

2009

The New Campaign: Social Networking Sites in the 2008 Presidential Election

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The New Campaign: Social Networking Sites in the 2008 Presidential Election

by

Ashley Payne

2009

A Capstone Experience/Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of

University Honors College at

Western Kentucky University

Approved by:

Dr. Jenifer Lewis

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Social-Networking sites were used in the 2008 presidential election with emphasis on Facebook and how this use impacted the youth vote. The 2008 election was the first in the history of elections to utilize such campaign tactics. Findings indicated that social-networking sites more than likely did have an impact on the election. Although this impact was not a direct impact, through political socialization, campaigning through Facebook did help increase awareness of election related information. Findings also indicated that a less is more strategy is better when using social-networking sites for campaigning as well as focusing messages sent through this medium to the targeted audience. Social-networking sites will likely be used in many elections to come to reach not only young voters, but voters of all ages. The use of these sites provides for a cheap, quick way to reach voters with a message that is not interpreted by a third party.

INDEX WORDS: Social-Networking Sites, Elections, Campaigns, Facebook

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2009

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Honors College
Western Kentucky University
August 2009

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my two professors from the Governor's Scholars Program who inspired my interest in elections. I appreciate your enthusiasm and love for not only teaching but for learning. You have inspired me to want to continuously learn and try new things.

Thank You.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has been very different than anything I have ever completed. It took a lot of hard work and dedication as well as support from those around me. This study would not have been possible without the help of my committee, Dr. Sandra Ardrey and Dr. Craig Cobane. It is only due to their constant support and encouragement that I was able to complete this project. My advisor, Dr. Jenifer Lewis, helped me so much throughout the process. She was always available for questions and advising during the process and provided much needed encouragement when I felt as if I might never complete the study. Thank you for pushing me to do my best and guiding me in the right direction when I had no idea where to go next. You are truly one of my favorite professors and I thank you for everything you've done for me.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for supporting me throughout this process. The constant support from my Mom has given me the strength to accomplish anything I put my mind to. Without you as a role model teaching me hard work and dedication, I wouldn't be the person I am today. I would also like to thank my friends, especially Emily, Beth, and Katie who constantly reminded me that I would make it through writing my thesis and would be happy with the outcome. Thank you for always being there, even when I was in a less than good mood. Also, a big thank you to Katie for helping me edit the final product.

Lastly, I would like to thank my Meemaw, Mike, and Chance for always supporting me in everything I do. You all mean the world to me and I thank you for just being there.

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INTRODUCTION

Social networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace played a large role in the 2008 Presidential Election. Every candidate in the race had a Facebook page, and the forerunners, Barack Obama and John McCain each used these sites greatly to enhance their campaigns. Barack Obama's campaign used these sites to his benefit, garnering much support from young people who use these sites. Young people "have a more powerful relationship to technology than all previous generations combined. They coordinate their activities and share gossip with friends via text message and are ever-present in the online web of social networks that allow them to track each other's moves seemingly on a minute-to-minute basis" (Connery, 2008, p. 164). Because of this relationship, this age group was able to keep a close watch on the election. With just the click of a mouse young voters could watch a speech or find a candidate's stance on an issue. This availability transformed the presidential campaigns in 2008 and will likely affect those to come.

Although it is suspected that these sites had a large impact upon the election, there is little to no current research concerning such an impact. Although research has been conducted concerning candidates use of campaign websites in the past, this is the first election where candidates were able to utilize social networking sites. Due to the newness of this research topic, it was hard to find much background information concerning how these types of sites were used in campaigns. There has also been a lack of research regarding how young voters respond to candidates, particularly through online mediums with which, presumably, they are quite comfortable.

This research is intended to focus on three main questions to bridge the gaps in the literature and examine the effects a specific social-networking site had on the 2008 presidential election. Those questions are:

RQ1: How did the candidates use social-networking sites in their campaign?

RQ2: How do young people utilize social-networking sites for campaign-related communication?

RQ3: What were young peoples' responses to the candidates' campaign strategies on social-networking sites?

To better understand this topic, this study begins by providing basic definitions and foundations for understanding the vital areas of interest in this project, such as the youth vote in the United States of America and the social networking site Facebook. *Youth Vote: A*

HISTORY

Youth is typically defined as the ages between 18 and 24 years old (Lewis, 2008). One of the biggest problems facing the United States has been the decline of young people's political participation. Large numbers of young people pass up their first opportunity to vote. This has been largely evident in Presidential Elections since 1972 (Flanigan and Zingale, 1998). Electoral records indicate participation amongst young people was highest in 1972, when they were given the right to vote. Participation has declined since then (Lewis, 2008). In the 2004 presidential election, according to CIRCLE (2005), the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, 47% of 18-24 year old citizens voted, where 66% of citizens 25 and older voted.

“Recent studies have shown that young Americans are less politically or civically engaged, exhibit less social trust, have less confidence in government, have a weaker alliance to their country, and are more materialistic than were previous generations” (Hollihan, 2009, p. 65). These low rates of participation among young people indicate that civics education is not working (Hollihan, 2009).

According to *Millennial Makeover* (2008), this previously low turnout is not because young people are apathetic, but because of a lack of access. Young people, particularly college students, tend to move around more than other groups. Because of this, voter records and files tend to be out of date by the time the next election comes around (Winograd, 2008). According to David Von Drehle, “finding and communicating with students have traditionally been a nightmare for politicians” (2008, p.2). Students are typically moving from place to place which makes them hard to find in the databases used by campaigns. This age group also does not usually watch television or read newspapers (Von Drehle, 2008).

Young people are not apathetic; it is just hard to target campaigns at their age group because of bad records and economic cost. It is not that young people are not receptive to political messages, it is just that the economic costs of reaching them through traditional political communication mediums were too high (Winograd 2008).

Youth Vote Present

In the 2008 primary, youth turnout rose sharply with more than 6.5 million young people under the age of 30 participating in the 2008 primaries and caucuses. According to CIRCLE (2008), National Exit Polls estimated that youth turnout rose in 2008 for the consecutive third presidential election (see Table 1). In 2008 there was an increase of an estimated 3.4 million voters under the age of thirty over 2004, Young people, ages eighteen to 29, represented eighteen percent of the electorate in the 2008 election, which represents a one percent increase over 1996, 2000, and 2004 when young voters only represented 17% percent of the electorate.

Table 1

Year	Youth Voter Turnout Estimated by CIRCLE	Percentage point change since previous election	Number of young people who voted
1996	37%		14.5 million ¹
2000	41%	+4	16.2 million ¹
2004	48%	+7	19.4 million ¹
2008	52-53%	+4-5	22.8 - 23.1 million ²

“Young voters favored the winner of this election by more than 2: 1, forming a major part of the winning coalition. Overall, voters chose Obama over McCain by a much narrower margin of about 53% to 46%. This gap in presidential choice by age is unprecedented. The average age-gap in support for the Democratic candidate from 1976 through 2004 was only 1.8 percentage points, as young voters basically supported the same candidate as older voters in most elections” (Circle, 2008).

Young people were not, however, crucial to Barack Obama's general election victory. According to the exit polls, Obama did not need young votes in order to pull out the victory; however, young people provided not only their votes but also many enthusiastic campaign volunteers. Some may have helped persuade parents and older relatives to consider Obama's candidacy, and far more young people than older voters reported attending a campaign event while nearly one-in-ten donated money to a presidential candidate.

Facebook

Facebook was founded in February 2004 (Facebook Factsheet, 2009). According to the company's factsheet (2009), “Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers.” Facebook was originally launched from the Harvard dorm room of the four co-founders as way to connect Harvard students. One month later the company began expanding to other universities and reached nearly 1 million active Facebook users by December 2004 (Company Timeline, 2009). When first launched, Facebook was open only to college students, meaning utilizing the sites for campaigning was impossible. In September 2006, however, Facebook removed the school network restrictions and opened registration allowing anyone to join the site (Company Timeline, 2009). By December 2006, Facebook had over 12 million active users (Company Timeline, 2009), an increase of 11 million users in two short years. Currently there are over 200 million active users (Company Timeline, 2009) making Facebook the

“second most-trafficked PHP (personal home page) site in the world” (Facebook Factsheet, 2009).

“Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate...anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment” (Facebook Factsheet, 2009). Facebook now has over 200 million active users logging more than 3.5 billion minutes a day worldwide (Facebook Factsheet, 2009). Through this site, users can “keep up with friends, upload an unlimited number of photos, share links and videos, and learn more about the people they meet” (Facebook Info, 2009). Users can chat online in real time, find out information about friends, look at and upload photos, as well as comment and communicate with friends through the site. According to Facebook Statistics (2009), more than 850 million photos are uploaded each month. This number indicates the sheer volume of content that is shared by people via Facebook. It is this availability to freely share information that has led to the incredible use of Facebook among college students. It is important to note, however, that the fastest growing user demographic is now people over 35 years old (Facebook Statistics, 2009).

After establishing this foundation of youth voting statistics and Facebook, a review of the literature on the Internet and Campaigns and its’ influence on voters is presented. The section concludes with a basic explanation of the Webstyle coding scheme and Political Socialization.

The Internet and Elections

The internet, defined by Thomas Hollihan (2009), “is a global computer network that enables users to send e-mail, other forms of text messages, graphics and video. Since its

development, the Internet has fundamentally reshaped communication. People now use the Internet to communicate with friends, swap photographs, download music, access news and information and sell products” (p.199). The Internet has revolutionized the computer and communication world. The invention of the telegraph, telephone, radio, and computer prepared us for the unprecedented integration of capabilities. It is a world-wide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for interaction between individuals without regard to location (The Internet Society, 2008). Today, 75% of all American adults use the internet, 70% daily, 91% of 18-29 year olds use the internet. In 1995, only 15% of American Adults used this Internet at all (Pew, 2009). This 60% increase leads to the conclusion that the internet is very pervasive in our society, especially among young people.

