three speeches had very similar purposes, while some differences in specific topics existed. The main purpose of these speeches suggested from the results of this study was to promote patriotism and instill a sense of responsibility for education and the nation's future. Differences in topics discussed seemed to be related to the date the speeches were given, while even over years in time the speeches maintained a common purpose. Beyond the purpose or topics discussed in the speeches, this study was focused on the presence of persuasive strategies.

In answer to the first research question, the study's results support that presidential speeches to school children contain persuasive strategies. One issue this study faced was applying persuasive theories that were developed for studying adults to determine whether the presidential speeches to children contained persuasive strategies. Even though the theories were originally developed to apply to adults, the theories in this study had either considered children in the theory or been previously applied to studies involving children. Aristotle, for instance, described specific vulnerabilities in youth in regards to persuasion. Regarding emotional appeals, Aristotle described youth as trusting, quick to anger, and inclined to pity. Interestingly, the results of this study reported that none of the presidents appealed to the emotion of anger and only one, Barack Obama, appealed to pity. Regardless of these results, the study supports the application of these theories to a study involving children because the speeches, though they were designed for children, contained techniques identified in the theories and, as

will be discussed further later in this chapter, the children were cognitively able to identify and comprehend such techniques.

Based on the difference in applying persuasive theories to a study with children, it was anticipated that the results would show a difference in the use of particular persuasive techniques. For example, it was anticipated that because the speeches were designed for children logical arguments would not be used and the peripheral route would be used rather the central route because children are not as cognitively developed as adults. From the content analysis of this study, however, that was not the case. In the approximate twenty-five minute duration of the three speeches several arguments were developed based on factual evidence, logical inferences, and moral values. In each of the speeches personal relevance or involvement was present, which is a prerequisite of the ELM for the central route of persuasion. The results support that the central route was used in persuasion to children, providing more support that adult theories are applicable to a study involving children.

While the results suggest the central route was used in the speeches to children, peripheral cues were also present according to the results of the content analysis. Because authority has a major role in the influence of political socialization and in persuasion it was interesting that the peripheral cue of authority, or the "because I said so" cue, was not identified in the content analysis of these speeches; however, the children, as will be discussed later in this chapter, did identify the authority and office of the president as a major aspect of their willingness to listen to the speech and the president's image to them. Using ideal candidate image framework, an image of

authority was also identified in the content analysis. The peripheral cues that were used

in all three speeches were expertise, celebrity status, and intangible reward. Intangible

reward was perhaps the most prevalent throughout the three speeches because of the

purpose of the speeches. The purpose of the speeches was to persuade children to value

education and hard work for the intangible reward of future success – individually and for

their country. Of the ten peripheral cues tested for in the content analysis, eight were

present in the three speeches. Even though the central route of persuasion was present,

the presence of peripheral cues suggests presidents include the peripheral route of

persuasion in persuading children.

In Chapter Two, common persuasive techniques discovered in a previous study

used specifically by presidents were discussed. Petrow and Sullivan (2007) reported that

presidents most often use the following persuasive techniques identified by compliance

gaining theory: use of inducements, appealing to shared characteristics, citing policy

details, persistence, foot-in-the-door technique, and door-in-the-face technique. Some

correlation in the results of this study and Petrow and Sullivan (2007) were shown. Of

the three speeches, use of inducements was present in two, appeal to shared

characteristics was present in two, citing policy details was present in one, persistence

was not present in any of the three speeches, foot-in-the-door technique was present in

all, and door-in-the-face technique was present in two. Persistence was not really

applicable in this study because the speeches studied were given only once and each

lasted only about twenty-five minutes. Citing policy details was also a technique that

was not particularly relevant to the speeches in this study because their purpose was not

to explain a bill or persuade the audience to vote on a particular issue. The results of this study support Petrow and Sullivan (2007) in their identification of persuasive techniques characteristic of United States presidents and support that presidents use some of the same persuasive techniques when addressing children as they use when addressing adults.

