

# Liking and Listening: Impression Formation and Information Processing in Presidential Debates

by

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## ABSTRACT

### *Liking and Listening: Impression Formation and Information Processing in Presidential Debates*

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Ninety-three undergraduate students at the University of Richmond were asked to watch, listen to, or read a transcript of the opening statements from the first presidential debate of the Election of 1960 between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Afterwards, participants were asked to recall three notable moments in the debate, both list and identify quotes from each Candidate, and indicate their impressions of each Candidate's personality. The purpose of my research was twofold: to revisit Dr. James Druckman's renowned experiment on the first presidential debate of 1960 that concluded that Kennedy won on television and Nixon won on radio, and to see if there is any connection between debate format, how participants process information, and how participants form impressions of a leader's personality. I hypothesized that individuals who listened to the debate would best process the information in the debate.

While there were not many situations where debate format was statistically significant in how participants processed information, some data suggest that my hypothesis is correct. The most notable contributions of my research include my findings on participants' impressions of Kennedy and Nixon's personalities: debate format proved to be statistically significant in how participants formed opinions about each leader's character. Specifically, data showed that Nixon's appearance and demeanor negatively affected participants' impressions of his personality. For example, participants who listened to the debate indicated that Nixon was as clear, competent, and specific as Kennedy, but those who watched the debate rated him much lower on those qualities despite

the fact that there logically should be no difference on those traits between television and radio. My research corroborated Druckman's findings and concludes that debate format and followers' opinions about a leader's personality are interconnected. Ultimately, data indicate that in order for followers to listen to a leader, they must first find him or her likeable.

Signature Page for Leadership Studies Honors Thesis

***Liking and Listening: Impression Formation and Information Processing in Presidential Debates***

Thesis presented

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Lastly, I dedicate this Honors Thesis to my late grandparents, Theodor and Martha Schroeder, and to my mother, Faith Weiner. My grandparents' passion for American history and politics instilled me with an insatiable curiosity about leadership that I maintain to this day. Similarly, my mother's never-ending encouragement, passion, and belief in my education led me to persevere in this year-long project. This work is for you.

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## INTRODUCTION

On September 26, 1960, two colleagues-turned-political-rivals squared off in the first televised presidential debate in United States history. John F. Kennedy, an esteemed senator from Massachusetts, developed a following of passionate Democrats who admired his youth, progressive outlook, and charisma. Richard M. Nixon, the country's Vice President, was a familiar face with an impressive resume and association with the popular Eisenhower Administration. The country was at a crossroad: after World War II, the U.S. emerged as a global superpower with a booming economy and changing social norms. While some veterans wanted to return home to a sense of normalcy, other citizens were eager to use America's victory in the war as a springboard for progressive social changes. Candidate Nixon represented traditionalism, consistency with the Eisenhower Administration, and a connection to pre-war America. Candidate Kennedy, on the other hand, embraced a forward-looking and modern ideology. The country needed to decide whether it would maintain its status quo and take the conservative route with Nixon in a new decade, or whether it would, in Kennedy's words, "start moving again."<sup>1</sup> The result, it turned out, depended largely on public communication.

This introduction examines both the literature and research relevant to the first presidential debate of 1960, presidential leadership, public communication, and persuasion. First, I argue that public communication is a crucial element in leadership and establish that presidential debates are a key opportunity for leaders to demonstrate their abilities as speakers. Next, I review the context and history of the Election of 1960, focusing mainly on the weeks leading up to the first presidential debate and initial reactions to the debate. From there, I explore the importance of storytelling in leadership and argue that the best leaders are gifted narrators who inspire audiences

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<sup>1</sup> John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. (1960, September 26). *Television debates: Transcript: First debate*. Archives.

with stories about a group's identity, mission, and future. I then analyze two psychological experiments relevant to my research in presidential debates that explain how followers process information in a leader's speech. Next, I introduce the existing literature and research about the first presidential debate of 1960, public communication, and the psychology of persuasion culminate in the present study. Finally, I reference James Druckman's 2003 experiment "The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited" to assert that while our studies are similar, Druckman's study has several flaws that require a robustness check to evaluate its significance moving forward.

Specifically, I am interested in understanding if different modes of public communication – whether that be watching a presidential debate on television, listening to a debate on the radio, or reading a debate transcript – impact how precisely followers process information. For example, does watching a debate lead followers to focus more on a leader's physical appearance than the specific words he or she uses, or does listening to a debate enable followers to pay more direct attention to the leader's argument? I am curious to learn what, and how much, followers remember from a leader's speech to better analyze psychological persuasion in leader-follower relationships. The specific details and amount of information that followers remember from a speech are different from whether or not a speech was persuasive and had impact, and it is important for leaders to understand both so as to devise the most effective and meaningful ways to persuade followers in a society where followers continue to interact more with leaders.

## **Section I: Confidence, Charisma, and Communication:**

Public speaking is known to be one of the most important skills for successful leaders. Leaders who convey confidence, charisma, expertise, and passion in their speeches are able to connect with followers on both emotional and intellectual levels, encouraging individuals to



support that leader and his or her cause. Charismatic leaders have the ability to transform groups by motivating followers and inspiring them to adopt the leader's cause as their own, making charisma an important quality to aspiring leaders.<sup>2</sup> However, leaders who struggle to demonstrate powerful public speaking skills are less likely to stand out and engage, motivate, and inspire followers; people remember powerful oratory and how they felt when a leader spoke to them, and followers often forget those who fail to deliver stirring speeches. Public speaking is an important category of distinction among potential leaders for followers, and it is becoming ever more important in today's world of media and constant communication.

In his book *The Presidential Difference*, Fred Greenstein outlines a framework for evaluating a president's leadership. Greenstein measures presidents on six categories: public communication, organizational capacity, political skill, vision, cognitive style, and emotional intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Greenstein establishes public communication as the first category for assessing a president's time in office, and throughout his work he makes a point of identifying the best presidential speakers.<sup>4</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and Barack Obama emerge as the modern era's most gifted speakers; each leader effected significant social and political change and created a distinctive legacy for themselves through their compelling oratory.<sup>5</sup> Greenstein notes not only that the content of a president's speech is key to engaging an audience, but also that non-verbal cues such as charisma, confidence, and enthusiasm are invaluable skills that advance a president's abilities as a speaker.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Shamir, B., House, R. J., & Arthur, M. B. (1993). The Motivational Effects of Charismatic Leadership: A Self-Concept Based Theory. *Organization Science*, 4(4), 577–594. JSTOR.

<sup>3</sup> Greenstein, F. (2009). *The Presidential Difference* (3rd ed.). Princeton University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

President Kennedy receives particularly high remarks for his public communication abilities according to Greenstein. The “eloquence of [Kennedy’s] oratory and his intelligent and stylish performance in his press conferences” made him a popular figure in the 1960s and beyond.<sup>7</sup> Greenstein notes that “Kennedy’s public performance and the attractive ambiance of his presidency won him impressive levels of public approval... Future chief executives can scarcely go wrong by attending to Kennedy’s communication practices.”<sup>8</sup> President Kennedy’s ability to convey his goals, vision, and policies for Americans led citizens to feel deeply bonded with the leader, making his assassination exceptionally tragic.<sup>9</sup> Kennedy balanced delivering carefully worded and thoughtful speeches while also capitalizing on his good looks, charm, and self-assurance. As a result, he came to be known as one of the most beloved and iconic public communicators in the modern presidency.

President Nixon might be the antithesis to President Kennedy in terms of public speaking abilities. Nixon came across as awkward, having a cold personality, and lacking charisma during what are called the Great Debates and his presidency, despite his keen intellect and strong argument skills. Greenstein highlights that Nixon “was a far from natural public speaker... He was patently ill at ease in press conferences, and his formal addresses came across as strained and stilted.”<sup>10</sup> While some Americans were unbothered by Nixon’s bland personality and uneasy demeanor, others began to distrust him as a leader. Despite his best efforts to improve his communication abilities, Nixon came across as an austere, unnatural, and uninspiring public speaker. One of Nixon’s aides recalled “the rigidity with which Nixon steeled himself to avoid

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<sup>7</sup> Greenstein, F. (2009). *The Presidential Difference* (3rd ed.). Princeton University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

mistakes,” stating that his “self-discipline was so tight it was unnatural.”<sup>11</sup> Nixon paled in comparison to Kennedy as a communicator; when it came time for the two candidates to debate during the so-called Great Debates, there was no question as to who was the better speaker. The difference in public speaking abilities is one factor that scholars associate with Kennedy’s victory in the Election of 1960 – Kennedy had won Americans over with his suave public discourses, while Nixon failed to overcome his insecurities to shine as a speaker.

Presidential debates are a critical form of public communication for presidential candidates. For many candidates, presidential debates are the first time that leaders introduce themselves to a national audience to establish legitimacy and demonstrate their political skill. Debates showcase every aspect of a potential president’s communication style: how he or she articulates their vision, how they disagree and argue with others, how they explain their policy goals and rationale, whether or not they are or can be persuasive, whether or not they are eloquent, and whether or not they appear charismatic, among other qualities. Debates also present presidential candidates with a unique opportunity to speak in a regulated setting, as they are given speaking time limits and moderators ensure that every person present gets to speak. Voters get to know presidential candidates during debates, making it imperative that candidates communicate well if they want to be competitive. Presidential debates, particularly the Great Debates of 1960, can serve as pivotal moments in an election and a leader’s career, making public communication particularly important during debates.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Greenstein, F. (2009). *The Presidential Difference* (3rd ed.). Princeton University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Kraus, S. (2001). *The Great Debates: Kennedy vs. Nixon, 1960*. Indiana University Press.

## Section II: The Great Debates:

The presidential debates of 1960, also known as the Great Debates, were the first televised debates in American history.<sup>13</sup> During the campaign, candidates Kennedy and Nixon appeared in four televised debates. The first debate on September 26, 1960 was a monumental and unprecedented moment in history that changed the future of presidential debates, campaigning, and elections. Both candidates spent the weeks leading up to the debate preparing and studying policy, while also campaigning.<sup>14</sup> However, neither candidate could have been prepared for how the debate would shape the rest of their campaigns, the election, and their legacies as leaders.

Two weeks before the first of the Great Debates, Nixon was hospitalized for a knee infection.<sup>15</sup> He lost weight, became noticeably pale, and most importantly missed out on two weeks of valuable campaign time.<sup>16</sup> One journalist recalled that at the debate, Nixon “looked exhausted, underweight, and ‘better suited for going to a funeral, perhaps his own, than to a debate.’”<sup>17</sup> Nixon campaigned until hours before the debate, potentially worsening his exhaustion.<sup>18</sup> He prepared for the debate by studying policy alone and refused to practice answering debate questions out loud with campaign advisors, despite the fact that they repeatedly reminded him of the importance of rehearsing responses.<sup>19</sup> Nixon also refused to use a sun lamp to tan himself, nor would he wear makeup during the debate.<sup>20</sup> A campaign aid hastily applied a cheap shaving lotion before the debate to cover his stubble, which some believe led to exaggerate the perspiration on his chin.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Kraus, S. (2001). *The Great Debates: Kennedy vs. Nixon, 1960*. Indiana University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Schroeder, A. (2000). *Presidential Debates: Fifty Years of High-Risk TV*. Columbia University Press.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

While Nixon was in the hospital, Kennedy spent the weeks leading up to the first debate campaigning outdoors.<sup>22</sup> He became noticeably tan to the point where even Nixon commented on Kennedy's bronzed tone.<sup>23</sup> Kennedy prepared for the debate differently from Nixon: in the weeks before the debate, he practiced responding to potential debate questions out loud with campaign advisors, becoming more a confident speaker and a better debater.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps no one took the debate more seriously than Kennedy's campaign team, who spent hours analyzing the lighting on the debate stage to decide which shade the candidate's suit should be, what socks he should wear, and that Kennedy needed a secret last-minute makeup touchup, even though he publicly declined the offer from the debate makeup artist to put on foundation – all so that he could truly look presidential.<sup>25</sup> Kennedy was fit, healthy, and glowing. Alan Schroeder, author of the book *Presidential Debates: Fifty Years of High-Risk TV*, commented that Kennedy had “the casual presumption of a lion in his den” on stage, delivering his statements with clarity and vigor and sitting poised and confident while Nixon spoke.<sup>26</sup> Howard K. Smith, the first debate moderator, described Kennedy as an “athlete come to receive his wreath of laurel.”<sup>27</sup> He was calm, cool, and collected, and a stark contrast to Nixon.

During the debate, the candidates discussed their views on key issues of the 1960 Election. Topics included the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the rise of Fidel Castro and Communism in Cuba, a deep fear about the spread of Communism, civil rights and integration, Kennedy's Catholic faith, and economic development, among other topics.<sup>28</sup> Both candidates were prepared to tackle campaign issues in their own ways as president. Candidate Kennedy took a progressive stance on

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<sup>22</sup> Schroeder, A. (2000). *Presidential Debates: Fifty Years of High-Risk TV*. Columbia University Press.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> History.com Editors. (2019, June 10). *The Kennedy-Nixon Debates*. HISTORY.

civil rights, tried to urge voters that his Catholic faith would not impact his actions as president, and he asserted American dominance against the looming threat of Communism. Candidate Nixon aimed to build on the Eisenhower Administration's policies, taking a conservative route to protect America from Communism and grow the economy. Kennedy laid out a clear vision of where he wanted America to go; he illustrated the country's current issues, particularly relating to race and civil rights, poverty, economic development, the Cold War, and Communism. Nixon took a different approach, giving detailed evidence regarding the successes of the Eisenhower Administration and outlining how he wanted to continue Eisenhower's economic development. Kennedy's remarks focused on inspiring the national public to aspire to be a greater country, while Nixon was a more didactic speaker.

The outcome of the first of the Great Debates was dramatically affected by whether the audience tuned in on television or on radio. Scholars find that individuals who watched the debate on television thought that Candidate Kennedy won, but those who listened to the debate on radio thought that Candidate Nixon won.<sup>29</sup> The controversy over who won and why leads scholars to believe that Kennedy won on television because of his good looks and confidence, but stripped of the visual components of the debate, radio listeners paid closer attention to the actual content and statistics in Nixon's arguments.<sup>30</sup> Overall, while Kennedy won the Election of 1960, scholars still disagree about the answer to who won the first debate of the 1960 debate series. It is therefore crucial that scholars explore what makes leaders successful public speakers – one element being storytelling – to better assess whether Candidate Kennedy or Candidate Nixon won the first of the Great Debates.

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<sup>29</sup> Druckman, J. N. (2003). The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(2), 559–571.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

### Section III: The Power of Storytelling:

The best leaders are gifted storytellers. Howard Gardner's *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* argues that while public communication is a fundamental leadership skill, a great leader distinguishes his or herself through their ability to convey a meaningful narrative to followers.<sup>31</sup> According to Gardner, "the key to leadership, as well as gathering a following, is the effective communication of a story."<sup>32</sup> Leadership transcends the basic delivery of facts and data to followers; leadership is about an individual's capacity to identify a group's current position, visualize a better future, and illustrate both reality and their goals to followers. Stories become the principle vehicle for leaders to connect with followers on a personal level, relate to them, and inspire them to realize the leader's goals.