According to David Paletz in *The Media in American Politics* (2002), it was not until 1992 that politicians began to catch up with Corporate America in the use of technology. Before this, campaigns “sent out biographical videotapes to groups of interested voters, video news releases to the press, and displayed video endorsements and messages at campaign functions” (p.233). According to Paletz, the Clinton campaign in 1996 “most effectively exploited the technology of computer modems, faxes, e-mail, and interactive satellite” (p.233). Clinton’s advisors “electronically transmitted his speeches and press releases, making them available through online computer services” (p.233). The creation of authentic candidate homepages occurred in the 1996 election as well. These sites described campaign activities, showed some of their commercials, recruited volunteers, and solicited contributions.

In the 2000 election, candidates no longer created these websites to be innovative, but to avoid looking “antediluvian” (Paletz, 2002). “In 2000, sites were more extensive and elaborate than ever before. They included biographical and family material, speeches and press releases, selected policy record and positions on issues, endorsements, and comparisons/attacks on the opponent’s plans and proposals” (Paletz, 2002, p.234). Eleven percent of voters in 2000 reported that the internet was one of their primary sources of campaign news and 19 percent said they got some of their news from it (Paletz, 2002).

According to Thomas Hollihan (2009), “campaigns have begun to rely heavily on personal computers, which enable candidates to keep detailed records on every person who contributes money, volunteers time, endorses the candidate, and so on. In addition, computer databases enable campaigns to maintain extensive amounts of information about voters” (p.198). Also, Hollihan (2009) states that “only well-funded campaign operations making use of some of these data, more efficient computers, combined with user-friendly software programs, have enabled even low-budget local campaigns to undertake sophisticated studies of their target voters that go well beyond what well-funded campaigns might have been able to accomplish only a few years ago, and the information is now available much more quickly” (p. 199).

Paletz (2002) argued that “the availability of all this material enabled people to equip themselves to assess and discuss the candidates’ qualifications and policies, the campaign’s news coverage, political advertising, and anything else that caught their fancy. It also made it more awkward than in the past for candidates to withhold information, fail to take positions, or say different things to different people” (p. 235).

Appeal to Campaigns

The internet appeals to campaigns for three very simple reasons. First, it is relatively inexpensive. In comparison to television ads, which are estimated to have cost around \$2 billion in total this campaign, a single highly sophisticated web site can cost \$200,000 to set up and another \$100,000 per year to maintain. Social-networking sites such as Facebook or YouTube are even less expensive. With those sites, the campaign does not have to pay any money to host the page, yet they are able to use the information dissemination capabilities of these sites. The internet is also a direct form of communication which means there is no interpretation by a third party. The internet's ability to reach a large number of voters is also a reason it is appealing to campaigns. The Internet is a way for voters to reach candidates 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

The Howard Dean Campaign

The 2003-2004 election was the first real internet election in the United States. Howard Dean, an almost unknown, placed himself as a frontrunner by hiring a political consultant, Joe Trippi, who helped Dean gain ground by using social-networking sites (Hollihan, 2009). This election also helped greatly in bringing volunteers to the campaign which was different than the very structured and controlled campaign that most candidates used. The volunteers gave the campaign more "the character of a spontaneous social movement" (Hollihan, 2009, p.205). This campaign was also the first to prove that the Internet could be effective in raising campaign funds (Hollihan 2009). We recognize these same techniques in BarackObama's 2008 Presidential Campaign.

The Howard Dean campaign suggested that "the new social networking technologies alone were insufficient to build excitement for a campaign" (Hollihan, 2009, p.205).

According to Hollihan, "the most likely explanation was that to fully benefit from this tactic,

the candidate had to have a message that would appeal to Internet users and that would motivate them to turn out for these types of events” (p.205).

The Dean campaign “illustrated the positive possibilities of the new communication technologies, however, it also starkly revealed the problems that these technologies could pose to candidates” (Hollihan 2009, p.206). Howard Dean also used Blogs in this election. “What the Dean campaign learned, was that these online journal permit candidates, campaign staff members, activists, reporters and ordinary citizen commentators to contribute their observations about daily events, news stories, and campaign messages and strategies. The benefit of blogs is that they can create a feeling of genuine interactivity, thereby giving participants a sense of personal empowerment” (Hollihan 2009, p.207).

Howard Dean’s brief moment in the presidential spotlight was powered by the new online campaign sensation, Facebook (Von Drehle, 2008). Howard Dean’s Campaign Manager, Joe Trippi wrote, ““most campaigns do everything in their power to control every element of the candidates’ image and message, from the clothes he wears to each word out of his mouth” (Winograd, 2008, p.157). He could see that running a campaign from the bottom up would require “an open source approach with control located in the swarm of contributors to campaign efforts rather than headquarters... Those candidates who master the art of putting the voters in charge of the campaign will be rewarded with victory” (Winograd, 2008, p.157).

The Internet is forcing candidates to not only disclose more information to the public, but is also holding them accountable for their actions. This changing campaign is something candidates and elected officials have never had to deal with and is also giving American citizens different ways to participate (Graff, 2007). Some of those different ways were used in the 2008 election, including: online video, cell phones, blogs, and social networking sites.

These tools provided “unparalleled power to ordinary voters and together have created a new infrastructure for launching (and rebutting) political attacks” (Graff, 2007, p.249).

Election 2008 and Young Voters

In the 2008 election, the Democratic websites, at least during the primary, got more traffic than the Republican counterparts. This could be because the Democrats were keeping a closer watch on the election via online capabilities than were the Republicans and were also more involved online than past elections. There was also evidence that “younger voters – who also tend to be the most likely voters to seek information online—were more likely to favor the Democratic Candidates” (Hollihan, 2009, p.208).

Barack Obama’s “campaign has become the first in decades, maybe in history-to be carried so far on the backs of the young. His crushing margin of victory in Iowa came almost entirely from voters under 25 years old, and as the race moved to New Hampshire and Nevada, their votes helped him stay competitive” (Von Drehle, 2008, p.1). Obama’s outreach to students started as a strategy in Iowa. Obama made young voters a genuine priority. Obama would meet student leaders backstage after rallies, something typically reserved for VIPs and fund raisers. Also, Barack Obama hired a veteran of Rock the Vote as his youth-vote coordinator (Von Drehle, 2008).

It is no wonder why candidates are beginning to appeal to young voters in ways that have not been seen in recent politics. One major way is through social networking sites. The results of the 2006 election shows that the use of social-networking sites provides an economical way to reach voters with messages that are actually received and, if created properly, believed (Winograd, 2008).

“A post-2006 election survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the press showed that the use of the internet to acquire information about candidates more than doubled between 2002 and 2006” (Winograd, 2008, p. 165-166). The results of the 2006 election show that the use of social-networking sites lowered the cost of reaching young voters (Winograd, 2008). Not only can students watch candidates’ speeches and debates on YouTube, but their e-mail addresses stay the same, even when their physical address changes, thus eliminating the problem with bad records. Also, the use of the internet makes it much easier for young people to volunteer. “Students who might never show up at a phone bank can now download contacts from a central database and make calls from the comfort of their dorm rooms...They once were lost but now can be found, and Obama is being rewarded for making the effort to look” (Von Drehle, 2008, p.3).

Millenials no longer use the traditional broadcast media for political information and persuasion, they use the internet. In the near future, displacement will cause television to lose its role as the primary medium for campaign messages to be sent to voters. The target demographic of the campaigns was replaced “by a predominantly Gen-x set of views, many of whom had moved onto the internet to get their news and information” (Winograd, 2008, p.163). When this generation did watch television, it was television that was targeted to their interests (Winograd, 2008). In 2007, according to Millenial Makeover, the target audience of television became even harder to reach as they began to use the internet more frequently as their primary source for news and information. “The higher cost and lower impact of television had become more of a burden than any campaign could carry” (Winograd, 2008,p.163)

Youth can also link such social networking sites as MySpace and Facebook to their cell phones. This makes it much easier for this age group to connect with others. In 2007, MySpace was rising in importance for members with regard to sharing political information and fostering political activism. According to most experts, there is no clear model to suggest what strategies work best with regard to the internet and social-networking sites (Hollihan 2009).

Facebook in Campaign 2008

All major presidential candidates and their running mates had a profile on Facebook. Each candidate used this site to garner support from users. Each candidate had a hefty number of supporters: John McCain had 624,705 supporters as of November 4th, 2008 (Election Day) and Barack Obama had 2,418,576 supporters. Both candidates were active in updating their pages leading up to Election Day. They each utilized the update capabilities of the site to send out information to supporters as well as the informational video capabilities to post videos to the site that were available to all users. They used event capabilities as well as the other application boxes to keep voters updated on the status of their campaigns. It is important to note that Chris Hughes, a cofounder of Facebook, was the Director of Online Organizing for Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign.

Webstyle

The first study conducted to systematically analyze the "self-presentation strategies of candidates employing the mass media of the internet" was done by Banwart (2002, p.110). This analysis approach was called Candidate Webstyle. The initial study led to the creation of a Webstyle coding scheme (Banwart, 2002). The webstyle coding scheme uses a modified version of the Videostyle coding scheme (Kaid & Davidson, 1986) "in order to account for

the unique nature and format of the website medium” (Banwart, 2002, p.119). The process of Webstyle content analysis is explained in detail in Chapter 2 as well as how it was adapted to fit with social-networking sites.

Political Socialization

The process in which people acquire their political values, beliefs and knowledge is known as political socialization. We acquire our political beliefs just as we acquire a vocabulary. Because many of these beliefs are learned from parents, teachers, and/or those we trust, we are conditioned to just accept them as they are “fed to us” (Hollihan, 2009, p.54). According to Paletz, “the media can be powerful agents of political socialization” (Paletz, 2002, p.130). The media has been identified as the principal source of political socialization for young people, one that has a significant amount of influence on their political opinions (Paletz, 2002). According to Thomas Hollihan (2009), “ample evidence suggests that news coverage significantly shapes political awareness” (p.70).