In their address to children, this study also suggests presidents keep a positive tone and develop a positive image. All three presidents developed an image of power, authority, charisma, optimism for the future, and a need for positive change. The overall image each developed in these speeches was very similar to the actual purpose of the speeches. Political socialization theory identifies authority figures as agents of influence, which these results suggest the presidents successfully portrayed of themselves. Ideal candidate image framework added to the results of this study to not only show persuasive techniques, but to account for the other sources of persuasion present in the presidential speeches to school children.

Based on the sample in this study of the only three presidential speeches ever designed specifically for children, education, the future, and patriotism are the topics and purpose of such speeches. The speeches differ in other topics, such as violence, drugs, fitness, or war, which seem to be characteristic of time period in which the speech was given and not characteristic of presidential speeches specifically. The results of the content analysis suggest the purpose of presidential speeches to school children is to instill patriotism and motivate children to value education in order to make a positive difference in the future of our nation.

The first research question was answered, as the study suggests presidential speeches to school children contain persuasive strategies. The findings of the study also revealed that a variety of persuasive strategies were utilized among the three speeches. The results support that the central and peripheral routes are used for persuasion in these speeches, that compliance gaining techniques are used, and Aristotle's rhetorical appeals are also present. An exact model for persuasion used by presidents when addressing children is not possible from the results of this study. There are some techniques all three speeches have in common, there are still some common in just two of the speeches, and some present in only one of the speeches. While the results of this study may not be able to develop a specific model for persuasive strategies in presidential speeches to children, the results can expand to include the perceptions children may have of the speeches.

Perspective of Children

In response to the second research question, children were able to identify persuasive strategies in presidential speeches designed for them, as well as describe the president's image and other aspects of the speech. Because political socialization theory was the main framework for the purpose of this study, it was particularly interesting that the children themselves identified aspects of the political socialization process after viewing Ronald Reagan's speech. As political socialization theory posits, any form of political learning constitutes socialization; from the students' responses, political socialization was present in the presidential speeches to school children. After viewing the speech, the children discussed how they had a responsibility to teach younger children about the country so that it would continue to survive. That particular discussion is

directly related to political socialization theory and top-down influence. Students also recognized the trickle-up influence of political socialization through Ronald Reagan's speech to children; the children explained that speaking to children can give adults a positive image of the president as well. While not exactly identifying how children may influence their parents through their own political learning, the discussion did explain how because children are exposed to a message by the president their parents may then be influenced in their opinion of the president.

One concern in this study was using a speech over twenty years old to show to the children in the focus group. The reasons for choosing this speech were determined to be stronger than using the other speeches, but there was still some concern that the children's opinion of the out-datedness of the president and the speech itself may bias their perspectives and responses. Further confirmation of the choice to use Ronald Reagan's speech to children was provided by the children in the focus group themselves. Ronald Reagan's metaphor to show his audience why stories of people in history are relevant to their own lives because people do not change, even when the environment does, was applied by the children in this study to explain why the speech was still relevant to them. It was interesting and relieving that the children actually addressed this concern in their own discussion.

The children's responses also confirmed the image of the president described in previous studies. As mentioned in previous chapters, people are influenced by messages from the President largely based on the image of the office itself. This image described by Trent and Friedenberg (2004) is one people have from childhood "that stands for truth,

honor, justice, and integrity" (p. 82). The children in this study described Ronald Reagan

as sincere, believable, passionate, and trustworthy. The President has a persona of power

and a symbolic role of legitimacy. All of the children discussed how they were most

impressed by the speech simply because the *president* took the time to address children.

Persuasive strategies discussed were audience role and power, personal relevance or

involvement, identifying with the audience, and use of argument. Each of the persuasive

strategies discussed by the children in the focus group was identified in all three speeches

in the content analysis.

Comparing results of Ronald Reagan's speech. All of the results from the

focus group can also be compared more specifically to the individual results of the

content analysis of Ronald Reagan's speech to see any similarities or differences in these

results. The results of the content analysis of Ronald Reagan's speech and the results of

the focus group responses about Ronald Reagan's speech were very similar. The content

analysis showed that national history, national pride, how the political system works, and

the nation's importance were all present in Ronald Reagan's speech. The children in the

focus group identified national pride, how the political system works, and the importance

of teaching younger generations these concepts. The children also identified the focus of

the speech on the future, which was also identified in the content analysis.