Gardner notes that storytelling in leadership revolves around identity.<sup>33</sup> Identity determines how people connect with others, their place in society, their values, their hopes, and their fears. In order for a leader to connect with potential followers, they need to convince followers that they not only share a common identity, but also that the leader embodies that identity.<sup>34</sup> True success in leadership "depends most significantly on the particular story that he or she relates or embodies, and the receptions to that story on the part of audiences. What links [great leaders] is the fact that they arrived at a story that worked for them and, ultimately, for others as well. They told stories... about themselves and their groups, about where they were coming from and where they were headed, about what was to be feared, struggled against, and dreamed about."<sup>35</sup> The stories leaders tell therefore demonstrate the common identity between them and followers, prove that the leader

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<sup>31</sup> Gardner, Howard. 2011. *Leading Minds: An Anatomy Of Leadership*. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

exemplifies the group's story through their background, and persuade potential followers to trust and support the leader.

Stories become powerful tools in leadership because followers can envision themselves as part of the leader's narrative. The ability to deliver facts, report new information, and recite statistics does not necessarily engage followers in the same way that stories do; stories give followers an active role in effecting change and validate their experiences stemming from their identity. Leaders "present a dynamic perspective to their followers: not just a headline or snapshot, but a drama that unfolds over time, in which they – leader and followers – are the principal characters or heroes. Together, they have embarked on a journey in pursuit of certain goals, and along the way and into the future, they can expect to encounter obstacles or resistances that must be overcome."<sup>36</sup> Leaders can elicit powerful emotional connections between themselves and followers through stories of group identity, especially in comparison to other groups, and inspire followers to adopt the leader's cause as their own by creating and communicating a relatable identity story. True leadership makes followers believe that they know the leader, identify with his or her story, and share an important place in that narrative.

Presidents have a particular obligation to convey narratives to citizens. Political scientist Steven Skowronek argues that presidents must present "a coherent and compelling narrative about [their] place in history."<sup>37</sup> A successful president not only captivates a nation through stories of national identity, but they also prove themselves as worthy of holding their office. Presidents contextualize a country's current status in terms of the nation's history, its present, and where he or she aims to lead citizens. While all great leaders communicate stories of identity, presidents

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<sup>36</sup> Skowronek, S. (1997). *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

<sup>37</sup> Gardner, Howard. 2011. *Leading Minds: An Anatomy Of Leadership*. New York: Basic Books.



have the especially difficult task of uniting a nation through stories. Citizens “come equipped with many stories that have already been told and retold in their homes, their societies, and their domains” when evaluating a potential president.<sup>38</sup> A president’s narrative “must compete with many other extant stories; and if the new stories are to succeed, they must transplant, suppress, complement, or in some measure outweigh earlier stories, as well as contemporary oppositional ‘counterstories.’”<sup>39</sup> Therefore, it is difficult not only for a president to earn trust and support among followers, but also for his or her ideals to triumph over stories of identity that have been deeply engrained in followers.

Presidential elections are a prime example of a time when leaders compete to win followers through their identity narrative. Two individuals face off to determine whose identity and goals best fit a country at the time; effective public communication is of peak importance in elections. During presidential debates, candidates challenge which identity narrative is strongest and aim to portray their story as the most appealing and accurate. Their stories go head to head with one another, requiring followers to choose with which narrative and leader they best connect and admire. Therefore, it becomes incredibly important that presidential candidates showcase their storytelling abilities during campaigns and debates to show their worth, win followers’ support, and prove themselves as powerful communicators.

#### **Section IV: The Art of Persuasion:**

The study of the Great Debates, presidential leadership, and communication naturally causes one to wonder about the psychology of how a presidential candidate, and eventually a president, is able to connect so deeply with followers. Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo’s

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<sup>38</sup> Gardner, Howard. 2011. *Leading Minds: An Anatomy Of Leadership*. New York: Basic Books.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

research article “The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion” explores the psychology of persuasion and how leaders appeal to followers’ logic, emotions, and subconscious to gain support. In their research, Petty and Cacioppo distinguish two psychological routes of persuasion – the central and peripheral routes – to better understand how leaders interact with and influence followers’ beliefs.<sup>40</sup>

According to Petty and Cacioppo, the central route of persuasion occurs when an individual focuses on the quality of the leader’s arguments.<sup>41</sup> Statistics, data, and logical reasoning are key elements of an argument that can ultimately persuade an individual.<sup>42</sup> Those persuaded by the central route require the intellectual capacity, means, and involvement in the topic in order to be willing to understand and evaluate an argument.<sup>43</sup> That is, followers must have the motivation and ability to process the arguments they hear. On the other hand, those persuaded by the peripheral route of information processing are influenced less by the specifics of a leader’s argument and more so by secondary characteristics of a speech; peripheral cues include body language, charisma, and the number of arguments in a speech.<sup>44</sup> Individuals persuaded by the peripheral route pay attention to whether or not the leader is self-assured and confident, how those around them react to the leader – if they laugh, cheer, boo, or are indifferent – and the overall number of arguments presented. These two modes of evaluation are not mutually exclusive; the central and peripheral routes of information processing often interact with one another, influencing a follower in complementary ways.

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<sup>40</sup> Richard E. Petty, & John T. Cacioppo. (1984). The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 69–81.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

A significant portion of Petty and Cacioppo's research focuses on what the authors call acceptance cues, or elements of an argument or the leader that suggest his or her reasoning is valid.<sup>45</sup> Acceptance cues can include the sheer quantity of arguments a leader puts forward in a speech, the complexity of the leader's arguments, the use of metaphors, physical and personality attributes of the leader, the context of the situation, the plausibility of the leader's rationale, and the intensity of the leader's position on his or her argument.<sup>46</sup> For example, the fact that a leader is attractive, seems likeable and trustworthy, delivers a speech during an opportune time for followers – during lunch, for example – uses clear and illustrative language, and takes a moderate and realistic stance on an issue can all serve as acceptance cues for followers.<sup>47</sup> Likewise, if a leader is unattractive, is not likeable and seems dishonest, delivers a speech too early or late in the day, uses convoluted or unclear language, and takes an extreme stance on an issue can serve as cues that followers should reject a leader and his or her message. Acceptance cues impact followers' willingness to listen to a leader, making it important that leaders emphasize the positive aspects of who they are and what they have to say in order to gain followers' interest in their ideas.

Petty, Cacioppo, and other researchers found that the total number of arguments a leader presents is connected to how followers evaluate a leader's claims.<sup>48</sup> High argument quantity can serve as a peripheral route acceptance cue that a leader has expertise in a subject area and can therefore be trusted.<sup>49</sup> If followers are uninterested or unable to understand the specifics of a leader's argument, they may be more inclined to use the amount of evidence provided as a cue that they should trust the leader's opinion. Argument quantity can also serve as a central route

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<sup>45</sup> Richard E. Petty, & John T. Cacioppo. (1984). The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 69–81.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

acceptance cue if the amount of evidence delivered makes an issue more salient to followers and encourages them to care about the topic and pay closer attention to the leader and his or her arguments.<sup>50</sup> However, increasing one's argument quantity can also have the reverse effect on followers if the leader's arguments are too complex and difficult for followers to understand; leaders can alienate followers by overwhelming them with complicated information.<sup>51</sup> Argument quantity therefore benefits a leader either as a peripheral route acceptance cue when followers have a low level of investment in the leader's actual discussion topics and focus more on the amount of information delivered or as a central route acceptance cue when the number of arguments presented increases followers' awareness about an issue.<sup>52</sup>

Followers' ability and motivation to understand a leader's argument is critical to how they process information in a speech. If followers are invested in an issue – for example, if followers living in a coastal area listen to a leader speak about the dangerous impacts of climate change – they are more likely to pay attention to the argument's content than individuals living in an area that is not as affected by climate change. Similarly, if followers are highly educated and able to understand complex ideas – for example, if followers are university students studying political science class and watching a presidential debate – they are better able to comprehend higher level information than individuals who have limited political knowledge. According to Petty and Cacioppo, followers' willingness to listen to a leader's arguments in the first place and their ability to digest and process the leader's information impact whether central route or peripheral route acceptance cues are more significant in their overall opinion of a leader's argument.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Richard E. Petty, & John T. Cacioppo. (1984). The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 69–81.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

In the first of the Great Debates, Candidate Nixon appealed to individuals through the central route of information processing. Nixon's opening statement and subsequent debate arguments delivered a series of statistics about the successes of the Eisenhower Administration; he rooted his comments in data about the state of the union in 1960.<sup>54</sup> Due to Nixon's emphasis on numbers and facts, individuals with a stronger understanding of economics, history, the Eisenhower Administration's policies, international relations, and current events were more likely to find his arguments compelling and valid because they were better able to process the information and were most likely more interested in what he had to say than followers who did not understand how to interpret his data.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, Candidate Kennedy appealed to voters through the peripheral route of information processing through his physical attractiveness, likeability, and charisma. His visionary opening statement outlined his goals for America, and he appealed to more typical Americans by using stories and personal examples of his understanding of the country's issues as opposed to focusing on statistics.<sup>56</sup> Kennedy's use of anaphora as a rhetorical strategy by repeating "I'm not satisfied" before stating an issue he saw in the U.S. drove home his beliefs about what the country needed to improve and clued the audience in that they should listen to what he said.<sup>57</sup> Likewise, using metaphors when explaining that his goal as president was to "get America moving again" illustrated Kennedy's policy goals to followers. Kennedy did give some specific details and data about civil rights and the U.S. economy during the debate, but the main focus of his opening statement and debate responses was his ideals, hopes, and aims for the country as president. Both Nixon and Kennedy gave very distinct speeches during the first of the Great Debates, leading voters to form two well-defined opinions about each leader.

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<sup>54</sup> Commission on Presidential Debates. (2020). *CPD: September 26, 1960 Debate Transcript*. Voter Education.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

## Section V: Information Processing:

Chaiken, Ledgerwood, and Eagly's article "A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing" builds on Petty and Cacioppo's understanding of the psychology of persuasion. In their research, Chaiken et al aimed to learn more about how followers process information in a leader's speech and how information processing persuades followers to support a leader.<sup>58</sup> Chaiken et al had similar findings to those of Petty and Cacioppo, noting two main routes of information processing that emerge in followers listening to a leader's speech: systematic processing and heuristic processing.<sup>59</sup> The authors introduce the heuristic-systematic model of persuasion to analyze how followers understand both the content and presentation of a leader's speech, drawing important conclusions about their model in political attitudes.<sup>60</sup>

Systematic processing is a logical approach to understanding an argument that relies on analytical thinking and personal motivation. According to Chaiken et al, systematic processing occurs when an individual "attempts to thoroughly understand any and all available information" about a subject "through careful attention, deep thinking, and intensive reasoning."<sup>61</sup> Systematic processing relies heavily on an individual's critical thinking capacity; to learn about a topic and develop confidence in one's understanding of the subject matter takes significant time and effort. Therefore, the individuals most likely to process information systematically are those with a higher baseline level of intelligence, curiosity about the subject matter, and time to learn more. The desire to learn more and intellectual capacity are key to Chaiken et al's discussion of systematic processing, and "thus, systematic processing is unlikely to occur unless a person is both able and

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<sup>58</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1, 1*, 246–266.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

motivated to do so.”<sup>62</sup> Similar to Petty and Cacioppo’s central route of information processing, Chaiken et al’s systematic processing only occurs in a select group of individuals with the means and the willingness to understand new information.

Heuristic processing, on the other hand, has parallels to Petty and Cacioppo’s peripheral route of information processing. Chaiken et al describe heuristic processing as “focusing on easily noticed and easily understood cues, such as a communicator's credentials (e.g., expert versus nonexpert), the group membership of the communicator (e.g., Democrat or Republican), the number of arguments presented (many or few), or audience reactions (positive or negative). These cues are linked to well-learned, everyday decision rules known as heuristics.”<sup>63</sup> Heuristics inform how individuals understand information and make decisions for themselves; subtle cues, such as a leader’s personality, group identity, and legitimacy can suggest to followers that a leader is worthy of their support, making their overall argument less important than their appearance and support from others.

Chaiken et al note that heuristic processing is “relatively automatic because it can occur even when people are not motivated and able to deliberately think about a topic.”<sup>64</sup> People naturally observe elements of a situation and a speaker, and in doing so they subconsciously form opinions about a leader. Chaiken et al explain that heuristic processing is more likely to occur in individuals than systematic processing because individuals want to form opinions of a leader as quickly and effortlessly as possible.<sup>65</sup> When followers lack the motivation and capacity to break down complex

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<sup>62</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1, 1*, 246–266.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

information, they rely more on acceptance heuristics than the specific information a leader delivers in order to form a quick judgement of a leader.

Chaiken et al's findings have important implications for voters' political attitudes. In exploring how systematic and heuristic processing relate to followers' political behavior, Chaiken et al identify five heuristics that impact followers' political behavior: the leader's party affiliation, ideological alignment, celebrity and other relevant endorsements, polls, and his or her physical appearance.<sup>66</sup> Followers instantly notice a politician's party, ideology, and physical appearance, and endorsements and polling data become salient among more engaged followers. According to Chaiken et al, followers who systematically process a politician's speech "tend to weigh the quality of the arguments put forth regarding an issue or candidate;" however, "when people are low in motivation to process information about political issues or candidates (e.g., involvement and personal relevance are low), or when they lack the ability to process systematically (e.g., they are stressed or under time pressure), they may tend to rely on heuristics such as party labels, expert or celebrity endorsements, and source cues such as attractiveness or group membership."<sup>67</sup> Chaiken et al's research applies directly to presidential debates, as voters' reactions to a politician's speech exemplify the authors' understanding of different routes to process information.

## **Section VI: The Present Study:**

Having reviewed significant literature regarding presidential debates, specifically the Great Debates, I will now discuss my research. My research stems from my experiences in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies' "Theories and Models of Leadership" and "Presidential Leadership" courses, in which I learned the power and importance of communication and storytelling in

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<sup>66</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1, 1*, 246–266.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.



leadership, especially in the American presidency. Learning about the most gifted speakers of the modern American presidency – namely, Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, and Barack Obama – inspired me to research how presidents use oratory to connect with followers and inspire them to enact the leader’s goals. It became apparent that to analyze the power of public speaking, I needed to compare a strong and weak speaker to understand which qualities of a good public speaker most resonate with followers, or which characteristics of a bad public speaker are most off-putting to followers.

John F. Kennedy, being one of the best presidential speakers, emerged as a powerful case study in presidential leadership because his legacy is that of an iconic and moving communicator whose speeches changed the country. Richard Nixon surfaced as a clear counterbalance to Kennedy; Nixon is known for being a cold, untrustworthy, and detached public speaker, while Americans remember Kennedy for his warmth and charisma. Therefore, I chose to use the opening statements from the 1960 presidential debate as a research platform because the debate shows both leaders together, both had equal speaking time, and both delivered speeches in the same context. It becomes difficult to compare presidents who give situational speeches, speeches of different lengths, and speakers who lived during different times. Despite the fact that the Great Debates are well known among the American public as being both influential and controversial, I chose to research Kennedy and Nixon because of the powerful distinction between the two leaders’ communicating styles.

