

WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT
Political Advertising Analysis



Money, Message and Margins: The Role of Campaign Advertising in the 2012 Elections

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Department of Government
@wesmediaproject



What Drives Elections?

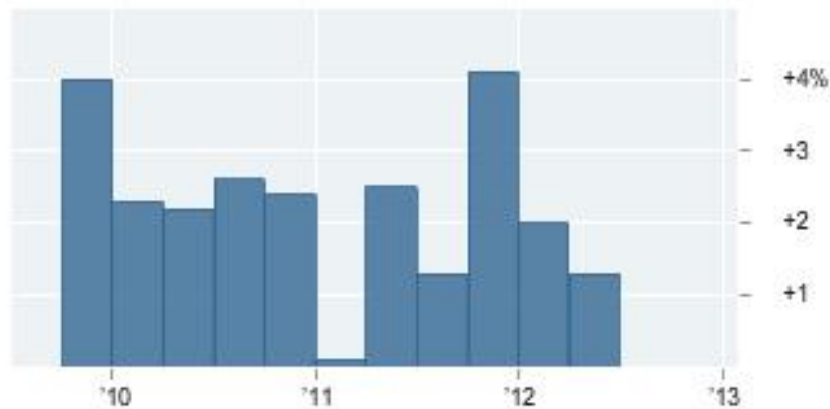
Updated Thurs., Sept. 27

Real Economic Growth

Annualized quarterly changes,
seas. adj.

◀ Prev.

Next ▶



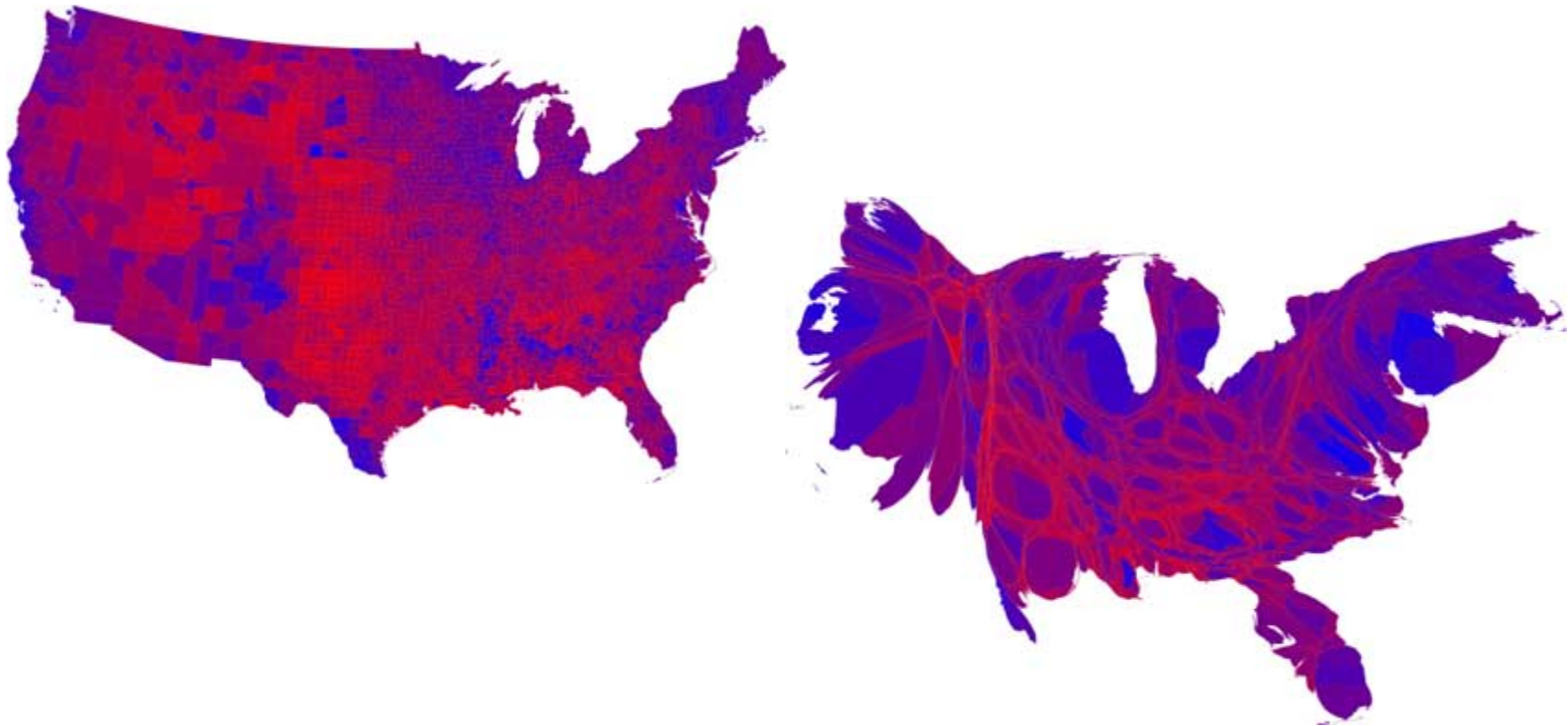
2012 Q2 +1.3%
2012 Q1 +2.0

Final estimates are released about 3
months after a quarter's end

Source: Bloomberg



What Drives Elections?