Audience power and role was found to be present in the speech according to the

content analysis, and the children recognized their role and power described in the

speech. Personal relevance or involvement and identification with the audience was

identified in the content analysis, as well as discussed by the children. The content

analysis showed the use of argument and the children also identified Ronald Reagan's use of arguments. The content analysis results and the children's responses revealed Ronald Reagan's image as trusting and legitimate. While the children specifically described Ronald Reagan as sincere, the content analysis results did not show this characteristic of his image. Both the content analysis and focus group results supported that Ronald Reagan used humor in his speech. Overall, the results of the two analyses supported each other, with the exception of one difference.

Conclusion

The findings in this study answer the two research questions, supporting that persuasive strategies are present in presidential speeches to school children and children do identify them and retain knowledge from their exposure. While there are some specific similarities and characteristics that can be identified of these speeches, there are also some differences. Content analysis and children's perspectives were found to be similar.

Limitations and Implications

While the specific research questions of this study were answered, the underlying question revolving around this study still seeks to be determined: Why were these speeches given? The purpose of the speeches has been clearly identified, but the reason these presidents decided to give these speeches, especially when facing controversy, is not clear. This study suggests that presidents develop a unique, positive, and appreciated image at least from the children by giving these speeches. As discussed above, giving a speech to children could have an influence on parents as a result. The children in this

study all agreed and felt it was important for the president to give a formal speech to children because it made them feel important. This study provides some insight into answering the above question, but future research should be conducted to truly answer the question.

Studying the actual influence and persuasive effect of the presidential speeches to children may be one way to further determine the answer to the above question. Such a study would also be an insightful expansion of the current study. This study sought to explore through content analysis the presence of persuasive strategies and other content in presidential speeches to children. Content analysis limited the results of the study to finding what these speeches contained. The focus group with children expanded the perspective of the findings, but the findings were still limited to content. An interesting expansion to this study would be to research the influence presidential speeches to school children have on children and even on adults. While the results of this study were limited in this way, they were appropriate to the purpose of the study.

While the focus group discussion added depth to the findings of this study, using a focus group may have limited the findings as well. In a group of students responses may not be as honest or as detailed as they may have been individually. Conducting individual interviews with students after they viewed a presidential speech may have resulted in more detailed and richer data of a child's perspective. The spiral of silence is a concern when conducting a focus group, especially with middle school age students who are peers; however, efforts were made to create an open and inviting atmosphere for

discussion in the focus group for this study. Time also prevented the researcher from conducting individual interviews with students.

It would also have added to the findings to have conducted more than one focus group on more than one speech. The findings would have been expanded significantly in this study; however, time was also a restriction in a conducting such research. In addition to the time restriction, the findings of the focus group were not the central focus of the study. The study's main purpose was to analyze the content of presidential speeches to school children, and the perspective of the children was included as an extension to the main research. Future research could be conducted to further explore the children's perspectives and the knowledge they retain from exposure to the speeches. Interviews or multiple focus groups would also be beneficial in studying the influence of these speeches.

The application of persuasive theories in this study with children is an implication for future studies and the applicability of such theories to children. Without having any knowledge of the persuasive theories used in this study, children in the focus group were able to identify and discuss some the concepts and strategies identified by the persuasive theories. These results suggest that the theories, even though originally developed for adults, are relevant to and beneficial to use in studies with children.

In addition to supporting the relevance of the persuasive theories in a study with children, this study also provided support for the importance of studying political socialization theory. Political socialization is a process that still exists and was not only present in the presidential speeches to school children, but part of the main purpose of the

speeches. Aspects of the process were also identified by the children. Because this process was present in the speeches and because persuasive strategies were present, the results of this study suggest that presidential speeches to school children do at least have the capacity to influence both children and adults. This study provides knowledge about the content of presidential speeches to school children, to better educate parents, teachers, and children about the nature of these messages. This study suggests that presidential speeches to school children are a form political communication and persuasive communication; research should, therefore, continue to explore and analyze these messages.