While conducting my research, I hypothesized that listening to a speech would lead to the strongest processing of a leader’s argument and position, thus leading participants to be mostly persuaded by central or systematic route information processing. However, I suspected that peripheral route persuasion would most likely occur under the visual condition, which suggests

that the way participants receive each candidate's argument will impact how they process and react to those arguments. While Chaiken et al hypothesized that individuals would best process and retain information by reading a transcript of a leader's speech, I disagree; requiring followers to actively engage in processing information by reading likely causes individuals to dislike the strenuous task and feel overwhelmed by the amount of effort required to learn about a leader's views.<sup>68</sup> Followers will most likely enjoy a leader's speech when it is effortless to engage with the speaker; watching or listening to a speech is easier than reading for most people, leading me to predict that followers would best process information under either the video or audio condition. Likewise, followers are most likely able to be persuaded by a leader when they can analyze a leader's speech with ease, meaning that followers' preference for a leader hinges somewhat on having a pleasant experience watching or listening to a speech.

I aimed to test which condition of exposure to a leader's speech generates the greatest level of information processing among participants, and if either the central, peripheral, systematic, or heuristic routes of persuasion prove more effective in an individual's sense of connection to a leader. To measure information processing, I had participants either watch, listen to, or read a debate transcript of the first of the Great Debates, and then had individuals identify quotes from each candidate and asked participants to list specific quotes they could remember from both candidates. Similarly, I asked participants a series of questions about each candidate's personality, appearance and voice qualities if applicable, and leadership qualities after they watched, listened to, or read the debate to evaluate if they seemed to pay more attention to either Kennedy or Nixon's words and arguments or their appearance and body language. Combining a memory test with a

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<sup>68</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1*, 1, 246–266.

personality assessment of each leader allowed me to understand how participants engaged with each candidate's opening statement, and what, if anything, was particularly memorable.

In the case of the Great Debates, I hypothesized that individuals persuaded by the central or systematic route of persuasion would likely favor Nixon as a leader due to his emphasis on statistics, data, numbers, and logical reasoning in his opening statement, while participants influenced by the peripheral route of persuasion would likely favor Kennedy due to his evident charisma, self-assuredness, and physical attractiveness. Individuals who pay more attention to numbers and facts were more able to digest Nixon's arguments and were likely to appreciate his use of quantitative information; however, Nixon's numerical specificity might have been overly complex information for some individuals, which would have isolated them and left them feeling confused. Kennedy better captivated individuals who paid more attention to the bigger picture, goals and visions, and narratives through his illustrative and metaphorical language; Kennedy's opening statement was more accessible to all Americans, potentially giving him an advantage as he came across as easier to understand and follow than Nixon. Overall, I predict that Kennedy will win among participants who watch the opening statements, while Nixon will win among participants who listen to the opening statements. However, comprehension and memory about what each leader said will be best in the audio condition because participants were able to focus purely on each leader's argument without their appearance or the cognitive effort of reading diluting their ability to process the information.

## **Section VII: A New Take on an Old Idea:**

The Great Debates became a focus in political science and social psychology shortly after the Election of 1960. Scholars were curious to learn how televising presidential debates impacted voter turnout, election results, and the future of presidential campaigns. One study, Dr. James

Druckman's "The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited" became particularly renowned after its publication in 2003.<sup>69</sup> In his study, Druckman tested participants to see whether the medium on which they heard the first the Great Debate – whether that be televised or on the radio – impacted who they thought won the debate overall.<sup>70</sup> Druckman found that participants who watched the debate thought Kennedy won, those who listened to an audio recording of the debate thought Nixon won, and that participants' memory of what each leader said was best for those who watched the debate.<sup>71</sup> His conclusion became well known across political science and psychology scholarship, inspiring university and high school political science and history courses to learn about the Great Debates and Druckman's findings nationwide.

While I agree that Druckman's study is significant to leadership studies, I expected to find a different conclusion about how well participants process the actual content of the opening statements in the first debate of the Election of 1960 depending on the debate medium. I am less interested in who participants believe won the first of the Great Debates – the main goal of Druckman's study – and am more focused on analyzing if and how the debate medium impacted how closely participants pay attention, process information, and retain information over time. I believe that the way someone experiences a speech affects how deeply they engage with the content; if it becomes cumbersome to learn about presidential candidates and their beliefs, information processing is likely to go down, creating an inverse relationship between central or systematic processing and peripheral or heuristic processing. Likewise, if it is enjoyable and easy to learn about presidential candidates and their beliefs, information processing will increase because people have an improved capacity to understand the content of a speech.

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<sup>69</sup> Druckman, J. N. (2003). The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(2), 559–571.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

It is also important to note that Druckman showed participants assigned to the audio condition of his experiment still photographs of both John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon.<sup>72</sup> Showing participants in the audio condition photographs of the two leaders compromises the significance of listening to an audio recording of the debate; the purpose of the audio condition is to remove the visual peripheral cues that come with watching a leader give a speech. Even if participants knew what Kennedy and Nixon looked like prior to seeing their photographs, Druckman primed the audio condition participants with visual aids that might have impacted how well they processed information during the debate. As previously noted, peripheral cues, especially visual cues, are fundamental to how followers process information and form their opinions about a leader – showing photographs meant to balance the visual participant group reduces the impact of the responses recorded from participants in the audio condition.

My study emerges as an intersection between Druckman and Chaiken et al's research. Druckman found that participants learned the most about candidates Kennedy and Nixon by watching the first of the Great Debates, while Chaiken et al found the best information processing occurred when participants read a speech transcript.<sup>73</sup> However, I believe that individuals best process the specific content of a leader's argument by listening to the speech. Listening to a leader speak is as easy and amusing as watching a speech and removes the peripheral noise that clouds followers' abilities to process information. Listening also provides followers with an unfiltered version of a leader's arguments and identity, allowing individuals to best process information by listening to a speech. Visual peripheral cues distract individuals who watch a debate from a leader's

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<sup>72</sup> Druckman, J. N. (2003). The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(2), 559–571.

<sup>73</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1*, 1, 246–266; Druckman, J. N. (2003). The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(2), 559–571.

main message, leading followers to project qualities and values onto a leader based on their appearance, body language, audience reactions, and personality type. Likewise, reading transcripts requires individuals to struggle through documents to understand a leader's message, making it inconvenient and frustrating to try and piece together a leader's argument.

Therefore, I designed my research to measure participants' learning about both Kennedy and Nixon across video, audio, and transcript conditions to examine if and how the way in which someone experiences a leader's speech impacts how much they learn and whether or not they feel persuaded by the leader's arguments. I ultimately predict that participants who listened to an audio recording of the opening statements from the first of the Great Debates will best process the information presented by each candidate, that participants who watched the televised opening statements will prefer Candidate Kennedy and will have the strongest positive opinions about his personality, and that Candidate Nixon will fare best in either the audio or transcript conditions because these participants are not exposed to Nixon's negative peripheral cues.

## **METHODS**

### **Section I: Participants**

In order to test my hypothesis, I had 93 participants either watch, listen to, or read a transcript of Kennedy and Nixon's opening statements from the first presidential debate of the Election of 1960. All participants were current undergraduate students at the University of Richmond. I recruited participants through weekly SpiderBytes messages, presenting my research hypothesis and thesis project to University of Richmond classes, having professors reach out to their students to encourage them to participate, and word of mouth. I paid each participant \$5 in cash and entered every participant into a raffle to win an additional \$50 as compensation for the 30 minutes they spent partaking in my research.

The participant population was heavily female identifying; 73 participants identified as female and 20 participants identified as male. Participants were also predominantly white – 76 participants were white, eight were Asian, five were Hispanic or Latino, two were African-American, and two did not indicate their race or ethnicity. Regarding political affiliation, 54 participants identified as Democrats, seven identified as Republicans, and 32 identified as independent. Fifty-five participants had majors in the School of Arts and Sciences, 21 participants had majors in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, and 17 participants had majors in the Robins School of Business. In terms of pre-existing knowledge about the Election of 1960, 56 participants indicated that they knew Kennedy won the election and 37 reported that they did not know who won and had little prior knowledge about the election. Participants ranged from first year to senior students and were from not only states across America, but also Spain, Turkey, and the Republic of Georgia.

## **Section II: Design**

The primary objective of this study was to understand how leaders – specifically presidents – persuade followers, and the impact of public speaking, charisma, personal attractiveness, and other qualities in both the central and peripheral routes of persuasion and personality impression formation. Using the opening statements of the first presidential debate of the Election of 1960 between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon, I analyzed both each presidential candidate's method aimed to persuade the American public and follower reactions to each leader's speech. Participants in my research either watched, listened to, or read a transcript of Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon's opening statements from the first presidential debate of the Election of 1960. I randomly assigned each participant's Medium, with 31 participants in each Medium.

This study used a 3X2 mixed design, with the between subjects factor of Medium and the within subjects factor of Candidate. The between subjects Medium variable included Watch, Listen and Read variations. The Candidate variable included John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon conditions. The dependent variables were participants' impressions of each Candidate and their information processing.

Prior to taking part in the study, participants completed a pretest in order to identify their basic biographical and demographic information and clarify any potential political biases or knowledge they had. After either watching, listening to, or reading a transcript of the opening statements from the debate, participants completed a survey that targeted how well they processed the information presented and their impressions of each Candidate's personality. The results of this study were used to assess the extent to which central or peripheral routes of persuasion and information processing impact a follower's likelihood of supporting or identifying with a



presidential candidate and to analyze the relationship between debate format and personality impression formation.

This study used the first debate of the so-called “Great Debates” of the 1960 presidential election between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon as stimuli. Specifically, the study used the opening statements from each Candidate to gauge followers’ evaluation of each Candidate’s personality and why they might have favored one Candidate over another. I chose to use opening statements from the same debate because opening statements presented a controlled situation under which both leaders operated under the same circumstances; the opening statements had a set time limit, allowed each candidate to establish himself as a leader, and set forth the leader’s initial vision and set of beliefs to be built upon later during the debate. The fact that each Candidate had an equal opportunity to make an impression on followers made using opening statements from the same presidential debate ideal stimuli.

For this study, it was imperative that participants evaluated two leaders in the same context to ensure that followers had equal exposure to both leaders. While I considered studying different presidents and more situationally-based speeches, the fact that each leader would have been speaking from different contexts or with less regulation as to how long he spoke would make it difficult for participants to gain equal exposure to each individual, which could have skewed the study’s results. Therefore, a presidential debate emerged as the best option to evaluate persuasion in presidential leadership due to its organization and format.

While participants were likely to recognize both Kennedy and Nixon as important figures in American history and politics, the fact that the first presidential debate of 1960 occurred 60 years ago creates significant distance between participants as University of Richmond undergraduate students and the candidates themselves. Sufficient time has passed between the

election of 1960 and today, allowing participants to look at the candidates in a more objective way than if this study were performed closer to the election year. Kennedy and Nixon arguably represent the best and worst of presidential communication – Americans remember Kennedy for his charismatic calls to action to the American people during his speeches, while Nixon was less regarded for his oratorical skills and was not generally considered charismatic or likeable; both the style and content of each leader's speeches make them distinct. Nixon is Kennedy's antithesis in regard to public speaking, making the two men a strong comparison when evaluating how public communication influences a follower's impression of a leader.

### **Section III: Procedure**

The study itself took place in the Jepson Psychology Lab between February 11 and February 21, 2020. Participants were seated in individual rooms by themselves in order to prevent other participants' reactions or comments during the opening statements from interfering with their thoughts toward each Candidate. I had four participants take my survey at a time with one participant in each of the four rooms of the Jepson Psychology Lab and scheduled individuals' participation in my research in half-hour increments. The study used computers in the Jepson Psychology Lab to play either a video or audio recording or display a typed transcript of the opening statements for participants to watch, listen to, or read. The recorded opening statements were eight minutes long each, making the total amount of video or audio time 16 minutes. It took participants reading a debate transcript about the same amount of time on average to read through the opening statements.

An experimenter let the participants into their individual rooms in the Jepson Psychology Lab and directed them to either watch, listen to, or read a transcript of the candidates' opening statements. Depending on the participant's assigned Medium, the experimenter stated the

following before the participant began the study: *this study is looking to understand how presidential debates influence election results. The specific debate is the first debate of the 1960 presidential election between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. We recognize that both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon became president in their lifetime, but there is some controversy as to the impact of the 1960 presidential debates. Your input can help us better understand its effects. First, please [watch, listen to, or read a transcript of] each candidate's opening statement in the debate. The candidates each speak for a total of eight minutes. Once the [recording, audio, or transcript] ends, please fill out the following questionnaire linked on this computer. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.* From there, the participants completed the study and responded to the follow-up questionnaire.

### ***Initial Reactions***

First, participants were asked who they thought would make a good president and for whom they would vote based on the content of each candidate's opening statement. This question served as an initial measure of which Candidate might have appealed most to participants. It was important to ask who participants believed would make a good president and for whom they would vote before asking some of the deeper central and peripheral route information processing and personality impression formation questions because participants' responses to questions about the more physical or logical characteristics of each candidate might overemphasize the role of peripheral cues and skew the data. Gathering participants' initial reactions to both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon before asking more detailed and specific questions about information processing and impressions of the candidates' personalities set up a roadmap to understand the relationship between which candidates reportedly performed best in the debate and why.

### ***Who Won***

Second, participants were asked who they thought won the debate. This question stems from participants' initial reactions to the debate clips and is a natural follow-up question to who participants thought would make a good president and for whom they would vote. It was also possible for participants to decide that they would vote for someone who they believe lost the debate, which created an interesting dynamic between information processing, impressions of personality, and overall persuasion that the rest of the questionnaire sought to explore. At the end of the questionnaire, if someone decided that they would vote for one Candidate, but they believed that the other Candidate won the debate, they were given room to expand on their thoughts and explain why they would vote for a Candidate who they thought lost the debate.

### ***Three Notable Moments***

Next, participants were asked to list up to three notable moments or events from the candidates' opening statements. This initial memory test evaluated if either Candidate made more of an overall impression on participants and helped identify which kinds of information or situations led participants to favor one candidate over another. Participants were given the option to list up to three moments or events rather than requiring them to list exactly three moments or events because some participants might have paid closer attention or remembered more details than others, which also helped to indicate how well participants processed the information in the debate.

### ***Three Notable Quotes***

Similar to listing three significant moments or events from the opening statements, participants were also asked to list three quotes from each Candidate, quoting word for word as best they could. Participants who most accurately remembered and spelled out direct quotes were

more likely to have processed each Candidate's opening statement more deeply than those who could not cite any direct statements. Listing three quotes initially established whether the participant processed the argument and ideas of one candidate versus another or if they paid equal attention to both candidates. For example, if a participant could clearly recall three statements from Candidate Kennedy and only one from Candidate Nixon, it was possible that the participant processed Kennedy's argument better, which may have led the participant to favor Kennedy.