There are many inter-connected areas that help in understanding the way social-networking sites have come to influence campaigns. After reviewing the literature regarding the history of the Internet and campaigns, the youth vote, and Facebook, the next step is to examine the methods employed in this study. To better understand the process of answering the research questions posed, it is necessary to review how the content analysis and survey was employed in this study.

METHOD

This study provides an examination of the use of social-networking sites in presidential campaign with a focus on the 2008 Presidential Election. This study examined the content and use of the social networking site, Facebook for campaigning from October 28, 2008 to November 4, 2008. The study focused on young voters (18-25 year olds) and their use of these sites as a form of political communication as well as the presence of the candidates and their messages sent via Facebook.

The study had three main purposes. First, the study examined how the two major candidates in the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama and John McCain, used social-networking sites in their campaigns. Secondly, the study focused on how young people used these sites. Finally, the study examined young peoples' responses to the campaign activities and persuasive tactics on these social-networking sites.

This study was designed to examine the youth vote in the 2008 presidential election and determine whether social-networking sites may have had an influence on the youth vote in 2008. Because the purpose of the study was to examine how the candidates used Facebook as well as how young voters responded, it was necessary to approach this study with mixed-methods. The analysis can not only focus on the youth receiving the messages and their perceptions, but also must examine the messages that were created by the presidential candidates and sent out via Facebook.

Procedures and Materials

The first research question, determining how the candidates used social networking sites in the 2008 election, was answered through a content analysis of the candidates' Facebook page as well as the messages they sent out to supporters via Facebook. The last two research questions in this study were answered through a survey of young voters. In general, the survey asked questions regarding young peoples' use of social networking sites and their responses to the campaign messages presented via Facebook.

The content of each of the candidate's Facebook pages was analyzed using the Webstyle coding method (Banwart, 2002). Usually, Internet research in political campaigns is focused on what occurred at one point in time rather than the whole realm of communication in a fluid environment, such as the Internet. This was also the case in this study. Since this study's focus was on the Facebook presence and the messages sent by presidential candidates on their Facebook pages, it was not necessarily interested in the changes over time but rather in the strategies used in specific messages. As such, each candidate's Facebook page was captured on the morning of Election Day (November 4, 2008) and analyzed as representative of the material presented on his Facebook page throughout the campaign.

The unit of analysis for this section of the study consisted of a single candidate's Facebook page (only the main page) to examine the candidate web style. This unit of analysis was consistent with previous research using Webstyle (Banwart, 2002; Lewis 2003; Banwart, 2000). An explanation of the Web site as the unit of analysis is necessary. The screen shots taken of the candidate's Facebook pages captured the information as presented on that page at that time. The screen shot did not capture the actual links on the site;

however, these links are visible in the captured information so that the coder could see that a link was available to a Web surfer viewing the Facebook page. The webstyle codebook and codesheet used in this study recorded data for 162 variables in 49 categories (See Appendix C and D).

Content analysis was also conducted on the “updates” (messages similar to Email) sent to “supporters” (the term Facebook uses to indicate a person who has selected to join the candidate’s Facebook network) from a candidate. The unit of analysis for this section was one update. The coding scheme used in this study was also developed from Webstyle (Banwart, 2002). The original Webstyle codebook was modified in an effort to design categories that would more accurately reflect Facebook and the way it is designed and used. Consistent with Banwart’s webstyle analysis, the categories described the verbal content such as candidate traits and appeal strategies; nonverbal content such as pictorial representation, facial expressions, body language, and eye contact; and the interactive capabilities of the site. Candidate information such as gender, party, level of race, and incumbency status, was also gathered.

One Communication graduate student was recruited and trained to code the sample in this study. The student first met with the researcher to review and discuss the code book and code sheet. Following the 30 minute review of the materials, the coder was given a candidate’s Facebook profile (not one of the candidates of interest in this study) to code as a sample. Any questions regarding how to code and what to code were discussed as the coder coded the sample site. After completing the sample coding, the coder was given copies of each candidate’s Facebook page for coding. In addition to the Election Day Facebook page that was electronically captured and archived for use in this study, the coder was asked to

look at the current Facebook pages for date-specific photos and updates. The criteria for the dates of this information were decided based on two different reasons. First, the updates and photos that were analyzed were those posted between October 28, 2008 and November 4, 2008, the same dates the survey used in this study was open. Secondly, these dates include the week before Election Day leading up to the date of the snapshot of the page used in the content analysis, giving a clear representation of the campaign tactics the candidates used in the final stretch of the campaign.

As stated previously, research questions two and three in this study were answered through a survey of young voters. The survey was open from October 29, 2008 to November 3, 2008 and was conducted online. The participants consisted of a convenience sample of 320 students enrolled at a large state university. The survey was administered to students from the Communication department as well as the Honors College. The participants were notified of this survey through professors as well as through the Honors List Serv that Emails all students in the University's Honors College. Some participants received extra credit for their participation, at the discretion of the faculty who notified the students of the opportunity.

Approximately 66.77% of the participants were women ($n = 215$) and 33.23% were men ($n = 107$). The average age of the participants was 20 years old. The majority of participants (85.09%) were Caucasian and the remaining participants were distributed across African-American (7.14%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2.8%), Hispanic (.62%), and others (4.35%). The political party affiliation of the participants was evenly split with approximately 38.82% Democrats ($n = 125$) and 39.44% Republicans ($n = 127$), while the

remaining 21.74% of participants indicated an Independent or “other” political affiliation ($n = 70$) (see Appendix A for demographics table).

The participants were administered a questionnaire to gather demographic information as well as information such as where they obtain political information (see Appendix B). This questionnaire also included measures of Internet and social-networking site use and perceived candidate use of these sites. The survey also included questions about the perceived influence the candidates had on those being surveyed. Also, as a basis for the study, a question concerning who the participant would vote for if the election was held on that day was included. The full questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

Using the previously described mixed research methods, the following questions were answered:

RQ1: How did the candidates use Social-Networking Sites in their campaign?

RQ2: How do young people utilize these sites?

RQ3: What were young peoples’ responses to the candidates campaign strategies on Social-Networking Sites?

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Descriptive statistics were used to count frequencies and the presence or absence of the variables within the Facebook sites. Because the website was considered a single unit of analysis—which is consistent with previous webstyle studies—significance testing between presence of variables on each candidate’s Facebook site could not be conducted. This limited the analysis to reporting of presence or absence of a particular variable for each site.

With regard to the survey, results were used to support the results from the content analysis as well as respond to RQs 2 and 3. These questions asked about how young people use social-networking sites and their responses to the candidates. As a result, basic frequencies are presented to respond to these questions.

Content Analysis

In order to respond to the first research question—which asks how candidates used social networking sites in their 2008 presidential campaign—the different components of the candidates’ Facebook pages were content analyzed. To begin, there was analysis of the content on the main information section. Within this section, both candidates had information present about basic information such as their sex, party affiliation, and the office they were seeking. Neither candidate had graphics present on the homepage. Although there were many similarities in this section, there were differences as well. John McCain introduced his site

with a personal letter whereas Barack Obama did not. There were also differences with the information available from the home page. John McCain had candidate information, links, events, and news available from this page where Barack Obama did not. Barack Obama had volunteer information and links to the voter protection center from his main page. They both included voter resources, a YouTube box, contact information, notes/updates, supporters, and a wall.

The candidate information section includes such information as favorite books, favorite movies, favorite music, as well as simple biographical information as gender, marital status, etc. Both candidates included this basic biographical information as well as their favorites such as the ones listed above. Both candidates also had photos of themselves alone as well as photos of them with other people. John McCain included information about his previous jobs.

The events section was also accessible from both candidates' main pages. They also included information regarding events open to the public and media. The events included the information on the type of event as well as information on past, current, and future events. Both candidates also had where and when an event would take place clearly displayed.

The contact section was not contained in a specific section on Barack Obama's main page. This information was found under the "info" tab. John McCain's was, however, found in its own section on the main page. It was also not possible to send either candidate a message directly from this site. Neither candidate had contact information about their campaign headquarters or a link for feedback/emailing the candidate. John McCain included more contact information than did Barack Obama. John McCain included a mailing address and an e-mail address on this page. They both included a phone number.

Neither candidate included extensive information for supporters to get involved. Barack Obama did not include any information. John McCain included a letter. Although both candidates included links on their page, John McCain's was not in a specific section but was included under posted items and info. John McCain included a link to a special interests website, and media-related websites, Barack Obama did not. They both included a link to governmental websites.

Both candidates also made a YouTube Box and Videos of their speeches available through this site. John McCain made television spot ads available. The photos that were shown on this site showed the candidate dressed both formally and casually. Both candidates posted photos in which they were either smiling or attentive but, for both candidates, the dominant expression in the photos was smiling. Both candidates also had a combination of closed and open body movement. When other people were in the photos, men, women, family, children, senior citizens, racial minorities and military were those included. The dominant settings of Barack Obama's photos were inside business photos or rallies. John McCain's photos were predominantly outside family photos and rallies.

Barack Obama included special sections or interest pages for certain groups where John McCain did not. Some of the groups included young voters/teens, women, veterans, minorities, and Native Americans.

Both candidates used the Facebook capability of "updates" that each supporter received. From the dates of October 28th, 2008 to November 4th, 2008 Barack Obama sent eight separate updates utilizing many different strategies. John McCain sent three. All of John McCain's updates invited supporters to participate in some aspect of the campaign. One of his updates emphasized hope and/or optimism for the future as well as addressed the

readers as “we.” Another update used traditional values, emphasized personal experience, included anecdotes to support the positions as well as emphasized his accomplishments. Overall, John McCain emphasized his past performance, his cooperation with others, and his experience in politics. John McCain relied heavily upon the action-oriented component.