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Appendix A: Codebook

1. Coder ID: your name/initials

2. Speech ID: number of speech begin analyzed

Issues and topics discussed in the speech:

3. What topics are discussed? (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

    a. Education: refers to any mention of school, the importance of learning

    b. War: any mention of current battles or past battles or conflicts of our nation

    c. Finances: reference to budget plans

    d. Change: discussion or call to change current status, views, or opinion

    e. Future: any reference to the future, whether nation's future or specifically
        addressing the future of the students; dreams and goals

    f. Policy: any reference to policy or current political issues

    g. Drugs: any mention of drugs, whether encouraging children to stay away from
        them or discussing statistics or effects of drugs on society

    h. Violence: any mention of violence going on in schools, in the country, in other
        countries, or in the children's lives

    i. Patriotism: mention of being a good citizen, having pride in your country

    j. Other: any topic outside of the ones listed is discussed; please list this topic

4. Purpose of the speech:

    (1) The purpose of the speech is specifically and clearly stated to the audience

    (0) The purpose of the speech is not specifically and clearly stated to the audience

5. Salience: of the issues or topics discussed is shown; the president describes how
    the issue or topic is useful or important to the audience, describes its proximity to
    the audience (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

6. Personal involvement: how the audience is effected by or involved with the issue;
    makes the issue personal to the audience (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

7. Human interest: an interesting story or example is given to peak interest in the issue being discussed; must be a specific person identified and story about them told as example (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

Emotional Appeals

What emotional appeals are made in the speech? An emotional appeal is defined as any communication intended to lead an audience to feel a particular emotion. (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

8. **Anger**: a desire for retaliation, accompanied by [mental or physical] distress, for some offense that was directed, without justification, toward oneself or someone close to them; the speaker makes reference to someone or something the audience should be angry at because they or it has caused harm to them or their loved ones.

9. **Calmness**: mentioning people (even themselves) the audience respects or fears, mentioning people who are humble in order to show those people agree with the point being made, there is no mention of pain when appealing to calmness, mention of positive and practical expectations for the future.

10. **Friendly-feeling**: the president develops a friendly relationship with the audience by giving praise to them, showing care and concern about them, discussing similarities between the audience and the president, does not seem intimidating; must be directly giving praise to the audience

11. **Enmity (Hate)**: mention of negative feelings or attitude toward a person, group, or thing

12. **Fear**: description of a future danger which is imminent to the audience, mention of people that are already suffering the danger, discussion of some remedy to the danger

13. **Shame**: mention of anything that would cause the audience to feel guilty for something disrespectful or disgraceful to society they may have done

14. **Kindliness**: speaker shares how they are doing a service to the audience without any benefit to themselves coming from it to motivate the audience to do something for them, or any appeal to doing a service to someone without any benefit to the giver OR speaker may show how someone else's 'act of kindness' really was not kind because that person benefited in some way from doing the act of kindness

15. **Pity**: mention of a certain pain at an apparently destructive or painful event happening to one who does not deserve it and which a person might expect himself or someone they know to suffer; describing a recent event that happened to people close to or like the audience or people the audience perceives as good; speaker calls for audience to have pity for someone or situation

16. **Indignation**: feeling remorse for someone who benefits undeservedly; mention of a situation such as this that would cause the audience to feel this way

17. **Envy**: distress at the apparent success of someone else; desire to prevent other from having what they have; mention of achievement or success of others that calls the audience to action to prevent others' success

18. **Emulation**: mentioning a drive to achieve what others have achieved, a challenge is given based on achievements of other people or the speaker

Use of Argument (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present, unless otherwise instructed)

19. An enthymeme is used: a logical syllogism that implies the major premise; two premises are typically given, the third is implied; based on the other premises, the conclusion must be true; ex: Of course Kelly talks a lot, Kelly is a woman. (major premise implied, but not stated would be: Women talk a lot).