### ***Impressions of Personality***

Participants were then asked to evaluate each Candidate's personality characteristics and leadership qualities based on what they saw, heard, or read in each Candidate's opening statement. On a scale from one to five with 'one' being strongly disagree and 'five' being strongly agree, participants were asked to rate both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon on the following characteristics: likeable, self-assured, nervous, comfortable, energetic, intelligent, charismatic, strong personality, weak personality, warm personality, cold personality, fit, confident, genuine, trustworthy, competent, personable, persuasive, clear, organized, specific, and good leader. Personality and presumed leadership qualities are another important form of Petty and Cacioppo's definition of peripheral cues; while personality and likeability could have certainly influenced individuals persuaded by the central route of information processing, those who were persuaded more by the peripheral route were more likely to form their opinions about who would make a good president and who they think won the debate based on how strongly they valued a leader's personality type. Individuals who fell into the central route of persuasion category still had opinions about each candidate's leadership style, but they were more likely to be persuaded by the statistical, numerical, logical information, and quality of each candidate's arguments than they were by how warm or personable a leader seemed.

### ***Memory Test and Information Processing***

Next, participants were asked to identify specific quotes that may or may not have been said during the candidates' opening statements. Quotes were copied and pasted from a debate transcript into the survey to ensure their accuracy. Participants were asked to identify 16 quotes: seven were Candidate Kennedy's statements, seven were Candidate Nixon's statements, and two were statements made by Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush in different presidential debates and political speeches. Participants were asked to select the Candidate's name who they believed said each quote and also had a 'neither' option. The results from this memory test were used to evaluate how closely participants focused on the actual content of the opening statements, which helped measure if Medium was statistically significant in participants' information processing and whether participants were more influenced by the central or peripheral route of information processing. Participants who paid close attention to the content of each Candidate's argument and who retained each speaker's ideas were more likely to have been persuaded by both the quality and quantity of arguments presented and were less likely to have formed their opinion of candidates Kennedy and Nixon based on their physical or personality attributes.<sup>74</sup> The more accurate their memory for each Candidate's quotes, the more deeply participants processed each leader's argument.

### ***Information Processing Reflection***

Participants were asked about the difficulty of earlier information processing questions to better analyze if and how their information processing impacted their understanding of the arguments and heuristics involved. On a scale from one to five, with 'one' being strongly disagree

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<sup>74</sup> Richard E. Petty, & John T. Cacioppo. (1984). The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 69–81.

and ‘five’ being strongly agree, participants were asked to evaluate the following statements: each Candidate’s opening statement was clear and coherent; I was interested to learn more about what each of the candidates had to say; I could easily decide who I thought won this debate; I could easily recall three moments, quotes, or events from the opening statements; it was difficult to understand the content and discussion topics of the opening statements; and finally, I learned a lot about the issues of the Election of 1960 from this debate. Understanding how easily a participant completed the survey allowed me to recognize how closely a participant paid attention to the opening statements; conversely, those who struggled to answer questions about each Candidate were likely not paying close attention to the debate’s content.

### ***Candidate Physical and Vocal Attributes***

Only participants who watched the opening statements of the first presidential debate of the Election of 1960 were asked about each Candidate’s overall appearance and body language. Participants were asked to rate each Candidate on the following attributes on a scale from one to five, with ‘one’ being strongly disagree and ‘five’ being strongly agree: attractive, good looking, appeared a bit old, if they thought that the candidates moved with confidence, if they noticed that Candidate Nixon appeared to be sweating while delivering his opening statement, and if they noticed Candidate Nixon’s pivot before returning to his seat after he delivered his opening statement. Similarly, both participants who watched or listened to the opening statements were asked questions about each speaker’s voice tone and quality. Regarding each Candidate’s voice quality, participants were asked to evaluate each speaker on the following attributes on a scale from one to five, with ‘one’ being strongly disagree and ‘five’ being strongly agree: easy to listen to, warm voice tone, cold voice tone, sounded passionate, sounded disconnected, natural speaking

pace, spoke too quickly, spoke too slowly, sounded confident, sounded excited, and spoke with vigor.

Asking about both the physical and vocal attributes of each candidate gets at the heart of Petty and Cacioppo's peripheral route of persuasion. If a participant was not interested in paying attention to the content of each Candidate's opening statement, he or she might have focused more on a Candidate's physical appearance, voice quality, and overall charisma. Body language, self-assuredness, and a Candidate's physical attractiveness served as important peripheral cues, signaling that participants should support or believe a leader.<sup>75</sup> For example, someone persuaded by the peripheral route of information processing might have been more inclined to support Candidate Kennedy after recognizing his composed posture, confidence on the debate stage, and physical attractiveness when compared to Candidate Nixon's rigid, sweaty, and somewhat nervous appearance.

### ***Additional Participant Reflection***

Of course, it was possible for a participant to prefer one Candidate's personality over another's and still believe that the other Candidate won the debate; it all depended on how the participant was persuaded. If someone believed that who won the debate was not the most personable or memorable speaker, this question gave the participant an opportunity to explain why their response to who won differed from who they would vote for as president. Participants were asked to clarify why their answer between who they thought won the debate and for whom they would personally vote was different, which allowed me to understand why in some cases the most persuasive individual was not always the most likeable, or vice versa.

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<sup>75</sup> Richard E. Petty, & John T. Cacioppo. (1984). The Effects of Involvement on Responses to Argument Quantity and Quality: Central and Peripheral Routes to Persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 69–81.



## **RESULTS**

### **Section I: Hypothesis Summary**

To reiterate, my research aimed to understand psychological persuasion and information processing using the American presidency as a case study. I wanted to learn how some leaders are able to persuade and inspire followers in a powerful and lasting way, while others fail to connect with followers on a deep emotional level. Specifically, I was curious as to whether the medium through which followers experienced a speech – whether that be watching a video (Watch), listening to the speech on the radio (Listen), or reading a speech transcript (Read) – impacts their ability to process information and their overall opinions about a leader’s character, personality traits, and leadership ability. I used John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon’s opening statements from the first of the so-called “Great Debates” of the Election of 1960 to determine if speech medium is significant in followers’ abilities to process and remember the content of a leader’s argument or in followers’ impressions about a leader’s personality.

I hypothesized that participants who listened to an audio recording of the candidates’ opening statements would best be able to process and remember the information from each Candidate’s opening statement because I believed that the Listen Medium provided the best and easiest way for participants to listen to candidates without being distracted by peripheral cues. For participants who watched the debate, I thought that peripheral cues, including each Candidate’s body language, physical appearance, camera angles and screen time, and attractiveness would disproportionately lessen their ability to focus on the debate’s content while overemphasizing the importance of non-verbal cues. Likewise, I hypothesized that participants who read a debate transcript would struggle to process and recall information from the debate because reading requires more effort than listening or watching a debate; only the participants with a high level of interest in the debate and the cognitive ability to engage with the transcript would remember the

debate content. Therefore, I thought that participants in the Listen Medium would process information best.

## **Section II: Results Summary**

Overall, my research did not find many significant differences regarding debate Medium and participants' ability to process and recall information; however, some data suggest that Medium may have impacted how participants process some quotes. In general, participants' information processing was strongest across the Watch and Listen media and worst in the Read Medium. Regarding participants' interpretations of each Candidate's personality and leadership abilities, I found significant differences across media. Ultimately, while different media may have differently affected how participants processed information, Medium is relevant to how followers perceive a leader's personality and leadership potential. Regarding which Candidate seemed to perform best, it was not necessarily true that participants thought Kennedy outperformed Nixon across media. Rather, the overall story from the data is that participants' opinions about each Candidate stemmed more from Nixon performing significantly worse than Kennedy, especially in the Watch Medium. Participants therefore favored Kennedy across the three media, but particularly in the Watch Medium where Nixon was consistently perceived much more negatively; Nixon seemed so inferior to Kennedy, not that Kennedy seemed so superior to Nixon. While participants in the Listen Medium rated Nixon more positively, he still had lower ratings on almost every personality trait analysis when compared to Kennedy.

## **Section III: Information Processing**

Information processing across all three media was not necessarily statistically different depending on participants' media. Participants in each Medium had decent information processing when it came to writing out quotes from each Candidate or identifying which Candidate said each

of the 16 quotes. On average, a majority of participants could remember and list two quotes from each Candidate, irrespective of Medium. While most individuals could not list longer quotes word for word, no individual falsely assigned a quote to a Candidate or wrote something that neither Candidate discussed. Key topics that participants took special interest in included Candidate Kennedy's emphasis on civil rights and the Cold War and Candidate Nixon's focus on the U.S. economy, mainly promoting fiscal responsibility and economic growth.

When identifying the 16 quotes from each Candidate, participants in the Watch Medium did best, as they had the most accurate means for seven items. On a different item, participants in the Watch and Listen media tied for having the most accurate means. Participants in the Listen Medium had the most accurate means for six items including two items that were statistically significant. Read Medium participants had the most accurate means for two items. Participants in the Watch Medium best remembered quotes from Candidate Kennedy, and participants in the Listen Medium best remembered quotes from Candidate Nixon and the quotes from other presidential debates. Accuracy in quote identification ranged from excellent to poor; participants were able to perfectly recognize some quotes, while others were more challenging across media.

Participants' accuracy in identifying one quote from Candidate Nixon differed significantly across Medium ( $p=0.019$ ). The quote, "but when you're in a race, the only way to stay ahead is to move ahead," challenged individuals in each Medium, but participants in the Listen Medium were most accurate when establishing that Candidate Nixon made the statement. Twenty-three out of 31 Listen Medium participants correctly identified the quote, compared to 20 Read Medium participants and 17 Watch Medium participants. Data from this quote suggest that Medium may be significant in how followers process information from a leader's speech, but further comparisons would need to confirm this possibility.

Information processing in another quote made by President George H. W. Bush in a different political speech showed a nearly statistically significant trend across media ( $p=0.086$ ). The quote, “read my lips: no new taxes” had stronger information processing than Nixon’s previously mentioned statement across participants in all media, and participants in the Listen Medium again had the best accuracy when identifying this quote. Twenty-nine out of 31 Listen Medium participants correctly identified the quote, compared to 28 Watch Medium participants and 25 Read Medium participants. While the quote’s responses were not statistically different across media, their near significance again suggests that there may be some correlation between participants’ Medium and their ability to process, recall, and identify information from a speech, such that all participants do better in the Listen Medium.

All in all, the information processing data indicate that while Medium might not have been as significant as I hypothesized, there are some cases when Medium is significant to information processing and where participants in the Listen Medium had the most accurate means. While participants in the Watch Medium correctly identified the greatest number of quotes from each Candidate, participants in the Listen Medium accurately pinpointed the quotes that had more significant variations between Medium and response, leading me to believe that further studies could confirm my hypothesis. My research therefore challenges Chaiken et al’s hypothesis in their article “A theory of systematic and heuristic information processing,” as Chaiken et al believed that individuals who read a transcript of a speech would best process the information as opposed to individuals who watched or listened to a speech.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Chaiken, S., Ledgerwood, A., & Alice H. Eagly. (2012). A Theory of Heuristic and Systematic Information Processing. *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology: Volume 1*, 1, 246–266.

#### Section IV: Impressions of Personality

Overall, my data corroborate Druckman's hypothesis and confirmed what individuals have claimed informally for years: Candidate Kennedy won the debate according to those who watched it on television, and Candidate Nixon won the debate according to those who listened to it on the radio.<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, my research pinpoints the specific causes behind Kennedy's victory on television and Nixon's victory on the radio. Looking closely at the data, two-way analyses of variance in the data (ANOVAS) and interactions make two things clear: Candidate Kennedy is the overall debate winner, and Medium affects by how much Kennedy wins. Additionally, data suggest that Candidate Kennedy's debate victory is more a function of Candidate Nixon performing worse in the Watch Medium than Candidate Kennedy performing significantly better. In other words, participants' opinions about candidates Kennedy and Nixon do not stem from Kennedy's exceptional performance in the first debate of the Election of 1960; rather, Nixon performed so poorly that individuals – especially those who watched the opening statements – favored Kennedy.

I had participants report their impressions of each Candidate's personality on a scale from one to five, with 'one' indicating that they strongly disagreed that a Candidate showed a specific personality trait, and 'five' indicating that they strongly agreed that a Candidate showed a specific personality trait. Several pieces of data clarify and support my argument that in the first of the Great Debates, Candidate Kennedy's victory came less from his skilled debate execution and more from Candidate Nixon's stiff and uneasy demeanor. The remainder of this section addresses the statistically significant one-way ANOVAS, two-way ANOVA interactions, and main effects to illustrate how Medium impacted participants' impressions of Kennedy and Nixon's personalities.

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<sup>77</sup> Druckman, J. N. (2003). The Power of Television Images: The First Kennedy-Nixon Debate Revisited. *The Journal of Politics*, 65(2), 559–571.

## Section V: Impressions of Personality – Nixon’s One-Way ANOVAS

Medium proved to be statistically significant in participants’ analyses of Candidate Nixon’s personality and leadership potential. While participants in the Watch Medium had particularly low opinions about Candidate Nixon’s character, Listen Medium participants thought most favorably of Nixon. Read Medium participants had a more neutral opinion about Candidate Nixon, likely because it is difficult to make inferences about a leader’s personality without hearing or seeing them live. The following table shows how Medium altered participants’ impressions about 16 of Candidate Nixon’s personality traits using means and significance values:

| <i>Quality</i>          | <i>Watch</i> | <i>Listen</i> | <i>Read</i> | <i>P Value</i> |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Likeable</i>         | 3.1          | 3.8           | 3.2         | 0.036          |
| <i>Nervous</i>          | 3.1          | 2.1           | 2.9         | 0.008          |
| <i>Comfortable</i>      | 3.0          | 4.0           | 3.4         | 0.003          |
| <i>Charismatic</i>      | 2.6          | 3.3           | 3.1         | 0.016          |
| <i>Warm Personality</i> | 2.1          | 2.7           | 2.5         | 0.032          |
| <i>Fit</i>              | 2.4          | 3.4           | 3.1         | 0.026          |
| <i>Confident</i>        | 3.2          | 3.9           | 3.9         | 0.005          |
| <i>Competent</i>        | 3.9          | 4.4           | 3.9         | 0.042          |
| <i>Personable</i>       | 2.4          | 3.0           | 3.0         | 0.014          |
| <i>Organized</i>        | 3.2          | 4.1           | 3.7         | 0.009          |

|                             |      |      |      |       |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|-------|
| <i>Good Leader</i>          | 3.3  | 3.7  | 3.5  | 0.043 |
| <i>Easy To Listen To</i>    | 3.3  | 4.0  | N/A  | 0.001 |
| <i>Warm Voice Tone</i>      | 2.3  | 2.9  | N/A  | 0.030 |
| <i>Sounded Disconnected</i> | 3.1  | 2.3  | N/A  | 0.007 |
| <i>Spoke Too Quickly</i>    | 2.2  | 1.7  | N/A  | 0.045 |
| <i>Sounded Confident</i>    | 3.0  | 3.8  | N/A  | 0.004 |
| <i>Average Means</i>        | 2.90 | 3.32 | 3.30 |       |

As seen in the table above, Medium proved to be statistically significant in participants' assessments of whether Candidate Nixon was likeable ( $p=0.036$ ), nervous ( $p=0.008$ ), comfortable ( $p=0.003$ ), charismatic ( $p=0.016$ ), if he had a warm personality ( $p=0.032$ ), whether he was fit ( $p=0.026$ ), confident ( $p=0.005$ ), competent ( $p=0.042$ ), personable ( $p=0.014$ ), organized ( $p=0.009$ ), a good leader ( $p=0.043$ ), easy to listen to ( $p=0.001$ ), if he had a warm voice tone ( $p=0.030$ ), sounded disconnected from his opening statement ( $p=0.007$ ), spoke too quickly ( $p=0.045$ ), and sounded confident ( $p=0.004$ ).