Barack Obama’s updates also included this action-oriented component. Seven out of the eight updates sent between these dates invited supporters to participate in some way in the campaign. Three of the eight updates were calling for change, two of the eight addressed the readers as “we,” two of the eight emphasized hope for the future, and another two attacked the opponent in some way. Overall, Barack Obama’s updates emphasized cooperation with others, called for action from supporters, and used the “of the people” or commonality strategy.

Survey Results

The survey conducted among communication and honors students yielded the following results. There were 320 completed surveys. The average age of participants was 20 years old. The majority, 85 percent of respondents were Caucasian. Participants were relatively balanced with regard to political party with 39.44% Republican, 38.82% were Democrats, 19.88% identified as Independent and 1.86 % as Other. Females represented 66.77% of those who took the survey and 33.23% were male.

According to the results of the survey, 95.38% of respondents use social-networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube; only 4.62% do not. Of those that use social networking sites, 84.84% visit the sites at least once a day and 64.84% of those visit the sites several times a day. Most of the respondents reported that they rarely participate in political discussions via Facebook with a large proportion reporting they never participate (44%

rarely, 43% never). Seventy eight percent reported that these sites had no influence on their interest in politics and 77 % reported that they did not influence their opinion on the 2008 election.

The survey results indicated 89.47% of respondents believed that Barack Obama did best in utilizing social networking sites in the campaign with only 10.53% indicating that John McCain best utilized them. When asked whether they agreed with the statement, “Barack Obama is heavily using these sites,” 38.96% agreed, 19.15% disagreed and 41.88% had no opinion. Asked the same question about John McCain, 11.94% of respondents agreed, 41.61% disagreed with 46.45% having no opinion.

The respondents were also asked to identify how often they got news from multiple news sources. The results were as follows: most respondents reported they “sometimes” got their news from local television news (41.77%) with 10.71% rarely or never getting news from the source and 29.58% getting a lot of news from this source. The amount of information gained from national television news is a bit different with most respondents reporting getting a lot of information from this source (67.17%), 24.7% getting some news and 8.13% rarely or never getting news from this source. With regard to websites, 54.9% got a lot of their news from news websites with only 17.21% indicating they rarely or never got information from these sites and 27.89% getting some news from these sites. Candidate’s homepages presented different numbers with 25.66% reporting getting a lot of news from the candidate’s homepage, 44.78% rarely or never getting their news from these sites, and 29.55% getting some news from these pages. Social networking sites were similar with 20.18% reporting getting a lot of news from them, 44.21% rarely or never getting news from these sites, and 35.61% getting some news from these sites.

The respondents were also asked to rate the candidates based on certain image characteristics. The majority of respondents saw Barack Obama as qualified (59.1%), but an overwhelming majority saw John McCain as being qualified (85.19%). Most saw Barack Obama as sophisticated (83.54%), with a slightly lower number seeing John McCain that way (68.7%). The respondents generally saw both candidates as being believable (55.22% Obama and 51.05 %McCain), and successful (80.55% Obama, 83.43% McCain). The Majority of respondents saw Barack Obama as being attractive (55.99%) where as the majority thought John McCain was unattractive (53.02%). An overwhelming majority saw Barack Obama as being friendly (82.93%), with a slightly lower percentage seeing John McCain that way (62.2%).

When asked if the candidate was “like” them, respondents reported the following. The majority reported they thought Barack Obama thinks like them (48.2%), 36.22 percent reported they thought Barack Obama does not think like them with 15.57 being neutral. 46.6 percent of the respondents stated they thought John McCain does not think like them with 12.77 percent being neutral and 40.73 percent reported that they thought John McCain does think like them. 40.89 percent of respondents reported they though Barack Obama was from a social class different from theirs with 18.81 percent being neutral and 40.29 percent reporting they thought he was from a social class similar to theirs. 57.01 percent thought that John McCain was from a social class different from theirs with 19.51 reporting neutral and 23.46 percent reporting they thought he was from a social class similar to theirs. 32.33 percent of respondents reported they thought Barack Obama behaved like them with 27.84 percent being neutral and 29.82 percent indicating they though Barack Obama does not behave like them. 33.13 percent of respondents reported they though John McCain behaved

like them with 23.4 percent being neutral and 43.47 percent reporting they believed John McCain does not behave like them.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to first analyze how the candidates used social-networking sites in the 2008 presidential election. After analyzing how they used these websites, determining how young people used these sites to gain campaign information was examined. Finally, determining young peoples' responses to the strategies used by the candidates was analyzed. The overall goal of this study was to determine whether the candidates' strategic use of Facebook was appealing to young voters and how this appeal may have lead to an increase in the youth vote. The results of this study provides for further analysis of how social-networking sites have and will continue to transform campaigns and the youth vote.

Overall, the results of this study indicate, in response to RQ 1 which asked how the candidates used social-networking sites, both presidential candidates were heavily using social-networking sites with the perception of young voters being that Barack Obama used them best. A discussion of each candidate's Webstyle is necessary to further understand exactly what techniques were and were not successful in this campaign.

Young people clearly felt that Obama best used social-networking sites. Based on that response and Obama's success in the election, a comparison of Barack Obama's use of the site and how it differed from John McCain's is appropriate. With that comparison, it is evident that a "less is more" strategy might be best when using social-networking sites for campaigns. John McCain's site had a personal letter as well as more information accessible

from the main page than did Barack Obama's. John McCain's Facebook profile also included more contact information as well as a link to the candidate's main campaign website where Barack Obama's did not. John McCain's contact information section also included a mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address while Barack Obama's only included a phone number. John McCain's site also included television ads accessible from the main site and Barack Obama did not.

All of this excess information on John McCain's site may have made his profile seem cluttered and over-bearing for young people who are known to have a short attention span. With so much information accessible from the main profile page, finding information may have been difficult for viewers of the page. Barack Obama's Facebook page may have been easier to view and find candidate information, making the page more successful in appealing to voters.

Another source of differences that may have led to the perception that Barack Obama was more successful at using these sites was his use of updates. Within the time period selected for analysis, Barack Obama had eight separate updates, John McCain only had three. These updates were not only sent to supporters who had, more or less, subscribed to the page, but were also accessible by anyone just looking at the profile. Barack Obama was definitely more extensive in his use of these updates. With young people accessing these sites generally at least once a day (if not more), they would have an update almost every day reminding them to vote or indicating exactly what the campaign was doing. An update from Obama in a young person's inbox may have served as a "reminder" to check out Obama's profile where a young person could learn more about Obama or have their support reinforced. These updates not only sent out vital information regarding volunteering and voting, but could have also

increased traffic to the profile and spread information among young voters. Barack Obama's use of these updates, and use of Facebook aligned more closely with the ways in which young people used the site. This similarity could have possibly led to Barack Obama's success in mobilizing the young voters. John McCain did not use the updates to the extent Barack Obama did. Within the dates analyzed, McCain had only three updates, two of which were the day before Election Day and one of which was on Election Day. The amount of updates and dates of the updates suggest that to be successful in mobilizing voters via social-networking sites, updates must be numerous and consistent. They must also be used in the weeks or even months leading up to Election Day, not just around Election Day. In other words, connecting with voters early and often still applies in the social-networking world of campaigning.

Not only were the amount and timeliness of the updates a major difference, but the content of the updates were also very different. In all of his updates, Barack Obama invited supporters to participate or act in some way in the campaign. His updates addressed supporters as peers inviting them to join with Obama and each other. Barack Obama also kept with his campaign theme by calling for change in some of his updates. John McCain's, although they did invite action among supporters, tended to focus more on traditional values, personal experiences, and McCain's accomplishments. While not unexpected, in that these themes showed continuity with the overall campaign themes, they did not resonate with young voters as was the hope of the campaign.

One example of the difference in content between the updates is how the candidates called supporters to action. Barack Obama's updates addressed readers as peers and incited action that was relatively easy and that Facebook supporters would be willing to do. Such is

the case with Barack Obama's November 2nd, 2008 update in which he asked supporters to donate their Facebook status. A user had to simply click on a link to donate their status. There was very little time involved, no monetary expense required, but it allowed for a massive show of support for Obama to be displayed among the hundreds of thousands who donated their status. The updates where John McCain invited participation were inviting supporters to make phone calls, as was the topic of his November 3rd, 2008 update. Like most of the public, young people are not likely to take their time and use their phone to make phone calls in support of a candidate. The use of an update to ask for a status donation instead of phone calls is much more appropriate for the audience. These differences in the use of updates make it obvious that Barack Obama was able to better understand his audience of young people and incite them to action they might actually take.

According to *Millennial Makeover* (Winograd, 2008), low turnout amongst youth is not because they are apathetic, but because of a lack of access. Young people, particularly college students, tend to move around more than other groups and because of this, voter records and files tend to be out of date by the time the next election comes around (Winograd, 2008). Candidates have traditionally had a difficult time reaching young voters because of the lack of solid contact information. Couple that with low voter turnout among the demographic which leads campaigns to typically not spend money reaching out to young voters. Facebook and other social-networking sites have made this once difficult to reach demographic very easy and inexpensive to reach. Candidate's can now utilize free social-networking sites where they can reach large numbers of young people without having to have previous voting records or contact information. These sites can reach young voters and can

also provide these voters with information on how to register to vote, absentee voting, etc. which gives them better access to the system.