20. A paradigm is used: rhetorical induction; the speaker gives many similar instances in which the same conclusion is true, so it must also be so for the topic being discussed

21. The arguments in the speech are based on:

    a. Factual evidence: specific details, statistics, references are given to support the argument or topic being discussed and to explain it

    b. Logical inference: strictly an ethymeme in this case, the conclusion seems to make sense without any data or facts to support it; it is logical to agree with the topic being discussed, so the audience should simply agree

    c. Moral values: values of the audience are used as support for the argument

22. How many arguments are made in the speech? (please tally the number of arguments in the speech)

Speaker Character and Identification (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

23. Wisdom: the president specifically mentions their own wisdom during the speech

24. Virtue and Good will: the president specifically identifies himself with virtue and/or good will; any mention of an act of doing a helpful or rewarding service, appeal to moral values

25. Identification with the audience: showing how the president can relate to the audience through personal stories or describing specific personal character traits or personal achievements; own experiences with the same experiences of the students are described; use of the word "we" in reference to speaker and audience, other forms such as "our" would also apply

26. Familiar connection: the president relates to students through discussion of someone or a story about someone in the audience's life that they know

27. Relating to the audience: the president attempts to identify with the audience by showing knowledge of their lives, such as what they are interested in, what their hobbies are, etc.

28. Perception of power is established through:

    a. Reward power: perceived ability of the speaker to give positive consequences or remove negative ones; speaker gives some indication they have this power

    b. Coercive power: perceived ability of speaker to punish those who do not comply; speaker gives some indication they have this power

    c. Legitimate power: perceived organizational power of the speaker; based on their position the speaker indicates they have power

    d. Referent power: perception of a connection or association with people who have power; speaker indicates while they may not have power over the particular topic, they are connected with someone who does

    e. Expert power: speaker is perceived to have knowledge, expertise, or skills concerning the topic; the speaker makes some indication of having one of these, which gives them power; specific qualifications for topic are listed, i.e. years of experience in studying _____, or a degree in _____, or as a father myself…

Peripheral Cues: Cues that cause an audience to believe or agree with a message, but are not necessarily related to the message. (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

29. Tangible Reward: speaker provides audience with a tangible reward in exchange for agreement; if you do this or agree with this you will get _____ (a better job, for instance); a very specific thing must be defined specifically as a reward to the audience

30. Expertise: the speaker's own expertise is emphasized as why the audience should listen to and agree with the message; shows him as expert

31. Celebrity status: mention of a celebrity figure that supports the particular message or a quote from a celebrity; portrayal of speaker as celebrity; mention of connection to a celebrity

32. Likeable: the likeability of the speaker is used for persuasion; if the audience likes the speaker, then they should agree with them

33. Intangible Reward: speaker provides audience with an intangible reward in exchange for agreement, such as success or fun or helping the country

34. Reciprocation: speaker attempts to persuade the audience to do something or agree with something because the audience owes it to the speaker or someone else

35. Consistency: speaker attempts to persuade the audience to do something or agree with something because it has always been done that way

36. Social proof: speaker attempts to persuade the audience to do something or agree with something because everybody else is doing it; examples or stories given about peers or people they know

37. Authority: speaker uses their position as president to persuade the audience, just because he says so you should agree because he is the president

38. Scarcity: speaker attempts to persuade the audience to do something or agree with something because that thing is running out or there is not much time

Persuasive Techniques (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present; if present, tally the number of times the technique is used)

39. Foot-in-the-door technique: president will seek a lesser commitment in order to set up a broader or bigger commitment; if students just complete one small task, they can make a big difference

40. Door-in-the-face technique: president asks for a greater commitment from the audience in order to at least secure a lesser one from them; appealing to them to become successful and do great things for their nation

41. Low-ball technique: the president attempts to hide the true message by not portraying the whole story on a particular issue

42. Use of inducements: president offers promises, threats, etc. to persuade

43. Appeal to shared characteristics: president uses shared ideology, party, or regional characteristics or values to persuade audience

44. Citing policy details: president provides details on a subject to show how knowledgeable he is on the topic in order to persuade

45. Impersonal commitments: president appeals to the audience's self-esteem or moral values; people will be impressed with you if you _____ or people will disappointed in you if you don't

46. Personal commitments: president attempts to persuade the audience through debt or obligation or responsibility to themselves, their parents, their country, their teachers, their children, etc.