On average, participants in the Watch Medium had a harsher evaluation of Candidate Nixon's personality than Listen Medium participants (-0.42), especially when assessing whether Nixon was nervous (+1.0), comfortable (-1.0), and fit (-1.0). Read Medium participants tended to have an opinion slightly in the middle of Watch and Listen participants, suggesting that either visual peripheral cues negatively affected how Watch Medium participants evaluated Candidate

Nixon's personality, or auditory peripheral cues improved Listen Medium participants' evaluation of Nixon, or a combination. The fact that participants' opinions about so many aspects of Nixon's character were statistically significant across media suggests that the way followers experience a speech alter their impressions of a leader's personality and can lead to disagreement among followers about whether a leader is qualified or not. The notion that Listen Medium participants thought more positively of Candidate Nixon's personality may explain why participants in the Listen Medium had the most accurate means when identifying Nixon's quotes; they may have paid closer attention to Nixon's opening statement because they approved of his personality.

## **Section VI: Impressions of Personality – Kennedy's One-Way ANOVAS**

Medium proved to be statistically significant in participants' analyses not only of Candidate Nixon's personality and leadership potential, but also that of Candidate Kennedy. Participants in the Watch Medium had particularly high evaluations about Candidate Kennedy's character, while Listen Medium participants thought less favorably of Kennedy than Watch participants. Read Medium participants again tended to have a more neutral opinion about Candidate Kennedy. The following table shows how Medium altered participants' impressions about Candidate Kennedy's personality traits using means and significance values:

| <i>Quality</i>     | <i>Watch</i> | <i>Listen</i> | <i>Read</i> | <i>P Value</i> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>Charismatic</i> | 4.7          | 4.1           | 4.5         | 0.006          |
| <i>Confident</i>   | 4.6          | 4.2           | 4.2         | 0.021          |
| <i>Competent</i>   | 4.5          | 4.2           | 4.0         | 0.027          |
| <i>Personable</i>  | 4.6          | 4.4           | 3.9         | 0.010          |



|                      |     |      |      |       |
|----------------------|-----|------|------|-------|
| <i>Organized</i>     | 4.6 | 3.9  | 4.2  | 0.003 |
| <i>Specific</i>      | 4.2 | 3.7  | 4.0  | 0.045 |
| <i>Average Means</i> | 4.5 | 4.10 | 4.13 |       |

As seen in the table above, Medium proved to be statistically significant in participants' assessments of whether Candidate Kennedy seemed charismatic ( $p=0.006$ ), confident ( $p=0.021$ ), competent ( $p=0.027$ ), personable ( $p=0.010$ ), organized ( $p=0.003$ ), and specific ( $p=0.045$ ). Data therefore show that participants' perceptions about Candidate Kennedy were less affected by Medium they were for Candidate Nixon. The fact that there were fewer statistically significant one-way ANOVAS regarding Candidate Kennedy's personality than Candidate Nixon's indicate both that participants mostly agreed that Kennedy was the stronger leader when compared to Nixon and that Kennedy's debate victory stems less from his debate performance and more from participants' less favorable opinions about Nixon's personality across all three media.

## **Section VII: Impressions of Personality – Two-Way ANOVAS: Main Effects and Interactions**

### **I. Candidate Main Effects**

In addition to the one-way ANOVA data analysis suggesting a relationship between participants' Medium and their impressions of each leader's personality, two-way ANOVAS show that there were several statistically significant main effects for Candidate across Medium. The table below depicts significant main effects for Candidate on a range of perception measures using means, F values, and significance values:

| <i>Quality:</i>         | <i>Kennedy:</i> | <i>Nixon:</i> | <i>F Value:</i> | <i>P Value</i> |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <i>Likeable</i>         | 4.5             | 3.3           | 102.8           | 0.000          |
| <i>Self-Assured</i>     | 4.5             | 3.9           | 20.2            | 0.029          |
| <i>Nervous</i>          | 1.8             | 2.7           | 29.9            | 0.003          |
| <i>Comfortable</i>      | 4.3             | 3.5           | 31.0            | 0.003          |
| <i>Competent</i>        | 4.2             | 4.1           | 2.2             | 0.048          |
| <i>Organized</i>        | 4.2             | 3.6           | 14.0            | 0.001          |
| <i>Clear</i>            | 4.4             | 3.8           | 16.4            | 0.022          |
| <i>Personable</i>       | 4.3             | 2.8           | 92.6            | 0.003          |
| <i>Confident</i>        | 4.3             | 3.7           | 27.7            | 0.001          |
| <i>Charismatic</i>      | 4.4             | 3.0           | 131.6           | 0.000          |
| <i>Warm Personality</i> | 4.0             | 2.4           | 129.7           | 0.000          |
| <i>Fit</i>              | 3.8             | 3.1           | 37.7            | 0.002          |
| <i>Average Means:</i>   | 4.0             | 3.3           |                 |                |

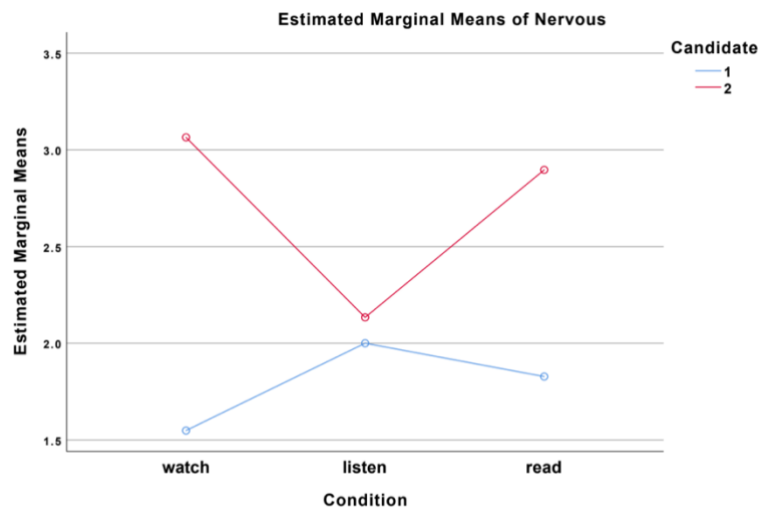
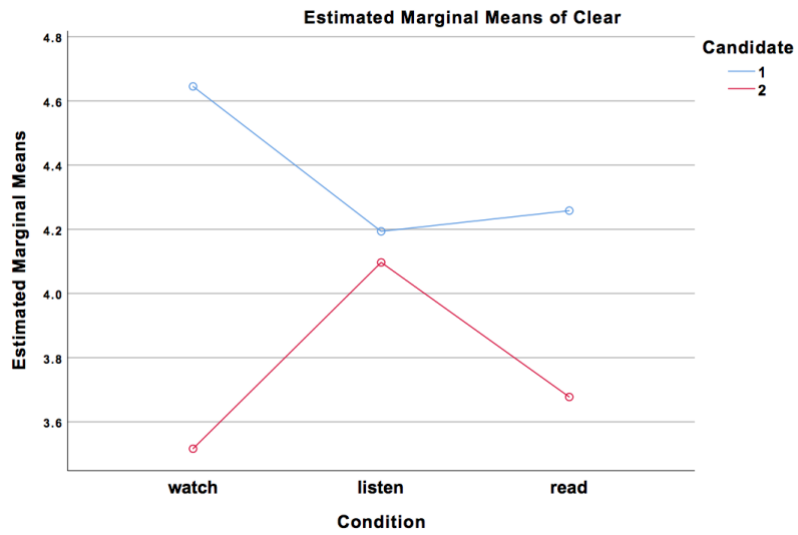
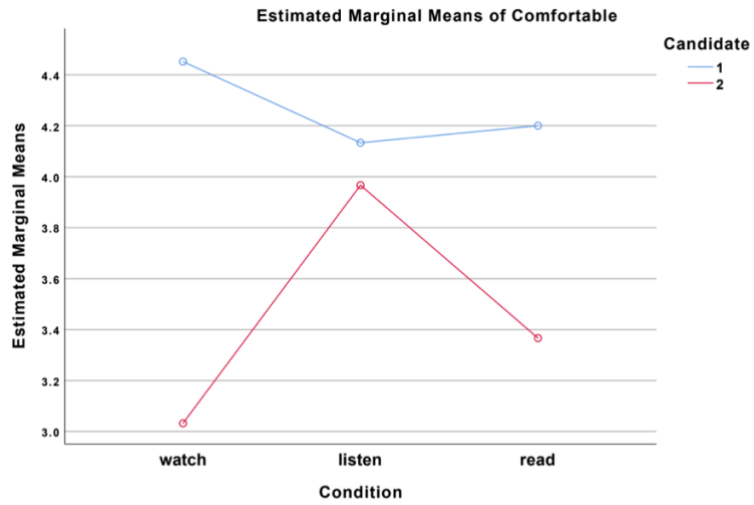
As seen in the table above there were main effects for Kennedy on the following personal qualities: likeable ( $F(2,90)=102.8$ ,  $p=0.018$ ), self-assured ( $F(2,88)=20.2$ ,  $p=0.029$ ), nervous ( $F(2,87)=29.9$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), comfortable ( $F(2,88)=31.0$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), competent ( $F(2,88)=2.2$ ,

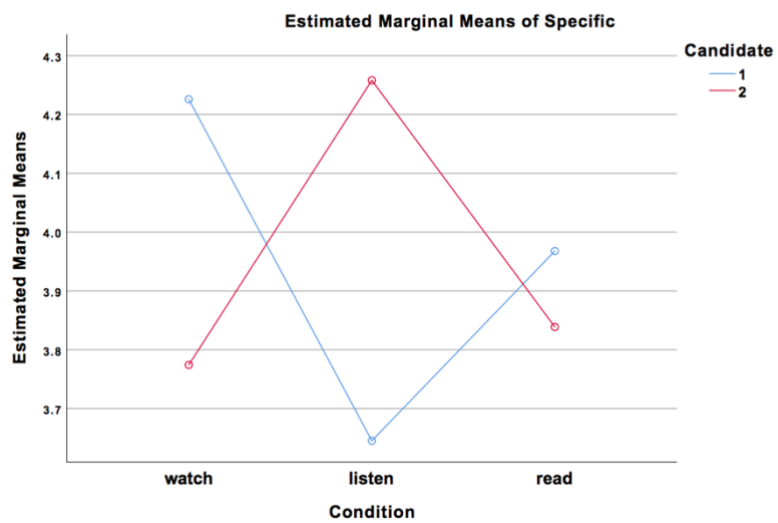
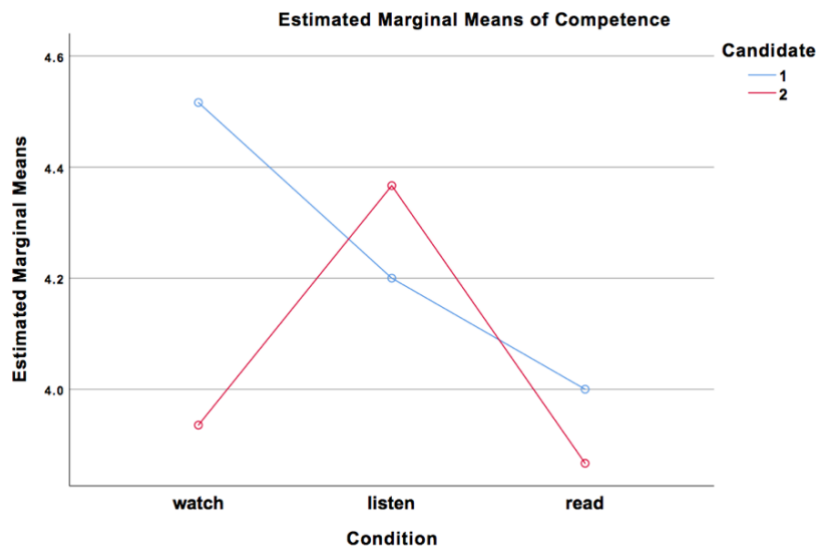
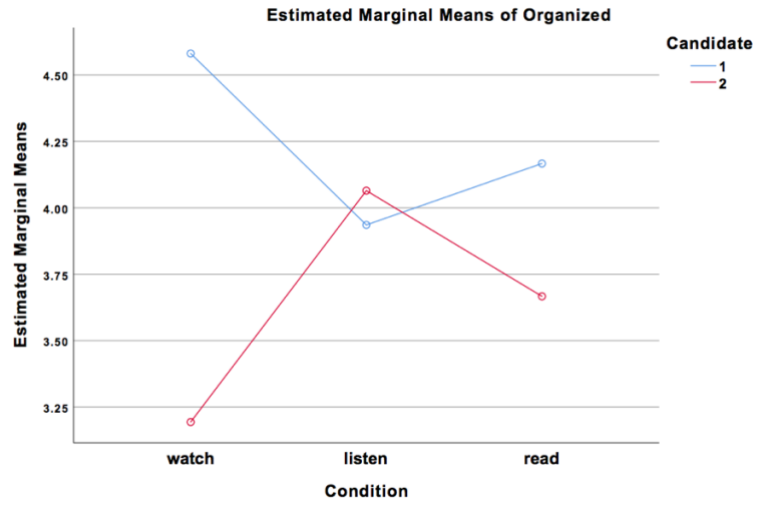
$p=0.048$ ), organized ( $F(2,89)=14.0$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), clear ( $F(2,90)=16.4$ ,  $p=0.022$ ), personable ( $F(2,90)=92.6$ ,  $p=0.003$ ), confident ( $F(2, 90)=27.7$ ,  $p=0.001$ ), charismatic ( $F(2,89)=131.6$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), warm personality ( $F(2,89)=129.7$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and fit ( $F(2,90)=37.7$ ,  $p=0.002$ ).