Millennial Makeover (Winograd, 2008) also points out that young people are receptive to political messages, but the economic costs of targeting their messages to this demographic through traditional political communication mediums are too high for a campaign. Facebook and other social-networking sites eliminate those costs making them a very advantageous resource for candidates. Candidates have to spend very little money to target young voters in an environment where they already exist. Campaigns do not have to entice young voters to participate in social-networking sites; they are already there. The candidates only have to target a message to the particular group and place it in a free environment. This approach is much more cost-effective than creating a new television advertisement and buying air time on a show that, maybe, 30% of the demographic watches.

Using social-networking sites, candidates can also create an infinite number of demographic-specific networks. This is clearly seen with Obama having several different affinity groups available from his Facebook main page. These groups, such as Students for Obama, Women for Obama, First Americans for Obama, Veterans for Obama, etc., were available for like-minded people to “gather” to get information about the candidate and could serve as ways to mobilize volunteers and voters. Another interesting point is that the fastest growing demographic of Facebook users are those over 35 years old (Facebook factsheet, 2009). With a growing number of older people joining these sites, candidates will now have myriad opportunities available to reach various demographics in future campaigns with little to no cost.

The next question for analysis in this study asked how young people used social-networking sites for campaign-related communication in 2008. The results of the survey indicate young people heavily used social-networking sites with 95.38% of the respondents indicating they used social-networking sites. An overwhelming 84.84% indicated they used social-networking sites at least once a day and 64.84% indicated they used them several times a day. Even though most respondents indicated they never or rarely participated in political discussions on social-networking sites (87.38%) and also indicated information on these sites did not influence their interest in politics (79.04%) or their opinions on issues in the election (77.27%), the process of political socialization indicates that the influence might have been present albeit unnoticed by young people.

According to Facebook statistics (2009) about participation on Election Day, more than 15 million users of voting age logged onto Facebook on Election Day to see and/or participate in the Election Day festivities. Of those 15 million who logged on, 5.4 million users shared that they voted with their friends through the site; 1.5 million users mentioned Barack Obama, John McCain, Sarah Palin, Joe Biden, or Election Day on their wall; 1.7 million users joined the Election Rally through the “Causes” application and donated their statues to the election; and more than 2.4 million users joined the Facebook Election Day event. With these statistics, it is obvious that it was almost impossible for those users accessing the site to avoid the Election. Even though most users reported that they did not participate in discussions and probably did not change their opinions on issues as a result of their exposure on the sites, the amount of coverage found on the site indicates that, perhaps users would have experienced an increase in awareness of the election as well as awareness about election-related information such as registration closing dates, polling times, etc.

Political socialization indicates that simply being around politics and political information, even if not actively seeking it out, leads to increased knowledge and participation.

Additionally, this theory places “peers” as a lead socialization agent for young voters, thus making one’s “friend” on Facebook a key element of positive or negative feelings toward a candidate. Regardless of whether or not a young person actively participated in discussions via a social-networking site, it is likely that they were influenced at least somewhat through simple exposure by their mere presence on the site.

The final question addressed in this study asked how young people responded to the candidates’ campaign strategies on social-networking sites. As stated previously, young people in the survey indicated that Barack Obama was best utilizing the site (89.47%). In the 2008 primary, youth turnout rose sharply with more than 6.5 million young people under the age of 30 participating in the 2008 primaries and caucuses (CIRCLE, 2008). According to CIRCLE (2008), National Exit Polls estimated that youth turnout rose in 2008 for the third consecutive presidential election. In 2008 there was an increase of around 3.4 million voters under the age of 30 over 2004. Young people, ages 18-29, represented 18% of the electorate in the 2008 election, which represents a one percent increase over 1996, 2000, and 2004 when young voters only represented 17% of the electorate. The increase in the youth vote indicates that social-networking sites may have had some influence on the numbers of youth who chose to vote. Unfortunately, there is no real way to gauge the influence of a singular form of campaign communication on a person when they were likely exposed to a number of various forms of communication and hundreds of messages during the course of the campaign.

Although concluding how effective these sites were with regard to the 2008 presidential campaign is not possible with the scope of this study, determining exactly how young people felt about each candidate in comparison to the information included on the social-networking sites can be done. Most respondents in the survey indicated thinking Barack Obama was qualified (59.1%), sophisticated (83.54%), honest (53.44%), believable (55.22 %), successful (80.55), attractive (55.99 %), sincere (65.76%), and strong (71.34%). The majority of respondents (48.1%) indicated they didn't think Barack Obama thought like them with a smaller amount (36.22%) indicating they did think Barack Obama thought like them, leaving a small number of respondents (15.57%) being neutral on the matter. Similarly, 32.33% of respondents believe that Barack Obama behaved like them with only 40.12% believing that he does not behave like him. When comparing the information contained on each candidate's Facebook page, Barack Obama placed more social information, such as personal favorites than did John McCain possibly making the statistics concerning Barack Obama's likeability higher than those concerning his qualification.

John McCain, on the other hand, had more information concerning his past work history as well as more information concerning how to get involved in the campaign. This could be why a large number of respondents (85.19%) of respondents thought John McCain was qualified. Respondents also believed John McCain to be sophisticated (69.7%), honest (54.38%), believable (51.05%), successful (82.43%), unattractive (53.02%), sincere (59.39%), and strong (62.43%). The big differences when comparing these characteristics seemed to be with whether or not each candidate is qualified and how attractive each candidate is. There was not a large difference in the amount of respondents who indicated

they thought John McCain thought like them (40.63%) with about the same amount indicating they did not think he thought like them (46.5%).

Overall, candidates heavily used social-networking sites in their campaigns. The ability to reach large numbers of voters at a relatively low cost made such sites a great tool for campaigns. Although most users indicate that they did not participate in political discussions, they were influenced by the large amount of users who did participate in political discussions as well as the overwhelming number of users who donated their statuses and/or used the Facebook Election Day capabilities. Although the use of social-networking sites probably did not make much of an impact on changing users' political ideologies, it did probably lead to increased awareness about Election related information.

LIMITATIONS

When analyzing the results of this study, certain limitations must be acknowledged. First, the demographics of the sample may have caused some of the data to be skewed. Because a large number of students who completed the survey were honors students, it is very possible that they were more interested in both politics and the campaign therefore giving false results. Another limitation with regard to the demographic is the sample included only students from one university. This could also be cause for the survey results to be skewed.

While the webstyle coding scheme was modified from its initial use by Banwart (2002), the limitations indicate that it be further modified to become a better tool for analyzing a single campaign. Consistent with the previous webstyle study, this study treated the entire website as a single unit of analysis. However, treating the website as a single unit of analysis did not allow for gaining depth in the information analyzed. The results only indicate the presence or absence of a particular variable on the website, not the number of times a particular variable is present. Coding in this manner does not allow for understanding the campaign's emphasis on a particular variable throughout the site. Research should be

done to determine the ability to treat each individual section on these sites as a single unit of analysis for the purpose of webstyle coding. Treatment of each of section as a single unit of analysis would allow analysis to determine the campaign's emphasis on a particular variable, leading to further determination made as to the campaign's full use of the site as a tool presenting the desired candidate's image.

CONCLUSION

In the years to come, it is quite clear that social-networking sites will be a very important component in campaigns. Further research should continue to focus on these sites as a means of presenting a candidate's image. The amount of information being sent through these sites as well as the cost indicate that campaigns will be heavily utilizing these sites in the future and will have the possibility of not only reaching just young voters but voters of all ages.

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Appendix A

Table 1

Participant Demographic Information

	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	215	66.77
Male	107	33.23
<i>Age</i>		
Under 18	4	1.25
18	102	31.78
19	88	27.41
20	47	14.64
21	40	12.46
22	21	6.54
23	6	1.87
24	4	1.25
25 and over	9	2.8
<i>Political Party</i>		
Democrat	125	38.82
Republican	127	39.44
Independent/Other	70	21.74
<i>Race/Ethnic Background</i>		
Caucasian	274	85.09
African-American	23	7.14
Asian/Pacific	9	2.6
<i>Islander</i>		
Hispanic	2	.62
Other	14	4.35
<hr/>		
<i>n = 320</i>		

Appendix B

2008 General Campaign Questionnaire

1. Please mark one: _____ male _____ female

2. Age_____

3. Which of the following best represents your ethnic background (*circle one*):

(1) Asian or Pacific Islander (2) Non-Hispanic White (Caucasian) (3) African-American

(4) Spanish or Hispanic origin (5) Multi-racial or mixed race (6) Native American

(7) Other (*name*):_____

4. Are you registered to vote? (1) Yes (2) No

5. Do you intend to vote in this year's election? (1) Yes (2) No

6. Different people use different sources to get information about the elections. Listed below are several sources from which people may gather political information. Please indicate how much you use each of the sources below to obtain information about the 2008 presidential election:

local television news 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

national television news 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

(e.g., CBS, NBC, ABC Nightly News, CNN, FOX)

television talk shows 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

(e.g., Meet the Press, Face the Nation, Crossfire, Equal Time)

television late night shows 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely) 0 (never)

(e.g.: Jay Leno, David Letterman, Conan O'Brien)

newspapers 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

(e.g.: state or local newspaper, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*)

news magazines 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

(e.g.: *Time*, *Newsweek*, *US News and World Report*)

News Web sites 5 (a lot) 4 3 2 1 (rarely)
0 (never)

(e.g.: CNN.com, ABC.com, etc.)