47. Anticipation of responses: president anticipates responses or thoughts of the audience by identifying it and then answering it

48. Necessity for compliance: the need for compliance is explained; not only may there be rewards for complying, some imminent need for complying is identified

Image: impression of the speaker by the public based on messages they are exposed to from the speaker. (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

49. Does the president show:

   a. Power: use of the word power, any speech referring to the power of presidential office, leadership, reference to decisions, responsibilities; proactive, present participle words used

   b. Legitimacy: can get things done because he is the president, his position enables him to do the things he is discussing

   c. Competency: any evidence or proof given for why he is qualified for his position, confidence in himself portrayed, the word confident in describing himself, the phrase "I am confident"

      d. Charisma: upbeat, positive, optimistic, excitement shown

50. Does the president emphasize

      a. his own accomplishments

      b. the need or call for change

      c. optimism for the future

51. Does the president seem

      a. sincere: use of words such as care, concern, well-being; talks about what's best for the children, interest in their needs and future

      b. authoritative: bold words, addressing the audience directly by using "you," and frequently using "I"

      c. trustworthy: words such as trust or you can trust me, faith in him

      d. empathetic: explains how he has been in their situation, understanding of their situations or struggles

      e. ethical: conforms to accepted standards, discusses following a professional code of conduct, responsibilities to his job as president, appropriate behavior or standards of the position

      f. moral: mentions values, human obligations

      g. driven: goals are discussed, plan of action detailed

Other aspects of content

52. What is the tone of the speech?

      (1) Positive: look at how topics or issues are discussed and how the overall speech is focused, examples or stories used have positive outcomes, enthusiasm and optimism shown

      (2) Negative: the opposite of positive, examples or stories have negative outcomes, somber and regretful

53. Is humor used in the speech? (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

54. If humor is used, how is it used?

(1) Positive response: humor is used in order to elicit a positive response from the audience (laughter, lighten the mood)

(2) Understanding: humor is used as a metaphor or as an example in order further explain a particular point

(0) Not applicable; humor is not used in the speech

55. What type of political learning is taught in the speech?

   a. the way the nation's political system works is discussed

   b. some aspect of our nation's history is described

   c. national pride is emphasized

   d. the importance of our nation is emphasized

   e. the audience's place in the political system is identified; their role as part of the whole picture, the reality of their contribution is shown

56. Direct questions: direct questions are asked to the audience in order to challenge them or call to action (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

57. Audience power: the power of the audience to make a difference is emphasized

Appendix B: Code Sheet

1. Coder Name:

   _____

   1

2. Speech ID: _____

   2

3. What topics are discussed? (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

       a. Education _____

           3a

       b. War _____

           3b

       c. Finances _____

           3c

       d. Change _____

           3d

       e. Future _____

           3e

       f. Policy _____

           3f

       g. Drugs _____

           3g

       h. Violence _____

           3h

       i. Patriotism _____

           3i

       j. Other: _____ _____

           3j

4. Purpose of the speech identified: _____

   4

5. Salience: _____

   5

6. Personal involvement: _____

   6

7. Human interest: _____

   7

Emotional Appeals
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present

8. Anger: _____

   8

9. Calmness:

_____
9

10. Friendly-feeling:

_____
10

11. Enmity:

_____
11

12. Fear:

_____
12

13. Shame:

_____
13

14. Kindliness:

_____
14

15. Pity:

_____
15

16. Indignation:

_____
16

17. Envy:

_____
17

18. Emulation:

_____
18

Use of Argument
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present, unless otherwise instructed

19. An enthymeme is used:

_____
19

20. A paradigm is used:

_____
20

21. The arguments in the speech are based on:

    a. Factual evidence

_____
21a

    b. Logical inference

_____
21b

    c. Moral Values

_____
21c

22. Number of arguments:

_____
22

Speaker Character and Identification
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present