Candidate Kennedy overall had higher means ( $M=4.0$ ) than Candidate Nixon ( $M=3.3$ ) when looking at statistically significant personality traits, with participants in the Watch Medium having the most favorable assessment of any Candidate across media. Participants in the Watch and Listen media had opposite reactions to candidates Kennedy and Nixon; participants in the Watch Medium had a low opinion of Candidate Nixon and a high opinion of Candidate Kennedy, while participants in the Listen Medium had a lower opinion of Candidate Kennedy and a high opinion of Candidate Nixon.

## **II. Candidate X Medium Interactions**

Consistent with each candidate's one-way ANOVAS and means, statistically significant interactions between Medium and participants' impressions of candidates Kennedy's and Nixon's personalities demonstrate that Watch and Read participants consistently rated Candidate Nixon's personality lower than Listen participants. The data show that on the traits of comfortable, clear, nervous, organized, competent, and specific, interactions qualify the main effects showing more positive evaluations of Kennedy. In every case, Nixon compares to be much more favorable in Listen than in Watch conditions. In fact, on the trait of specific, Nixon's mean on Listen is actually higher than Kennedy's. Additionally, on specific, Nixon's supremacy on Listen is larger than Kennedy's on Watch. There is no main effect for Kennedy on specific. The following graphs illustrate the most representative statistically significant interactions between Candidate and Medium:





The graphs above demonstrate not only interactions between Candidate and Medium, but also situations where Candidate Nixon outperformed Candidate Kennedy. For example, participants found Candidate Nixon to be more specific ( $M=4.0$ ) than Candidate Kennedy ( $M=3.9$ ), demonstrating one quality where participants across conditions rate Nixon more highly (+0.1). Likewise, participants thought that Candidates Kennedy's ( $M=4.2$ ) and Candidate Nixon's ( $M=4.1$ ) competence levels were about the same, with Listen Medium participants finding Candidate Nixon ( $M=4.4$ ) more competent than Candidate Kennedy ( $M=4.2$ ).

Other interactions between Candidate and Medium, such as those seen in participants' evaluations of Kennedy and Nixon's levels of comfort and clarity, reflect data trends that Listen Medium participants almost always have a more favorable analysis of Candidate Nixon's personality than Watch and Read participants. It is important to address that in some occasions, such as those depicted in the graphs above, interactions between Candidate and Medium show that Nixon does better than Kennedy. However, the overall data indicate that across media, participants reported that Candidate Nixon performed worse than Candidate Kennedy. I will further analyze the data presented and draw conclusions about the data's implications for leadership in the following section.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Section I: Results Summary**

To review, data gathered in my research indicated one situation where Medium had a statistically significant impact on how participants processed information from each Candidate's opening statement. Listen Medium participants had the most recollection of Nixon's quote about staying ahead in a race, giving some support to my hypothesis. Additionally, Medium had a statistically significant impact on how participants formed impressions of both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon's personalities. Across media, main effects for Candidate and Candidate X Medium interactions demonstrated the great impact of media variations on impressions of both candidates, especially Nixon. Participants across media consistently had a more favorable impression of Candidate Kennedy's personality than Candidate Nixon's, although participants evaluated Nixon's specificity more highly than Kennedy's.

### **Section II: Information Processing**

Regarding participants' information processing, two interesting trends occurred in the Watch and Listen conditions: Watch Medium participants better recalled and identified quotes from Candidate Kennedy, and Listen Medium participants better recalled and identified quotes from Candidate Nixon. While these differences are not statistically significant, they are suggestive about how participants processed information. When asked to write three quotes from Candidate Kennedy, Watch Medium participants wrote three quotes on average, with eight participants accurately listing four direct quotes. Nearly all Watch Medium participants cited Candidate Kennedy directly as opposed to paraphrasing his statements. However, Watch Medium participants only recalled 2.3 quotes on average from Candidate Nixon. The majority of Watch Medium participants paraphrased Candidate Nixon's statements as opposed to citing him directly,

and one Watch participant could not recall a single thing that Candidate Nixon said. Similarly, when determining which Candidate said specific quotes, Watch Medium participants had the most accurate means on four of Candidate Kennedy's seven quotes that participants were asked to identify. Overall, Watch Medium participants appeared to pay closer attention to Candidate Kennedy's statements and had an easier time remembering specific statements that he made.

On the other hand, Listen Medium participants processed and recalled quotes from Candidate Nixon better than they did quotes from Candidate Kennedy. When asked to write out quotes from Candidate Nixon, Listen Medium participants wrote 2.7 quotes each on average, with one participant accurately writing out four direct quotes. However, Listen Medium participants on average only recalled 2.3 quotes from Candidate Kennedy. More Listen Medium participants cited Candidate Nixon directly than they did Candidate Kennedy. Likewise, when determining which Candidate said specific quotes, Listen Medium participants had the most accurate means on only two of Candidate Kennedy's seven quotes that participants were asked to identify, but they had the most accurate means on three of Candidate Nixon's seven quotes. While the margins are smaller for Listen Medium participants' accuracy regarding Candidate Nixon than Watch Medium participants' accuracy for Candidate Kennedy, Listen Medium participants appeared to pay closer attention to Candidate Nixon's statements and had an easier time remembering specific statements that he made. Overall, data indicate that in situations where participants had a more positive impression of a Candidate's personality, their accuracy when writing out and identifying quotes from that Candidate improved.

It is therefore possible that participants' quote identification means and accuracy reflect Watch Medium participants' favorable impression of Candidate Kennedy's personality and Listen Medium participants' positive impression of Candidate Nixon's personality. How much



participants liked a Candidate's personality and their approval of him as a leader might have caused participants to pay closer attention to what the specific Candidate said because they felt a stronger connection to the leader; thinking highly of a Candidate's personality helped participants engage with either Candidate Kennedy or Candidate Nixon and encouraged participants to focus on their preferred Candidate's ideas, beliefs, and goals for America. Watch Medium participants exemplify the relationship between participants' impressions of a Candidate's personality and information processing, as Watch Medium participants felt the most positively about Candidate Kennedy's personality of all participants in my research and they also had the most accurate means when identifying Kennedy's statements.

### **Section III: Impressions of Personality**

The most significant contributions of my research are the specific aspects of both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon's personalities that cause them to either win or lose the debate according to participants, and the evidence that Medium impacts how followers form impressions of a leader's personality and therefore their leadership ability. My research pinpointed the qualities of both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon's characters that led followers to ultimately favor Kennedy over Nixon. Likewise, my research demonstrated that Medium affects personality impression formation, especially in qualities that should logically be objective across media. The role of debate Medium in participants' evaluation of a leader's personality has important implications for leaders, especially those who are not naturally seen as charismatic, likeable, or relatable.

The reason that Candidate Nixon lost the debate according to participants was not solely because of Candidate Kennedy's considerably poised performance; rather, it was a combination of Kennedy's charm and Nixon's comparatively nervous, tense, and stiff demeanor. Participants

indicated that Candidate Nixon was less likeable, self-assured, comfortable, personable, confident, charismatic, warm, and fit than Candidate Kennedy, leading them to have less favorable impressions of Candidate Nixon's leadership abilities. Participants also noted that Candidate Nixon was significantly more nervous than Candidate Kennedy, which also harmed their impression of his character and leadership potential. While Listen Medium participants had more positive evaluations of Candidate Nixon's personality, they still acknowledged that Nixon was not particularly relatable or amiable, especially when compared to Candidate Kennedy. Therefore, according to my research, followers' impression of Candidate Nixon – that he lacked a dynamic and engaging personality – determined why Nixon reportedly lost the debate.

It is also important to note that Watch Medium participants' evaluation of Candidate Nixon's personality reflects that visual peripheral cues contributed to how participants formed impressions of each Candidate's personality. Discrepancies in how participants formed impressions of both candidates Kennedy and Nixon's characters suggest that visual peripheral cues such as Kennedy's body language or Nixon's chin sweat led participants to develop more favorable opinions about Kennedy's personality and less positive views of Nixon. The fact that Listen Medium participants had a more balanced impression of Candidate Kennedy's personality and a much more favorable impression of Candidate Nixon's personality demonstrates that removing visual peripheral cues in the debate created a more even playing field for participants to form opinions about each Candidate's personality.

Despite participants' more approving opinions about Candidate Kennedy's character, participants across media agreed by a small margin that Candidate Nixon was more specific than Candidate Kennedy. When evaluating each Candidate's specificity, the interaction between Candidate and Medium showed that Medium played an important role in how participants

determined whether each Candidate was specific. Watch and Listen Medium participants had an opposite evaluation of whether candidates Kennedy and Nixon were specific; Watch Medium participants found Candidate Kennedy to be more specific than Candidate Nixon, and Listen Medium participants found Candidate Nixon to be more specific than Candidate Kennedy. While each Candidate said the exact same opening statement in each Medium, participants' evaluation of what each Candidate said differed significantly. Whether or not a leader is specific should not vary depending on whether followers watch, listen to, or read a transcript of a debate or speech; nonetheless, data suggest that Medium has the power to alter followers' opinions of leaders to the extent that objective qualities become notably subjective across media. Peripheral cues, whether they be visual or auditory, therefore shape how followers perceive a leader on a deeply emotional and logical level.

Participants' impressions of each Candidate's likeability, charisma, and personability are three examples of situations where participants across media agreed that Candidate Kennedy was more likeable, charismatic, and personable than Candidate Nixon. Additionally, participants' positive impressions of Candidate Kennedy and his likeability, charisma, and personability might have been so powerful that they impacted and overruled how they perceived Candidate Nixon's personality. For example, participants' means for Candidate Kennedy's likeability ( $M=4.5$ ), charisma ( $M=4.4$ ), and personability ( $M=4.3$ ) were significantly higher than participants' means for Candidate Nixon's likeability ( $M=3.3$ ), charisma, ( $M=3.0$ ), and personability ( $M=2.8$ ). Participants' impressions of candidates Kennedy and Nixon's personality traits even impacted their analysis of qualities that should not vary across Medium. In particular, while participants overall agreed that Candidate Kennedy was more organized ( $M=4.2$ ) and clear ( $M=4.4$ ) than Candidate Nixon ( $M=3.6$ ,  $M=3.8$ ), Watch Medium participants found Candidate Kennedy to be

more organized ( $M=4.6$ ) than Candidate Nixon ( $M=3.2$ ), and Listen Medium participants found Candidate Nixon to be more organized ( $M=4.1$ ) than Candidate Kennedy ( $M=3.9$ ). Likewise, Watch Medium participants found Candidate Kennedy to be clearer ( $M=4.7$ ) than Candidate Nixon ( $M=3.5$ ), but Listen Medium participants found Candidate Nixon to be almost just as clear ( $M=4.1$ ) as Candidate Kennedy ( $M=4.2$ ). Medium affected every aspect of personality impression formation among participants, especially those in the Watch Medium, such that qualities and traits that should not have been affected by Medium were.

#### **Section IV: Implications for Leadership**

As seen in the correlation between followers' impressions of a leader's personality, debate format, and information processing, leaders have the important job of first coming across as likeable, charismatic, and confident to followers in order for followers to decide to engage with the content of a leader's debate or speech. Otherwise, as seen in the case of Watch participants' poor memory of Candidate Nixon's statements and Listen participants' less accurate recollection of Candidate Kennedy's quotes, followers will not engross themselves with the content of a leader's speech on a deeper emotional and intellectual level. Followers will not involve themselves with a leader's ideas and speaking points if the leader fails to first create a favorable personality impression. While information processing itself may not be as closely tied to debate Medium as I anticipated, the relationship between participants' impressions of each Candidate's personality, debate media, and how they processed the information in each Candidate's opening statement suggests that information processing is more closely tied to followers' impressions of a leader's personality, over which Medium is highly influential.

Additionally, the impact of watching the first of the Great Debates on Candidate Kennedy's reported debate victory suggests that visual peripheral cues have a more significant impact on

followers' impressions of a leader's personality than previously documented. Visual peripheral cues have the power to impact followers' impression formation to the extent that a leader's body language and physical appearance override rational judgment on qualities that should be neutral and objective, particularly regarding whether or not a leader is clear, organized, and specific while speaking. Candidate Kennedy emerges as the example of a leader whose calm composure and good looks visually suggest to followers that he is also clearer and more organized, competent, and likeable, for example, than Candidate Nixon. How leaders appeal to visual peripheral cues can therefore be the deciding factor between followers being drawn to and approving of a leader or feeling estranged from and disinterested in the leader and what he has to say.

Given the importance of debate format in followers' personality impression formation, especially in a world where modern technology increases followers' visual exposure to a leader through televised debates, press conferences, and speeches, my research suggests that leaders should strategically emphasize positive visual peripheral cues when speaking. Demonstrating frequent positive visual peripheral cues, such as showing confidence through charismatic body language or looking physically attractive and well-groomed, fosters followers' favorable development of personality impressions early on and encourages followers to listen to and support a leader. It is not a coincidence in the case of John F. Kennedy and other well-regarded leaders that individuals who are attractive are also seen as charismatic, likeable, relatable, and intelligent; visual peripheral cues lead followers readily to impose positive qualities and impressions of personality onto a leader. An example of this kind of attribution is elegantly presented in Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink* chapter entitled "The Warren Harding Error: Why We Fall For Tall, Dark, and

Handsome Men” discussing the good looks of one of our worst presidents.<sup>78</sup> President Warren G. Harding illustrates the concept that when followers see that a leader is attractive, they readily associate him with qualities including courage, strength, likeability, and competence and therefore trust and support him.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, leaders who fail to show positive visual peripheral cues in a debate or speech, as seen in the example of Candidate Nixon, also fail to reach followers. Individuals will struggle to engage with a leader and his or her arguments if he or she does not first prove themselves through visual peripheral cues that create a favorable personality impression.

My findings also tie into Dr. James Uleman’s literature on spontaneous trait inferences. According to Uleman’s research, followers often spontaneously deduce a leader’s traits without realizing; followers constantly make automatic judgements about leaders and their personalities.<sup>80</sup> Followers make spontaneous or automatic trait inferences based on implicit leadership theories; what followers believe leaders should act and look like influence whether spontaneous trait inferences will indicate leadership potential in an individual.<sup>81</sup> As Gladwell notes, President Harding’s good looks, confidence, and warm personality led followers make spontaneous trait inferences that led to his rise in popularity in American politics.<sup>82</sup> Essentially, followers constantly form opinions about a leader’s personality and capability through informal thinking rooted in automatic responses to implicit leadership theories, once again establishing that leaders have an important job of presenting themselves as likeable in order to gain followers’ support.

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<sup>78</sup> Gladwell, M. (2007). The Warren Harding Error: Why We Fall For Tall, Dark, and Handsome Men. In *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. Little, Brown.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Newman, L. S., & Uleman, J. S. (1989). Spontaneous trait inference. *Unintended Thought*, 155–188.

<sup>81</sup> Emrich, C. G. (1999). Context Effects in Leadership Perception. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(8), 17.

<sup>82</sup> Gladwell, M. (2007). The Warren Harding Error: Why We Fall For Tall, Dark, and Handsome Men. In *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. Little, Brown.