Candidates' campaign Web sites	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
Social networking Web sites	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely) 0(never)
(e.g.: FaceBook, MySpace, etc.)					
Internet search engines	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
(e.g.: Google, Yahoo)					
Radio news	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
Political blogs	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
Political satire shows	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
(e.g.: The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, SNL)					
Televised debates	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
(e.g.: between the candidates)					
political radio talk shows	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
(e.g.: Rush Limbaugh, G. Gordon Liddy, Jim Hightower, NPR)					
Political advertising on TV	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
YouTube	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
Messages on my cell phone	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely) 0(never)
Communicating online with friends	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely)
	0(never)				
Rallies or public events where	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely) 0(never)
I can hear the candidates in person					
Speaking with others in person	5 (a lot)	4	3	2	1 (rarely) 0(never)

When thinking about politics and government, do you consider yourself to be:

very conservative

conservative

somewhat conservative

moderate

somewhat liberal

liberal

very liberal

7. Which of the following best represents your political party affiliation? Check ONLY ONE of the following choices.

(1) ___ Democrat (3) ___ Independent/Unaffiliated

(2) ___ Republican (4) ___ Other (name): _____

8. Thinking of the Republican party affiliation that you have just identified, what is the strength of your affiliation?

strong: ___:___:___:___:___:weak

9. Thinking of the Democratic party affiliation that you have just identified, what is the strength of your affiliation?

strong: ___:___:___:___:___:weak

10. Thinking of the Independent party affiliation that you have just identified, what is the strength of your affiliation?

strong: ___:___:___:___:___:weak

11. Do you participate in or use social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, or YouTube?

(1) Yes (2) No

12. How often do you visit these sites social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)?

(1) Never (2) Rarely (3) A few times a week (4) Once every day (5) Several times each day

13. How often do you participate in political discussions on social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.)?

(1) Never (2) Rarely (3) A few times a week (4) Once every day (5) Several times each day

For the next set of statements, please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement by circling whether you strongly agree (**SA**), agree (**A**), have no opinion (**NO**), disagree (**D**), or strongly disagree (**SD**).

a. I get most of my political information from these sites

SA A NO D SD

b. The information on these sites has influenced my interest in politics.

SA A NO D SD

c. The information on these sites has influenced my opinions on the issues in the election.

SA A NO D SD

d. Barack Obama is heavily using these sites in this campaign

SA A NO D SD

e. John McCain is heavily using these sites in this campaign

SA A NO D SD

14. Which candidate do you believe is best utilizing social networking sites in this campaign?

(1) John McCain (2) Barack Obama

15. In a typical day, how many hours a day do you spend on the Internet?

16. How many hours a day do you spend looking at or seeking out political information on the Internet? _____

17. If the election for President were held today, for whom would you vote? Select only ONE.

____ John McCain (1) ____ Barack Obama (2) ____ Other (3) ____ Undecided (4)

18. Following are some sources that other young citizens have told us provide them with useful information when deciding how to vote in the presidential election. For each one, would you please **rate each source according to how likely you think it is to provide you with the kind of information you need in order to feel confident about voting or making a good decision in the presidential election.**

a. Television news

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

b. Newspapers

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

d. The Daily Show with Jon Stewart.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

e. Televised debates between the candidates.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

f. Advertising sponsored by the candidates or their parties.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

h. Advertising by independent or issue-based groups.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

j. Talking with friends or classmates about the candidates and issues.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

k. Searching for political information on the Internet.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

n. Information from social networking sites like FaceBook, MySpace, etc.

Very Useful Somewhat Useful No Opinion Not Particularly Useful Not Useful at All

9. On the scale below, please indicate your feelings about Barack Obama. Circle the number that best represents your feelings. Numbers “1” and “7” indicate a *very strong feeling*. Numbers “2” and “6” indicate a *strong feeling*. Numbers “3” and “5” indicate a *fairly weak feeling*. Number “4” indicates you are *undecided* or *don’t know*. Please work quickly. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. Doesn’t think like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Thinks like me

2. From social class 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 From
social class different from mine
similar to mine

3. Behaves like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Doesn’t
behave like me

4. Economic situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Economic
different from mine situation like mine

5. Similar to me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Different from me

6. Status like mine 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Status
different from mine

7. Unlike me 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Like me

8. Background different 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Background
from mine
similar to mine

Appendix C

Internet Web Sites Codebook

1. Coder Name: your name
2. Web Site ID: number of Web site given on your list of Web sites
3. Candidate Name: determine from Web site
4. Sex of Candidate: determine from the Web site
5. Status of Candidate: if the candidate is currently holding the office and is up for reelection, he/she would qualify as an incumbent; if the candidate currently does not hold the office for which he/she seeks election, he/she qualifies as a challenger; if the current

office holder is not seeking reelection, the candidates would be considered as running in an open race.

Home Page:

Does the home page:

6. Identify the candidate's party affiliation: does the candidate identify, either in text or photos/graphics that he/she is a Republican or Democrat?
7. Identify the office that the candidate is seeking: a phrase may be present, such as "Elect Betty Smith to the US Senate" or "Reelect Governor Betty Smith" that indicates whether the candidate is a senate, congressional (US House), or gubernatorial candidate.
8. Feature graphics: animation, cartoons, background pictures added for effect (e.g.: banner ads, flags waving, buttons flashing)
9. Provide the candidate's biographical information: age, sex, religion, likes, job history, etc.
10. Introduce the Web site with a personal letter from the candidate: includes a letter from the candidate welcoming the visitor to the Web site, may have candidate's "signature" at the bottom
11. Level of office candidate is seeking: features the office candidate is running for very clearly
12. Is the profile picture:
 - (1) of the candidate only: a head shot or portrait shot
 - (2) of the candidate with other people: with family, friends, at a campaign rally
 - (3) other people only: candidate is not shown on the web site in any photos
 - (4) a combination: multiple photos are used that both feature the candidate only and the candidate with other people
 - (8) not applicable/no photos on the web site

If graphics are featured on the home page, are they:

13. Party related: animation, photos, or cartoon-style text that states Republican or Democrat, features elephants or donkeys, or RNC or DNC logos
14. Candidate related: photos, cartoon animations, nicknames in cartoon text, campaign logos
15. General election/campaign related: photos, animation, graphics that feature flags, statehouses, campaign buttons from past elections

16. Generic, none of the above: photos, animation, graphics that are not specific to the candidate, election, or politics; may have "VOTE" flashing or moving, etc.
17. Are new content features visible in the minified section? Choose (1) for yes and (2) for no.
18. How many updates are present in the updates section. Count from the very first update to election day, November 4th, 2008. For this one please go online to the candidate's Facebook Page. Under the picture there is a section to view updates.

What links are listed as available from the home page?

19. Candidate bio information
20. A Clearly Labeled Voter Resources Section
21. Information for volunteers: how to volunteer, who to contact, etc.
22. Favorite Pages: Other websites clearly labeled as favorites of the candidate.
23. Is there a clearly labeled "YouTube Box"?
24. Is there contact information for the candidate?
25. Is there a notes or updates section that the candidate used?
26. Is there a Voter Protection Center section?
27. Is there a links section?
28. Is there a place that shows supporters of the candidate?
29. Is there a "wall" where supporters can write whatever they like?
30. Is there a clearly labeled events section?
31. Is there a section with News Stories present (Clearly Labeled)?
32. Other (specify): titles of other links not listed above

Candidate Info section:

Does the candidate bio section provide:

33. Biographical Information: gender, marital status, birthday, etc)
34. Favorites (Movies, Books, T.V. Shows)
35. Candidate Photos (Go to the candidate facebook page for this as well, look at photos present up to election day, November 4th, 2008.) Are there photos of the candidate by him or herself?
36. Candidate photos with other people: photos that include the candidate with other people. (Go to the candidate facebook page for this as well, look at photos present up to election day, November 4th, 2008.)
37. Business related information about the candidate: specifically list/narrate past businesses worked at/owned, employment history, etc.
38. Other(s) (specify): includes information and/or features not listed above

Events Section:

39. Is the event information contained in a specific section that is easily accessible from the main page?

For campaign event information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

40. Information on events open to the public and media: encourages attendance, or may specify whether the public and media are invited to attend
41. Does it specify the type of event?
42. Past, current, and future events: the visitor can scroll through past dates to view events the candidate attended, as well as view events for the current date or upcoming dates

43. Only current and future events: does not offer the visitor the ability to scroll through past events

44. Is the “when and where” clearly displayed on the event?

Contact Section:

45. Is the campaign directory/contact information contained in a specific section

46. Is it possible to send a message to the candidate through the site?

For campaign directory/contact information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

47. Campaign headquarters contact information: lists the physical address, phone, fax, Web site, and/or email address; may list multiple headquarters and information for each location

48. Mailing address: provides physical mailing address

49. Phone number: provides telephone number

50. Fax number: provides fax number

51. Email address: provides email address

52. Links to campaign coordinators in a constituent’s specific area: offers to search for coordinators in the visitor’s area by asking for county name, zip code, or district number

53. Link for feedback/emailing the campaign: provides a link to email the campaign/candidate directly from this section of the Web site

Get Involved Section

For get involved information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

54. Letter from the candidate: features a letter from the candidate to the visitor encouraging him/her to get involved in the candidate’s campaign; probably will have candidate’s “signature” in writing at the conclusion of the letter

55. Form for contributing: provides an actual form to be completed and sent directly to campaign for visitors interested in contributing/donating to the campaign; a secure connection may be required
56. Form for volunteering: provides an actual form to be completed and sent directly to the campaign for visitors interested in volunteering/getting involved in the campaign
57. Specific link to email campaign to contribute (separate from a form): a link that allows a visitor to email the campaign indicating interest in contributing/donating to the campaign
58. Specific link to email campaign to volunteer (separate from a form): a link that allows a visitor to email the campaign indicating interest in volunteering/getting involved in the campaign
59. Sign up form for getting involved: asks the visitor to print and fill out a form to sign up for various volunteer activities; may ask the visitor to mail or email
60. Specific link to email campaign to get involved (separate from a form): a link that allows a visitor to email the campaign to sign up for various volunteer activities
61. Information for contacting people on behalf of the campaign (e.g.: newspaper editor contact information, local leaders, etc.): provides actual names and addresses for mailing material printed or downloaded from the web site; may provide phone numbers for “phone bank” calling
62. Link for feedback/emailing the campaign: provides a link to email the campaign/candidate directly from this section of the web site

Links Section:

63. Is there a listing of “links” contained in a specific section?: on some sites there may be a specific section of the web site dedicated to listing this information, while on others it may be found elsewhere; for those sites not including this information under a so-named section, indicate within what sections the information can be found.