23. Wisdom

_____
23

24. Virtue and Good Will:

_____
24

25. Identification with the audience: _____

    25

26. Familiar connection: _____

    26

27. Relating to the audience: _____

    27

28. Perception of power is established through:

    a. Reward power: _____

    28a

    b. Coercive power: _____

    28b

    c. Legitimate power: _____

    28c

    d. Referent power: _____

    28d

    e. Expert power: _____

    28e

Peripheral Cues
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present

29. Tangible reward: _____

    29

30. Expertise: _____

    30

31. Celebrity status: _____

    31

32. Likeable: _____

    32

33. Intangible reward: _____

    33

34. Reciprocation: _____

    34

35. Consistency: _____

    35

36. Social proof: _____

    36

37. Authority: _____

    37

38. Scarcity: _____

    38

Persuasive Techniques
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present; if present, tally the number of
times the technique is used

39. Foot-in-the-door technique: _____
     Tally: _____   39

40. Door-in-the-face technique: _____
     Tally: _____   40

41. Low-ball technique: _____
     Tally: _____   41

42. Use of inducements: _____
     Tally: _____   42

43. Appeal to shared characteristics: _____
     Tally: _____   43

44. Citing policy details: _____
     Tally: _____   44

45. Impersonal commitments: _____
     Tally: _____   45

46. Personal commitments: _____
     Tally: _____   46

47. Anticipation of responses: _____
     Tally: _____   47

48. Necessity for compliance: _____
     Tally: _____   48

Image
Code 1 for present, 0 for not present

   49. Does the president show:

        a. Power: _____
                                           49a

        b. Legitimacy: _____
                                           49b

        c. Competency: _____
                                           49c

        d. Charisma: _____
                                           49d

   50. Does the president emphasize:

a. his own accomplishments

        _____
           50a

b. the need or call for change

        _____
           50b

c. optimism for the future

        _____
           50c

51. Does the president seem:
    a. sincere

        _____
           51a

    b. authoritative

        _____
           51b

    c. trustworthy

        _____
           51c

    d. empathetic

        _____
           51d

    e. ethical

        _____
           51e

    f. moral

        _____
           51f

    g. driven

        _____
           51g

Other aspects of content

52. What is the tone of the speech?

        _____
           52

53. Is humor used in the speech? (Code 1 for present, 0 for not) _____
           53

54. If humor is used, how is it used?

        _____
           54

    (1) Positive response

    (2) Understanding

    (3) Not applicable; humor is not used

55. Political learning:

    a. the way the nation's political system works

        _____
           55a

    b. national history

        _____
           55b

    c. pride

        _____
           55c

    d. nation's importance

                                                         55d

    e. audience's role

                                                         55e

56. Direct questions: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

                                                         56

57. Audience power: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

                                                          57

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

1. What do you think the key points in the speech were? What topics were discussed?
2. What do you think the President's purpose was for giving this speech? Did he say what it was?
3. Was the purpose/topic of speech relevant to you? Important to you? Why?
4. Did you understand what the President was saying? Was he speaking on your level or was it complicated to you? What should he have said or things he could have said so that you would understand?
5. Did you notice any particular arguments the President made?
6. Did you find anything particularly interesting about what the President said?
7. How did the President try to relate to you or identify with you?
8. What specific characteristics would you identify the President with? Why would you give him those characteristics? What from the speech made you feel that way?
9. Do you think he was persuasive/convincing about what he was saying? How?
10. What if anything did he mention about himself? Did he tell any personal things about himself? Stories? How did they add to what he was saying?
11. Do you think he was funny? Did he make any jokes?
12. What do you feel you learned from viewing this speech?
13. Do you feel like the President gave you something to do or asked you to do anything?
14. What, if any, was the most memorable part of the speech?
15. Was the speech different from ones you have heard before?
16. What did you like or dislike about the speech?
17. What do you wish he would have talked about? Or what would have made it more effective?