Lacking positive visual peripheral cues or even exuding negative peripheral cues through sweating, standing tensely and gripping a podium, looking nervous, tripping or pivoting awkwardly when walking on stage are examples of adverse visual peripheral cues that suggest to followers that they should not support a leader, that what he says is not significant or worth paying attention to, and that he has less leadership potential than a more poised and charismatic competitor. Therefore, my data indicate that the relationship between debate format, followers' impressions of a leader's personality, and how followers process information in a leader's speech make it imperative that aspiring leaders gain followers' trust and support by strategically appealing to their implicit leadership theories through visual peripheral cues in order for followers to listen to a leader and his or her ideas.<sup>83</sup>

## **Section V: Limitations and Future Research**

While the results of my research have significant impacts for the field of leadership studies, they are not without their limitations. Two limitations of my research include a small participant population and a lack of diversity among participants. This study only had 93 participants, mainly due to the fact that I ran this study in-person on a small college campus, and because I had limited funding to pay individuals for their participation in my research. Likewise, all participants were undergraduate students at the University of Richmond, and they were mainly white, female identifying, and liberal. The fact that there was a lack of diversity regarding age, gender, racial, and political ideology limits the application of my data to similar population sizes and demographics; this study is not applicable on a national or international scale. Other limitations of my findings stem from the fact that participants only watched, listened to, or read the opening

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<sup>83</sup> Emrich, C. G. (1999). Context Effects in Leadership Perception. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(8), 17.

statements of a presidential debate as opposed to the entire debate, and this debate was moderately well-known among participants.

In the future, replications of this study should seek to have a larger and more diverse population size. Future studies should also seek to have representation from more male, racially diverse, and politically conservative participants that better resemble the U.S. population in order to have more applicable findings. Participants should also span across multiple generations and age groups to ensure that the data does not have a generational bias. Likewise, future participants should watch a full debate rather than a short clip in order to get more well-rounded impressions of each Candidate's personality. Future studies could possibly create a debate with hypothetical leaders to use as stimuli to ensure that preconceived notions about politicians do not skew the data. Lastly, future studies should have participants identify more quotes from a full debate – these quotes can be sentence fragments or can include more quotes said outside the debate – to better get at the heart of participants' information processing.

## **Section VI: Conclusion**

Ultimately, this study has three main conclusions: first, it is possible that my hypothesis was correct regarding Listen Medium participants best processing information in the debate; second, data suggest that Candidate Kennedy's victory in the debate stems from Candidate Nixon's rigid and uncomfortable demeanor on television; and third, Medium has a fascinating significant impact on how followers evaluate a leader's personality. While there was only one clear situation where information processing was statistically significant depending on media, participants in the Listen Medium had the most accurate means when identifying the statistically significant quote. The quote also happened to be said by Candidate Nixon, suggesting that participants who listened



to the opening statements as opposed to watching or reading them best processed both the information and each Candidate's arguments.

Additionally, data indicate that Druckman's 2003 study was correct in that Watch participants reported that Candidate Kennedy won the debate, and Listen participants reported that Candidate Nixon won. However, my research is distinct in that it unpacks how and why Candidate Nixon lost the debate. Nixon lost most significantly according to Watch participants on personality measures related to likeability, charisma, and confidence, suggesting not only that visual peripheral cues led participants to have a less favorable impression of Nixon's personality and leadership potential, but also that personality qualities related to likeability, charisma, and confidence are key traits that promote followers' support of a leader. The outcome of the first of the Great Debates is therefore more a matter of Candidate Nixon performing worse due to participants' less favorable impressions of his lack of likeability and charisma, rather than Candidate Kennedy performing better.

Finally, this study concludes that debate format – whether followers watch, listen to, or read a transcript of a presidential debate – plays a significant and fundamental role in how they form impressions of a leader's personality. The fact that debate format impacts not only how participants see candidates as being likeable and confident but also whether or not they are specific, clear, and organized demonstrates that how followers experience a leader's speech is tied to their opinions of a leader's personality and shows that followers often irrationally evaluate a leader's character. According to the findings of this study, aspiring leaders should capitalize on any positive physical characteristics and other visual peripheral cues they have in order to engage followers, win their trust, and encourage them to listen to their ideas and arguments. Overall, data reveal that

what a leader says may not be as important as how he or she says it – or how he or she looks – and that debate format plays a central role in personality impression formation.

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## APPENDIX A: Survey

# Information Processing During Presidential Debates: Video

### Participant Informed Consent Form

Title: Information Processing During Presidential Debates

**Purpose of Study:** The purpose of this research study is to learn how people comprehend the content of presidential debates when they watch, listen to, or read the debates.

**Description of the Study and Your Involvement:** If you decide to be in this research study, you will be asked to answer basic questions about your political beliefs. Then you will either watch, listen to, or read a transcript of an excerpt from a presidential debate. You will be asked to answer questions on what you read or watched.

**Principal Investigator:** The principal investigators for this study are Lauren O'Brien, a senior at the University of Richmond, and Dr. George Goethals, professor of Leadership Studies.

**Risks and Discomforts:** The project will take approximately 30 minutes of your time to complete. This survey only asks general questions and will not cause any distress. If you feel upset or uncomfortable at any time, please stop answering the survey. This may be done at any time during the study.

**Benefits:** You will learn about the particular debate you are going to look at as well as the candidates and topics involved in the excerpt. You will also receive \$5 as monetary payment for taking part, and you will be entered into a raffle to win an additional \$50.

**Costs:** There are no costs for participating in this study other than the 30 minutes the study takes.

**Alternatives:** Alternative treatments are unnecessary as this is not a treatment study. Instead of taking this study, alternatives that exist are to take other studies or to not participate in any study.

**Confidentiality:** The answers given will not be told to anyone. You will not need to provide your name at any time and your answers will not be associated with your name. The findings of this study will be presented and published but your name will not be used.

**Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for stopping during the study and you may do so at any time. Questions also may be left blank at any time if you do not wish to answer them.

**Questions:** If you have any questions please contact George Goethals, Professor of Leadership Studies Jepson Hall Room 235 University of Richmond, Richmond, VA 23173 804- 287-6354 [ggoethal@richmond.edu](mailto:ggoethal@richmond.edu). If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, feel free to contact Dr. Scott Allison, Chair of the University of Richmond's Institutional Review Board for the protection of Research Participants at 804-289-8127 or at [sallison@richmond.edu](mailto:sallison@richmond.edu).

**Participant's Consent:** The study has been described to me and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation in the project at any time without penalty. By clicking the "next" button on this page you are confirming that you have read and understand the above information, that you are above 18 years of age, and that you provide your consent to participate.

### Participant Information

Please answer the following biographical questions as best and as honestly as you can. Your answers will not be shared with other participants or with anyone outside of the study. Your responses to these questions might help improve our understanding of the data gained in this study. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

1. What is your class year?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Senior (graduating in 2020)
- ☐ Junior (graduating in 2021)
- ☐ Sophomore (graduating in 2022)
- ☐ First-year (graduating in 2023)
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your major(s) and/or minor(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is your home state? If you are an international student, what is your home country?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your race/ethnicity?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ White
- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latinx
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your gender identity?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Gender non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your political affiliation?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Democrat  
☐ Republican  
☐ Independent  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Generally speaking, do you identify as being more liberal or more conservative?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Liberal  
☐ Conservative  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you know who won the Election of 1960?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

9. On a scale from 1-5 with 1 being absolutely nothing and 5 being a significant amount, how much do you already know about John F. Kennedy?

*Mark only one oval.*

|   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |   |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| I know absolutely nothing about John F. Kennedy | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | I know a significant amount about John F. Kennedy |

10. On a scale from 1-5 with 1 being absolutely nothing and 5 being a significant amount, how much do you already know about Richard Nixon?

*Mark only one oval.*

|   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |   |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| I know absolutely nothing about Richard Nixon | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | I know a significant amount about Richard Nixon |

11. List up to 5 important events, beliefs, or concerns that impacted the political climate and party platforms during the Election of 1960:

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**Debate  
Video**

Please watch the following video in which Candidates John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon deliver their opening statements in the first presidential debate during the Election of 1960. To view the video in full screen, click the "YouTube" logo in the bottom right corner of the video. Afterward, you will be asked a series of questions about what you saw in the video. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

**Candidate Opening Statements**



<http://youtube.com/watch?v=w0HzamfVwd0>

**Participant  
Survey:  
Initial  
Reactions**

Based on what you saw in the video of the candidates' opening statements, please answer the following questions. We recognize that both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon became president in their lifetime, but there is some controversy as to the impact of the first presidential debate of 1960 in the election outcome. Your input can help us better understand its effects. Please do your best to base your responses solely on what you saw during the video, not what you might already know about each individual. Please note that you cannot return to the video and watch it again to answer questions. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

12. List up to three moments, quotes, or events that you found memorable during the candidates' opening statements:

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13. List up to three things that Candidate Kennedy said that you found notable, quoting word for word as best you can:

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14. List up to three things that Candidate Nixon said that you found notable, quoting word for word as best you can:

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15. I believe Candidate Kennedy would make a good president based on what I saw in this debate.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

16. I believe Candidate Nixon would make a good president based on what I saw in this debate.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

17. Based on what I saw in this debate, I would vote for Candidate Kennedy.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

18. Based on what I saw in this debate, I would vote for Candidate Nixon.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

19. Who do you think won this debate?

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy
- ☐ Candidate Nixon

Participant  
Survey:  
Candidate  
Personality  
Characteristics

Based on what you saw in the video of the candidates' opening statements, please answer the following questions. We recognize that both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon became president in their lifetime, but there is some controversy as to the impact of the first presidential debate of 1960 in the election outcome. Your input can help us better understand its effects. Please do your best to base your responses solely on what you saw during the video, not what you might already know about each individual. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

20. Candidate Kennedy was likable.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

21. Candidate Nixon was likable.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

22. Candidate Kennedy seemed to be self-assured.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

23. Candidate Nixon seemed to be self-assured.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

24. Candidate Kennedy seemed to be nervous.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

25. Candidate Nixon seemed to be nervous.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

26. Candidate Kennedy seemed to be comfortable.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

27. Candidate Nixon seemed to be comfortable.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

28. Candidate Kennedy seemed to be energetic.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

29. Candidate Nixon seemed to be energetic.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

30. Did Candidate Kennedy appear to be good looking?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No

31. Did Candidate Nixon appear to be good looking?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No

32. Did Candidate Kennedy appear to move with confidence?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No

33. Did Candidate Nixon appear to move with confidence?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes  
☐ No

34. Did Candidate Kennedy appear a bit old?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

35. Did Candidate Nixon appear a bit old?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

36. Did you notice that Candidate Nixon appeared to be sweating while delivering his opening statement?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

37. Did you notice Candidate Nixon's pivot when he returned to his seat after he delivered his opening statement?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

38. Candidate Kennedy seemed intelligent.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

39. Candidate Kennedy seemed charismatic.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

40. Candidate Kennedy seemed to have a strong personality.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

41. Candidate Kennedy seemed to have a weak personality.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

42. Candidate Kennedy seemed to have a warm personality.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree. |

43. Candidate Kennedy seemed to have a cold personality.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

44. Candidate Kennedy seemed fit.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

45. Candidate Kennedy seemed confident.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

46. Candidate Kennedy seemed energetic.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

47. Candidate Kennedy seemed genuine.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

48. Candidate Kennedy seemed trustworthy.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

49. Candidate Kennedy seemed competent.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

50. Candidate Kennedy seemed personable.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

51. Candidate Kennedy seemed persuasive.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

52. Candidate Kennedy was clear.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

53. Candidate Kennedy was organized.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

54. Candidate Kennedy was specific.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |



55. Candidate Kennedy seemed to be a good leader.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

56. Candidate Nixon seemed intelligent.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

57. Candidate Nixon seemed charismatic.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

58. Candidate Nixon seemed to have a strong personality.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

59. Candidate Nixon seemed to have a weak personality.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

60. Candidate Nixon seemed to have a warm personality.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

61. Candidate Nixon seemed to have a cold personality.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

62. Candidate Nixon seemed fit.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

63. Candidate Nixon seemed confident.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

64. Candidate Nixon seemed energetic.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

65. Candidate Nixon seemed genuine.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

66. Candidate Nixon seemed to be trustworthy.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

67. Candidate Nixon seemed competent.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

68. Candidate Nixon seemed personable.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

69. Candidate Nixon seemed persuasive.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

70. Candidate Nixon was clear.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

71. Candidate Nixon was organized.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

72. Candidate Nixon was specific.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

73. Candidate Nixon seemed to be a good leader.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

Participant  
Survey:  
Candidate  
Voice  
Characteristics

Based on what you saw in the video of the candidates' opening statements, please answer the following questions. We recognize that both Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon became president in their lifetime, but there is some controversy as to the impact of the first presidential debate of 1960 in the election outcome. Your input can help us better understand its effects. Please do your best to base your responses solely on what you saw during the video, not what you might already know about each individual. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

74. Candidate Kennedy was easy to listen to.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

75. Candidate Kennedy had a warm voice tone.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

76. Candidate Kennedy had a cold voice tone.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

77. Candidate Kennedy sounded passionate.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

78. Candidate Kennedy sounded disconnected from his opening statement.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

79. Candidate Kennedy had a natural speaking pace.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

80. Candidate Kennedy spoke too quickly.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

81. Candidate Kennedy spoke too slowly.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

82. Candidate Kennedy sounded confident.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

83. Candidate Kennedy sounded excited.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

84. Candidate Kennedy spoke with vigor.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

85. Candidate Nixon was easy to listen to.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

86. Candidate Nixon had a warm voice tone.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

87. Candidate Nixon had a cold voice tone.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

88. Candidate Nixon sounded passionate.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

89. Candidate Nixon sounded disconnected from his opening statement.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

90. Candidate Nixon had a natural speaking pace.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

91. Candidate Nixon spoke too quickly.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

92. Candidate Nixon spoke too slowly.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

93. Candidate Nixon sounded confident.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

94. Candidate Nixon sounded excited.

Mark only one oval.

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |



95. Candidate Nixon spoke with vigor.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

Participant Survey:  
Information  
Retention

Please select the candidate who said the following statements. If you have any questions or difficulties, please come find me outside the room.

96. "But when you're in a race, the only way to stay ahead is to move ahead."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

97. "In the election of 1960, and with the world around us, the question is whether the world will exist half-slave or half-free, whether it will move in the direction of freedom, in the direction of the road that we are taking, or whether it will move in the direction of slavery."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

98. "The kind of country we have here, the kind of society we have, the kind of strength we build in the United States will be the defense of freedom. If we do well here, if we meet our obligations, if we're moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world. If we fail, then freedom fails. Therefore, I think the question before the American people is: Are we doing as much as we can do?"