For “links” information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

64. National party web site: provides link to the RNC or DNC Web site

65. Other candidates' web sites: provides links to other candidates' campaign Web sites that the candidate is supporting/supportive of
66. Special interests' Web sites: provides links to Web sites of special interest groups such as Right to Life groups, environmental groups, gun control/anti-gun control groups, healthcare groups, etc.
67. Governmental Web sites: provides links to Web sites of the Senate, House, governmental departments
68. Media related Web sites: provides links to Web sites of local newspapers, political news outlets, television stations
69. Candidates Main Campaign Website: provides a link to the main site used by the campaign
70. Other(s) (specify): includes links to information and/or features not listed above

General: Does the candidate make the following available on the facebook page:

- 71.) YouTube Box
- 72.) Videos of Speeches
- 73.) Television Ads
- 74.) Debates
- 75.) News Conferences

When the candidate is shown in a photo is the candidate dressed: (For the following questions please refer to the candidates facebook page. Look at there photos that were added before or on November 4th, 2008)

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

76. Formal: coat and tie, pantsuit/skirtsuit, business/professional dress
77. Casual: sweaters, shirt sleeves, tie only, skirt and casual blouse, athletic wear
78. Not applicable/candidate's photo not on Web site: candidate not shown in a photo
79. Dominant dress type: dress type most often seen on candidate

80. When the candidate is shown in a photo, does the candidate have eye contact directly with the

viewer?:

(1) Almost never: candidate never looks at camera if head-on or candidate is not head-on

(2) Sometimes: looks directly at camera some of the time

(3) Almost always: looks directly at the camera always or almost always

(4) Not applicable/candidate not present: candidate is not shown in photos on the Web site

When the candidate is shown in a photo, is the candidate usually:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

81. Smiling: cheerful, happy look

82. Attentive/serious: concerned

83. Frowning/glaring: angry

84. Not applicable/no candidate present: candidate is not shown in photos on the Web site

85. Other (specify): includes expressions not listed above

86. Dominant expression of candidate: expression most often seen on candidate

When the candidate is shown in a photo, is the candidate's body movement/posture:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

87. Compact/closed: arms/hand in by sides of body when sitting/standing, taking up little space

88. Expansive/open: arms/hands and/or legs often outstretched when sitting or standing, taking up space

89. Combination of closed/open body movement/posture: candidate equally shown in closed and open body movement and posture in ad

90. Not applicable/candidate not present: candidate is not shown in photos on the Web site

If photos of other people (other than candidate or his/her opponent) are featured in the Web site, are they: (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)

91. Men: if a man/men are pictured on the Web site

92. Women: if a woman/women are pictured on the Web site

93. Family of Candidate: spouse, children (any age), or parents of candidate are pictured separately or with the candidate; identified as family

94. Children (not candidate's): children approximately 18 or younger (other than candidate's own) are pictured on the Web site (e.g.: babies, schoolchildren, high school students)

95. Senior citizens: people approximately age 65 and older (other than the candidate's parents) pictured on the Web site

96. Ethnic/racial minorities: African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans are pictured on the Web site

97. Other(s) (specify): describe any other particular demographic group(s) (e.g.: veterans, disabled) not included in the groups above that are pictured on the Web site

Of the photos featured on the Web site, code for the setting:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

98. Inside-home or family setting: shot in a house or studio setting that looks like a room in a home (e.g.: kitchen, living room); candidate and/or family members may be shown

99. **Inside-factory or industry setting:** shot inside a high or low tech manufacturing factory (e.g.: computer software, automobile, clothing manufacturer); candidate and/or workers shown inside the work environment
100. **Inside-classroom/educational setting:** shot inside a school and/or child care facility (e.g.: classroom, library, hallway with students/teachers); candidate and/or teachers and/or students shown inside the setting
101. **Inside-office/other professional setting:** shot inside an office, studio, or other business or professional setting; candidate and/or others pictured in the office or studio
102. **Inside-grocery/store setting:** shot inside a grocery or store setting (e.g.: grocery store, Wal-Mart type of store, small retail shop); candidate and/or others pictured in the store
103. **Inside-general:** shot inside a building or studio but the setting is not recognizable or distinguishable; candidate and/or others pictured
104. **Outside-family setting:** shot of candidate interacting outdoors with his/her and/or other families (e.g.: on a walk, at a picnic, country fair); general scenes of families shown in outdoor activities
105. **Outside-factory or industry setting:** outside shots of factory or industry (e.g.: shipyard, construction site); candidate and/or workers shown in outside work environment
106. **Outside-schoolyard:** live outside shots of school and/or child care facility (e.g.: school playground); candidate and/or teachers and/or students shown outside
107. **Outside-business setting:** shot outside an office, studio, or other business or professional setting; candidate and/or others pictured outside the office or studio
108. **Outside-farm setting:** outside scenes of farm and/or farming activities (e.g.: driving a tractor, with a harvest crew, outside a barn); candidate and/or farmers pictured
109. **Outside-scenic:** outside shots of scenery of state (e.g.: mountains, ocean, seashore, lakes, rivers); candidate and/or others are pictured
110. **Other(s) (specify):** some other setting not described above; in this category code inside and outside shots for which you cannot categorize from the listing above (e.g.: citizen on the street interviews)

111. Dominant setting of photos: setting most commonly used for photos shown on the Web site

112. Is there a place to “subscribe” to the site to receive updates via e-mail or facebook message?

113. If there is a supporter section, please type the number of supporters present on the page

If the Web site provides special sections or interest pages, are they for:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

114. Young voters, teens: targeted toward Generation X, Generation Y, explains why they should vote, may provide links to “get out the vote” programs for youth

115. Women: provides a special section for women that specifically addresses the wage gap, child care issues, family and medical leave positions; may also feature a page from the candidate’s wife or family member with recipes, invite women to send in their recipe

116. Veterans: provides a special section devoted to issues of concern and interest for veterans

117. Senior citizens: provides a special section for senior citizens that covers topics such as Medicare, social security

118. Other(s) (specify): describe any other special sections targeted toward a particular demographic of the constituency not listed above

What strategies are present in the site? For remaining questions please answer the questions for each update for each candidate between the days of October 28th, 2008 to November 4th, 2008. These updates can be found on the candidates current facebook site under their picture. (Print out extra copies of the last three pages.

(Code 1 for present, 0 if not present)

119. Incumbency stands for legitimacy: emphasis on incumbency in office, its legitimacy, the support and respect it is afforded

120. **Voice for the state: emphasis on candidate as voice/representative for the state and state issues in the capitol (Washington or state capitol)**
121. **Calling for change: things need to be done differently; changes need to be made**
122. **Addresses readers as peers (“we”): candidate presents him/herself as one of the people by using the pronoun “we” (e.g.: “We can solve our problems”)**
123. **Inviting participation/action: asks visitor to be part of the political process, to join candidate by voting or taking some other action**
124. **Emphasizing optimism/hope for the future: emphasizes candidate as one best able to deal with the future, things can and will be better if you elect this candidate**
125. **Yearning for the past: reactionary, wanting to go back to the “good old days,” desiring traditions of the past, the “American Dream,” etc.**
126. **Traditional values: reinforces majority values, family values, may involve morality, God, etc.**
127. **Representing philosophical center of the party: has support of his/her political party and represents its policies and platforms**
128. **Using endorsements by party of other important political leaders: uses testimonials from party and other important political leaders to “speak” on behalf of the candidate, linking the candidate with established, highly respected leaders**
129. **Use of personal experience, anecdotes to support positions and/or candidacy: includes stories textually narrated by the candidate or others to tell about the candidate, his/her experiences, and/or the experiences of his/her constituents to support his/her positions on the issues/candidacy or to attack the opponent**
130. **Use of statistics to support positions and/or candidacy: candidate or surrogate uses statistical evidence (e.g. percentages) to support his/her positions on issue/candidacy or to attack opponent**
131. **Use of expert authorities (non-political) to support positions and/or candidacy: features non-political sources (e.g.: newspaper articles, scientists, educators, doctors/nurses) to support positions/candidacy or to attack the opponent**
132. **Identifying with experiences of others: candidate and/or surrogates link experiences of others (constituents) with candidate’s personal experiences or his/her personal concerns**

133. Emphasizing own accomplishments: stressing the achievements of the candidate
134. Taking offensive position on an issue: candidate contrasts his/her own position on the issues with that of his/her opponent, or questions/challenges opponent's position on issues
135. Attacking record of opponent: reviewing and criticizing the past accomplishments (or failures) of the opponent, or questions and/or challenges opponent's position on issues
136. Attack opponent on personal qualities: reviewing, criticizing, accusing the personal qualities or actions of the opponent (e.g.: lying, paying taxes late, inexperienced)
137. Attack opponent on his/her stands: reviewing and criticizing the opponent's past or current stands on certain issues; not in comparison with those of the candidate but a direct attack on the opponent's stand or position
138. Compare candidate stands with stands of opponent: review and compare the opponent's past or current stands on certain issues with that of the candidate; no judgments are made by the candidate, but rather states the differences
139. Compare candidate personal qualities with personal qualities of opponent: review and compare the personal qualities or actions of the opponent with those of the candidate
140. "Above the trenches" position: rarely acknowledge the opponent, refrains from comparison or attack on the opponent, aloof from the political battle
141. Candidate makes gender an issue: the candidate suggests that his/her gender is an important factor in caring about certain issues; (e.g.: "I am a mother, so I care about healthcare")
142. Other strategy(ies) (specify): describe any strategies used not listed above

Overall, what candidate characteristics are emphasized on the Web site?