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

99. "I know what it means to be poor. I know what it means to see people who are unemployed."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

100. "I think we can do better. I don't want the talents of any American to go to waste. I know that there are those who want to turn everything over to the government. I don't at all. I want the individuals to meet their responsibilities. And I want the states to meet their responsibilities. But I think there is also a national responsibility."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

101. "I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit for political purposes my opponent's youth and inexperience."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

102. "This means that the average family income went up fifteen per cent in the Eisenhower years as against two per cent in the Truman years. Now, this is not standing still. But, good as this record is, may I emphasize it isn't enough. A record is never something to stand on. It's something to build on. And in building on this record, I believe that we have the secret for progress, we know the way to progress."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

103. "Let's take schools. We have built more schools in these last seven and a half years than we built in the previous seven and a half, for that matter in the previous twenty years. Let's take hydroelectric power. We have developed more hydroelectric power in these seven and a half years than was developed in any previous administration in history. Let us take hospitals. We find that more have been built in this Administration than in the previous Administration. The same is true of highways."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

104. "I want people in Latin America and Africa and Asia to start to look to America; to see how we're doing things; to wonder what the resident of the United States is doing; and not to look at Khrushchev, or look at the Chinese Communists. That is the obligation upon our generation."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

105. "But when we look at the growth of G.N.P. this year, a year of recovery, we find that it's six and nine-tenths percent and one of the highest in the world today."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

106. "I think it's time America started moving again."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

107. "I costed out the cost of the Democratic platform. It runs a minimum of thirteen and two-tenths billions dollars a year more than we are presently spending to a maximum of eighteen billion dollars a year more than we're presently spending. Now the Republican platform will cost more too. It will cost a minimum of four billion dollars a year more, a maximum of four and nine-tenths billion dollar a year more than we're presently spending."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

108. "I'm not satisfied until every American enjoys his full constitutional rights."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

109. "Read my lips: no new taxes."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

110. "Let's put it in terms that all of us can understand."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

111. "This is a great country, but I think it could be a greater country; and this is a powerful country, but I think it could be a more powerful country."

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Candidate Kennedy  
☐ Candidate Nixon  
☐ Neither

**Participant  
Survey:  
Reflection**

Please answer the following questions about your experience participating in this survey. Please give honest answers about the level of difficulty you experienced while answering questions about Candidate Kennedy and Candidate Nixon. Your answers will not be shared with other participants or with anyone outside of the study. Your responses to these questions might help improve our understanding of the data gained in this study.

112. Each candidate's opening statement was clear and coherent.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

113. I was interested to learn more about what each of the candidates had to say.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

114. I could easily decide who I thought won this debate.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

115. I could easily recall three moments, quotes, or events from the opening statements.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

116. It was difficult to answer questions about each candidate after seeing the opening statements.

*Mark only one oval.*

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

117. I learned a lot about the issues of the 1960 election from this debate.

Mark only one oval.

|                   |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
|                   | 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     |                |
| Strongly disagree | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Strongly agree |

118. If your answer between who you thought won the debate and who you would personally vote for is different, please explain your reasoning in a few short sentences:

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119. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

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**\*\*Note:** Only Watch Medium participants were asked questions regarding each Candidate's appearances (questions 30-37).

**\*\*Note:** Only Watch and Listen Medium participants were asked questions regarding each Candidate's tone of voice (questions 74-95).

**APPENDIX B: Opening Statements Transcript**  
**September 26, 1960**  
**The First Kennedy-Nixon Presidential Debate**

**HOWARD K. SMITH, MODERATOR:** Good evening. The television and radio stations of the United States and their affiliated stations are proud to provide facilities for a discussion of issues in the current political campaign by the two major candidates for the presidency.

The candidates need no introduction. The Republican candidate, Vice President Richard M. Nixon, and the Democratic candidate, Senator John F. Kennedy.

According to rules set by the candidates themselves, each man shall make an opening statement of approximately eight minutes' duration and a closing statement of approximately three minutes' duration.

In between the candidates will answer, or comment upon answers to questions put by a panel of correspondents. In this, the first discussion in a series of four uh – joint appearances, the subject-matter has been agreed, will be restricted to internal or domestic American matters. And now for the first opening statement by Senator John F. Kennedy.

**CANDIDATE KENNEDY:** Mr. Smith, Mr. Nixon. In the election of 1860, Abraham Lincoln said the question was whether this nation could exist half-slave or half-free.

In the election of 1960, and with the world around us, the question is whether the world will exist half-slave or half-free, whether it will move in the direction of freedom, in the direction of the road that we are taking, or whether it will move in the direction of slavery. I think it will depend in great measure upon what we do here in the United States, on the kind of society that we build, on the kind of strength that we maintain. We discuss tonight domestic issues, but I would not want that to be any implication to be given that this does not involve directly our struggle with Mr. Khrushchev for survival.

Mr. Khrushchev is in New York, and he maintains the Communist offensive throughout the world because of the productive power of the Soviet Union itself. The Chinese Communists have always had a large population. But they are important and dangerous now because they are mounting a major effort within their own country. The kind of country we have here, the kind of society we have, the kind of strength we build in the United States will be the defense of freedom. If we do well here, if we meet our obligations, if we're moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world. If we fail, then freedom fails.

Therefore, I think the question before the American people is: Are we doing as much as we can do? Are we as strong as we should be? Are we as strong as we must be if we're going to maintain our independence, and if we're going to maintain and hold out the hand of friendship to those who look to us for assistance, to those who look to us for survival?

I should make it very clear that I do not think we're doing enough, that I am not satisfied as an American with the progress that we're making. This is a great country, but I think it could be a greater country; and this is a powerful country, but I think it could be a more powerful country.

I'm not satisfied to have fifty percent of our steel-mill capacity unused. I'm not satisfied when the United States had last year the lowest rate of economic growth of any major industrialized society in the world. Because economic growth means strength and vitality; it means we're able to sustain our defenses; it means we're able to meet our commitments abroad.

I'm not satisfied when we have over nine billion dollars worth of food – some of it rotting – even though there is a hungry world, and even though four million Americans wait



every month for a food package from the government, which averages five cents a day per individual.

I saw cases in West Virginia, here in the United States, where children took home part of their school lunch in order to feed their families because I don't think we're meeting our obligations toward these Americans.

I'm not satisfied when the Soviet Union is turning out twice as many scientists and engineers as we are. I'm not satisfied when many of our teachers are inadequately paid, or when our children go to school part-time shifts.

I think we should have an educational system second to none.

I'm not satisfied when I see men like Jimmy Hoffa – in charge of the largest union in the United States – still free. I'm not satisfied when we are failing to develop the natural resources of the United States to the fullest.

Here in the United States, which developed the Tennessee Valley and which built the Grand Coulee and the other dams in the Northwest United States at the present rate of hydropower production – and that is the hallmark of an industrialized society – the Soviet Union by 1975 will be producing more power than we are. These are all the things, I think, in this country that can make our society strong, or can mean that it stands still. I'm not satisfied until every American enjoys his full constitutional rights.

If a Negro baby is born – and this is true also of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans in some of our cities – he has about one-half as much chance to get through high school as a white baby. He has one-third as much chance to get through college as a white student. He has about a third as much chance to be a professional man, about half as much chance to own a house.

He has about uh – four times as much chance that he'll be out of work in his life as the white baby. I think we can do better. I don't want the talents of any American to go to waste.

I know that there are those who want to turn everything over to the government. I don't at all. I want the individuals to meet their responsibilities. And I want the states to meet their responsibilities. But I think there is also a national responsibility. The argument has been used against every piece of social legislation in the last twenty-five years. The people of the United States individually could not have developed the Tennessee Valley; collectively they could have. A cotton farmer in Georgia or a peanut farmer or a dairy farmer in Wisconsin and Minnesota, he cannot protect himself against the forces of supply and demand in the market place; but working together in effective governmental programs he can do so.

Seventeen million Americans, who live over sixty-five on an average Social Security check of about seventy-eight dollars a month, they're not able to sustain themselves individually, but they can sustain themselves through the social security system.

I don't believe in big government, but I believe in effective governmental action.

And I think that's the only way that the United States is going to maintain its freedom. It's the only way that we're going to move ahead. I think we can do a better job. I think we're going to have to do a better job if we are going to meet the responsibilities which time and events have placed upon us. We cannot turn the job over to anyone else.

If the United States fails, then the whole cause of freedom fails. And I think it depends in great measure on what we do here in this country.

The reason Franklin Roosevelt was a good neighbor in Latin America was because he was a good neighbor in the United States. Because they felt that the American society was moving again. I want us to recapture that image. I want people in Latin America and Africa

and Asia to start to look to America; to see how we're doing things; to wonder what the resident of the United States is doing; and not to look at Khrushchev, or look at the Chinese Communists. That is the obligation upon our generation.

In 1933, Franklin Roosevelt said in his inaugural that this generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny. I think our generation of Americans has the same rendezvous. The question now is: Can freedom be maintained under the most severe tack – attack it has ever known? I think it can be.

And I think in the final analysis it depends upon what we do here. I think it's time America started moving again.

**MR. SMITH:** And now the opening statement by Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

**CANDIDATE NIXON:** Mr. Smith, Senator Kennedy. The things that Senator Kennedy has said many of us can agree with. There is no question but that we cannot discuss our internal affairs in the United States without recognizing that they have a tremendous bearing on our international position. There is no question but that this nation cannot stand still; because we are in a deadly competition, a competition not only with the men in the Kremlin, but the men in Peking. We're ahead in this competition, as Senator Kennedy, I think, has implied. But when you're in a race, the only way to stay ahead is to move ahead. And I subscribe completely to the spirit that Senator Kennedy has expressed tonight, the spirit that the United States should move ahead.

Where, then, do we disagree? I think we disagree on the implication of his remarks tonight and on the statements that he has made on many occasions during his campaign to the effect that the United States has been standing still. We heard tonight, for example, the statement made that our growth in national product last year was the lowest of any industrial

nation in the world. Now last year, of course, was 1958. That happened to be a recession year. But when we look at the growth of G.N.P. this year, a year of recovery, we find that it's six and nine-tenths per cent and one of the highest in the world today.

More about that later.

Looking then to this problem of how the United States should move ahead and where the United States is moving, I think it is well that we take the advice of a very famous campaigner: Let's look at the record.

Is the United States standing still? Is it true that this Administration, as Senator Kennedy has charged, has been an Administration of retreat, of defeat, of stagnation?

Is it true that, as far as this country is concerned, in the field of electric power, in all of the fields that he has mentioned, we have not been moving ahead.

Well, we have a comparison that we can make.

We have the record of the Truman Administration of seven and a half years and the seven and a half years of the Eisenhower Administration. When we compare these two records in the areas that Senator Kennedy has – has discussed tonight, I think we find that America has been moving ahead.

Let's take schools. We have built more schools in these last seven and a half years than we built in the previous seven and a half, for that matter in the previous twenty years.

Let's take hydroelectric power. We have developed more hydroelectric power in these seven and a half years than was developed in any previous administration in history.

Let us take hospitals. We find that more have been built in this Administration than in the previous Administration. The same is true of highways.

Let's put it in terms that all of us can understand. We often hear gross national product discussed and in that respect may I say that when we compare the growth in this Administration with that of the previous Administration that then there was a total growth of eleven percent over seven years; in this Administration there has been a total growth of nineteen per cent over seven years. That shows that there's been more growth in this Administration than in its predecessor. But let's not put it there; let's put it in terms of the average family. What has happened to you?

We find that your wages have gone up five times as much in the Eisenhower Administration as they did in the Truman Administration.

What about the prices you pay? We find that the prices you pay went up five times as much in the Truman Administration as they did in the Eisenhower Administration. What's the net result of this?

This means that the average family income went up fifteen per cent in the Eisenhower years as against two per cent in the Truman years.

Now, this is not standing still. But, good as this record is, may I emphasize it isn't enough.

A record is never something to stand on. It's something to build on.

And in building on this record, I believe that we have the secret for progress, we know the way to progress. And I think, first of all, our own record proves that we know the way.

Senator Kennedy has suggested that he believes he knows the way. I respect the sincerity which he makes that suggestion. But on the other hand, when we look at the various programs that he offers, they do not seem to be new. They seem to be simply retreads of the programs of the Truman Administration which preceded it. And I would suggest

that during the course of the evening he might indicate those areas in which his programs are new, where they will mean more progress than we had then.

What kind of programs are we for?

We are for programs that will expand educational opportunities, that will give to all Americans their equal chance for education, for all of the things which are necessary and dear to the hearts of our people. We are for programs, in addition, which will see that our medical care for the aged are – is – are much – is much better handled than it is at the present time. Here again, may I indicate that Senator Kennedy and I are not in disagreement as to the aims. We both want to help the old people. We want to see that they do have adequate medical care. The question is the means. I think that the means that I advocate will reach that goal better than the means that he advocates.

I could give better examples, but for – for whatever it is, whether it's in the field of housing, or health, or medical care, or schools, or the eh- development of electric power, we have programs which we believe will move America, move her forward and build on the wonderful record that we have made over these past seven and a half years.

Now, when we look at these programs, might I suggest that in evaluating them we often have a tendency to say that the test of a program is how much you're spending. I will concede that in all the areas to which I have referred Senator Kennedy would have the spe- federal government spend more than I would have it spend. I costed out the cost of the Democratic platform. It runs a minimum of thirteen and two-tenths billions dollars a year more than we are presently spending to a maximum of eighteen billion dollars a year more than we're presently spending.

Now the Republican platform will cost more too. It will cost a minimum of four billion dollars a year more, a maximum of four and nine-tenths billion dollar a year more than we're presently spending. Now, does this mean that his program is better than ours? Not at all. Because it isn't a question of how much the federal government spends; it isn't a question of which government does the most. It is a question of which administration does the right thing. And in our case, I do believe that our programs will stimulate the creative energies of a hundred and eighty million free Americans. I believe the programs that Senator Kennedy advocates will have a tendency to stifle those creative energies.

I believe in other words, that his program would lead to the stagnation of the motive power that we need in this country to get progress.

The final point that I would like to make is this: Senator Kennedy has suggested in his speeches that we lack compassion for the poor, for the old, and for others that are unfortunate. Let us understand throughout this campaign that his motives and mine are sincere. I know what it means to be poor. I know what it means to see people who are unemployed. I know Senator Kennedy feels as deeply about these problems as I do, but our disagreement is not about the goals for America but only about the means to reach those goals.

**MR. SMITH:** Thank you, Mr. Nixon. That completes the opening statements.

### **APPENDIX C: Email**

Are you interested in participating in a study looking at presidential debates? Participants will be asked to answer survey questions and will be paid \$5 for partaking in a 20-minute study in addition to being entered into a raffle to win an additional \$50. Information given in this study will be confidential and will not cause harm to any participants. The results of this study will be used in developing a thesis for the Jepson School of Leadership Studies' Honors Program and may be presented or published. Participating in this study is a great way to learn more about presidential debates and student-led research while supporting a fellow student. If you are interested, please email Lauren O'Brien at [lauren.obrien@richmond.edu](mailto:lauren.obrien@richmond.edu) or Dr. Goethals, professor of Leadership Studies, at [ggoethal@richmond.edu](mailto:ggoethal@richmond.edu).