(Code 1 for present, 0 if not present)

143. Honesty/integrity: truthful, honest, has personal integrity

144. Toughness/strength: e.g.: tough on crime, the death penalty, peace through strength
145. Past performance/success/failure: previous accomplishments, achievements
146. Aggressive/fighter: need for aggressive action, candidate will fight for constituents
147. Cooperation with others: candidate will work with others to find solutions to problems
148. Competency: assertive, confident, will get the job done
149. Leadership: candidate is a recognized leader, on the forefront of issues, others follow his/her lead
150. Experience in politics: candidate has the political experience, connections, to best represent constituents
151. Washington outsider: no more “politics as usual,” candidate will represent the state and its citizens against bureaucracy, special interest groups, etc.
152. Sensitive/understanding: candidate understands, cares about, and is sensitive to the needs of others
153. Knowledgeable/intelligent: candidate is smart, knowledgeable on the issues
154. Qualified: gives reasons or makes statements why this candidate is best qualified for office, based on past record and experience
155. Action oriented proponent: candidate has a plan, is not just complaining about the problem
156. Trustworthy: you can trust/believe in this candidate
157. Of the people (commonality): emphasizes that he/she can relate to the people of the state or district, is just like you (e.g.: “I’ve raised my children in this state like many of you, and I want the best education possible for them”)

Subject of Update: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Appendix D

Internet Web Sites **Code Sheet**

1. Coder Name: _____
1
2. Web Site ID: _____
2
3. Candidate Name: _____
3
4. Sex of Candidate: _____
(1) Male 4
(2) Female
5. Status of Candidate: _____
(1) Incumbent 5
(2) Challenger
(3) Open Race

Home Page:

Does the home page: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

6. identify the candidate's party affiliation _____
6
7. identify the office that the candidate is seeking _____
7
8. feature graphics _____
8
9. provide the candidate's biographical information _____
9
10. introduce the Web site with a personal letter from the candidate _____
10
11. Level of office candidate is seeking: _____
(1) President 11
(2) Vice President
12. Is the Profile Picture _____
(1) Of the candidate only 12
(2) Of the candidate with other people

(3) Other people only

(4) Combination _____

(8) Not applicable/no photos

If graphics are featured on the home page, are they: (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)

13. party related _____
13

14. candidate related _____
14

15. general election/campaign related _____
15

16. generic, none of the above _____
16

17. Are new content features present in the minified?
(1)yes _____
(2) no 17

18. How many Updates are present in the Updates Section?
(1) 1-4 _____
18
(2) 5-7
(3) 8-10
(4) above 10

What information or links are listed as available from the home page? (Code 1 as present, 0 as not present)

19. candidate information _____
19

20. voter resources _____
20

21. Volunteer Information _____
21

22. Favorite Pages _____
22

23. YouTube Box _____
23

24. Contact Information	24
25. Notes/Updates	25
26. Voter Protection Center	26
27. "links"	27
28. Supporters	28
29. Wall	29
30. Events	30
31. News	31
32. Other Information: _____	32

Candidate Info Section:

Does the candidate bio section provide: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

33. Biographical Information (gender, marital status, birthday)	33
34. Favorites (movies, books, t.v. shows)	34
35. candidate photos (candidate only)	35
36. candidate photos with other people	36
37. business related information about the candidate (previous jobs)	37
38. other(s) (specify): _____	38

Events Section:

39. Is the event information contained in a specific section accessible from the main page?

(1) Yes

39

(2) No

If no, under what section is event information listed?

For campaign event information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

40. information on events open to the public and media

40

41. Type of Event

41

42. past, current, and future events

42

43. only current and future events

43

44. Where and When is clearly displayed

44

Contact Section:

45. Is the campaign directory/contact information contained in a specific section?

(1) Yes

45

(2) No

If no, under what section is the information listed? _____

46. Is it possible to send a message to the candidate through the site?

46

(1) Yes

(2) No

For contact information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following:
(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

47. campaign headquarters contact information

	47
48. mailing address	_____
	48
49. phone number	_____
	49
50. fax number	_____
	50
51. email address	_____
	51
52. links to campaign coordinators in a constituent's specific area	_____
	52
53. link for feedback/emailing the campaign	_____
	53

For “get involved” information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

54. letter from the candidate	_____
	54
55. form for contributing	_____
	55
56. form for volunteering	_____
	56
57. specific link to email campaign to contribute (separate from a form)	
_____	57
58. specific link to email campaign to volunteer (separate from a form)	
_____	58
59. sign up form for getting involved	_____
	59
60. specific link to email campaign to get involved (separate from a form)	
_____	60
61. information for contacting people on behalf of the campaign	_____

	61
62. link for/ability to feedback/email the campaign	62

Links Section:

63. Is there a listing of “links” contained in a specific section?	
(1) Yes	63
(2) No <i>if no</i> , under what section is the information listed?	

For “links” information contained in the web site, code for presence of the following:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

64. national party Web site	64
65. other candidates’ Web sites	65
66. special interests’ Web sites	66
67. governmental Web sites	67
68. media related Web sites	68
69. Candidate’s Main Website	69
70. Other(s) (specify): _____	70

General:

Does the candidate make the following available? (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

71. YouTube Box	71
72. Videos of speeches	72
73. Television spot ads	73
74. Debates	74
75. News conferences	

75

When the candidate is shown in a photo is the candidate dressed:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

76. formal _____
76

77. casual _____
77

78. not applicable/candidate's photo not on Web site _____
78

79. Dominant dress type _____
79

80. When the candidate is shown in a photo, does the candidate _____
have eye contact directly with the viewer? 80

(Code for overall eye contact of candidate only)

(1) Almost never

(2) Sometimes

(3) Almost always

(4) Not applicable/candidate not present

When the candidate is shown in a photo, is the candidate usually: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

81. Smiling _____
81

82. Attentive/serious _____
82

83. Frowning/glaring _____
83

84. Not applicable/no candidate present _____
84

85. Other (specify): _____
85

86. Dominant expression of candidate _____
86

When the candidate is shown in a photo, is the candidate's body movement/posture:

(Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

87. Compact/closed	_____
	87
88. Expansive/open	_____
	88
89. Combination of closed/open body movement/posture	_____
	89
90. Not applicable/candidate not present	_____
	90

If photos of other people (other than candidate or his/her opponent) are featured in the Web site, are they: (Code 1 if present, 0 if not present)

91. Men	_____
	91
92. Women	_____
	92
93. Family of Candidate (identifiable as family of candidate)	_____
	93
94. Children (not candidate's)	_____
	94
95. Senior citizens	_____
	95
96. Ethnic/racial minorities	_____
	96
97. Others (specify) _____	_____
	97

Of the photos featured on the Web site, code for the setting: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)

98. Inside-home or family setting	_____
	98
99. Inside-factory or industry setting	_____
	99
100. Inside-classroom/educational setting	_____
	100
101. Inside-office/other professional setting	_____
	101
102. Inside-grocery/store setting	_____

	102
103. Inside-general	<u>103</u>
104. Outside-family setting	<u>104</u>
105. Outside-factory or industry setting	<u>105</u>
106. Outside-schoolyard	<u>106</u>
107. Outside-business setting	<u>107</u>
108. Outside-farm setting	<u>108</u>
109. Outside-scenic	<u>109</u>
110. Other(s) (specify) _____	110
111. Dominant setting of photos: _____	111
112. Is the opportunity available to sign up for information via e-mail or facebook message?	_____
(1) Yes	112
(2) No	
113. How many supporters does the Candidate have? _____	113
If the Web site provides special sections or interest pages, are they for: (Code 1 for present, 0 for not present)	
114. young voters, teens	<u>114</u>
115. women	<u>115</u>
116. veterans	<u>116</u>
117. senior citizens	_____

117

118. other(s) (specify): _____
118

What strategies are present in the updates? (Code 1 for present, 0 if not present)

- | | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| 119. incumbency stands for legitimacy | _____ | 119 |
| 120. voice for the state | _____ | 120 |
| 121. calling for change | _____ | 121 |
| 122. addresses readers as peers (“we”) | _____ | 122 |
| 123. inviting participation/action | _____ | 123 |
| 124. emphasizing optimism/hope for the future | _____ | 124 |
| 125. yearning for the past | _____ | 125 |
| 126. traditional values | _____ | 126 |
| 127. representing philosophical center of the party | _____ | 127 |
| 128. using endorsements by party of other important political leaders | _____ | 128 |
| 129. use of personal experience, anecdotes to support positions and/or candidacy | _____ | 129 |
| 130. use of statistics to support positions and/or candidacy | _____ | 130 |
| 131. use of expert authorities (non-political) to support positions and/or candidacy | _____ | 131 |
| 132. identifying with experiences of others | _____ | 132 |
| 133. emphasizing own accomplishments | _____ | 133 |

134. taking offensive position on an issue	134
135. attacking record of opponent	135
136. attack opponent on personal qualities	136
137. attack opponent on his/her stands	137
138. compare candidate stands with stands of opponent	138
139. compare candidate personal qualities with personal qualities of opponent	139
140. "above the trenches" position	140
141. candidate makes gender an issue	141
142. Other strategy(ies) (specify): _____	142

Overall, what candidate characteristics are emphasized on the Updates? (Code 1 for present, 0 if not present)

143. honesty/integrity	143
144. toughness/strength	144
145. past performance/success/failure	145
146. aggressive/fighter	146
147. cooperation with others	147
148. competency	148
149. leadership	149
150. experience in politics	150

151. Washington outsider	<hr/> 151
152. sensitive/understanding	<hr/> 152
153. knowledgeable/intelligent	<hr/> 153
154. qualified	<hr/> 154
155. action oriented proponent	<hr/> 155
156. trustworthy	<hr/> 156
157. of the people (commonality)	<hr/> 157