Source: <http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2008/11/07/purple-america/>



What Drives Elections?



Source: Bryan Denton for *The New York Times*,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/26/world/asia/in-afghanistan-us-advisers-train-allies-with-caution.html?pagewanted=all>



Effect of Campaigns & Advertising?





SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Syllabus

CITIZENS UNITED *v.* FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

No. 08–205. Argued March 24, 2009—Reargued September 9, 2009—
Decided January 21, 2010





Citizens United & Wes Media Project

- Unlimited corp./union investment
- FEC reporting incomplete (FCC developments)
- End of Wisconsin Advertising Project

- Our goals:
 - Develop definitive database
 - Enhance transparency



Brought to you by:

WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY



Bowdoin



Rockefeller
Brothers Fund
Philanthropy for an Interdependent World



Kantar/CMAG Frequency Data

CREATIVE	MARKET	STATION	AFFILIATE	AIRDATE	AIRTIME	PROGRAM
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/15/2010	00:03:30	INSIDER WKND
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/11/2010	23:56:27	ABC NEWS:NIGHTLINE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/13/2010	00:03:10	ABC NEWS:NIGHTLINE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/14/2010	00:04:14	ABC NEWS:NIGHTLINE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/14/2010	19:48:28	WHEEL OF FORTUNE WKND
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/13/2010	13:40:01	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/12/2010	13:24:00	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/11/2010	13:22:00	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WCCT	CW	08/15/2010	01:40:41	FOX 61 NEWS AT TEN
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/13/2010	05:20:04	GOOD MORNING CONCT 5A
USSEN\CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/12/2010	05:53:31	GOOD MORNING CONCT 530A



2012
WESLEYAN MEDIA

AcademiClip.
Today's Media Research



WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT

2012

Political Advertising Analysis



LOGIN

USER NAME

PASSWORD

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Online Coding Tool



REPORT PROBLEM

HOUSE/AL01 BONNER STOOD UP TO OBAMA

Notes from Supervisor:

Page 2 Page 3 Page 4 Issues Complete Coding

Are the any of the following issues are mentioned in this ad? (Check all that apply)

Economic Policy

- Taxes
- Deficit/Budget/Debt
- Government Spending
- Recession/Economic Stimulus
- Minimum Wage
- Farming (friend of)
- Business (friend of)
- Union (friend of)
- Employment/Jobs
- Poverty
- Trade/Globalization
- Housing/Sub-prime Mortgages
- Economic disparity/income inequality

Foreign/Defense Policy

- Military (generic reference)
- Foreign Policy (generic reference)
- Veterans
- Foreign Aid
- Nuclear Proliferation
- China
- Middle East
- Iran
- Afghanistan/War in Afghanistan
- September, 11th
- Terror/Terrorism/Terrorist
- Iraq/War in Iraq
- Israel

Social Issues

- Abortion
- Homosexuality/Gay & Lesbian Rights
- Moral/Family/Religious Values
- Tobacco
- Affirmative Action
- Gambling
- Assisted Suicide/Euthanasia
- Gun Control
- Civil Liberties/Privacy
- Race Relations/Civil Rights

Social Welfare Issues

- Education/Schools
- Lottery for Education
- Child Care
- Health Care (not prescription drugs)
- Prescription Drugs
- Medicare
- Social Security
- Welfare
- Women's Health

Other





Data We Collect

- Tone (promote, attack, contrast)
- Issue themes, personal traits/adjectives & policy vs. personality balance of spot
- Major politician mentions & tone
- Mentions of party affiliation, magic words, etc
- Emotional appeals, music, voiceovers
- Historical context (2000 – 2008, WiscAds)



Wesleyan Media Project » Blog Archive » Ad Spending in Federal and Gubernatorial Races in 2010 Eclipses \$1 Billion; \$250M in Last Two Weeks Alone - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

https://election-ad.research.wesleyan.edu/2010/10/27/spending-update/

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WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT
2010 Political Advertising Analysis

« Negativity Update: 2010 Features Similar Rates of Negativity, But Dems More Likely to Attack Personally

An Uptick in Negativity: Last Few Weeks Provide Confirmation – 2010 Campaign Most Negative in Recent History »

Ad Spending in Federal and Gubernatorial Races in 2010 Eclipses \$1 Billion; \$250M in Last Two Weeks Alone

Oct. 27, 2010 by efowler

Spending by outside groups up to \$120 million since September 1

(MIDDLETOWN, CT –) As of October 20, spending on advertising in U.S. Senate, House and gubernatorial races has eclipsed \$1 billion, a historic figure by any measure. Almost \$620 million of that spending has been since September 1, and \$250 million was in the past two weeks alone. As a point of comparison, the Wesleyan Media Project estimated roughly \$220M was spent on advertising between January 1 and September 15. That means in the last two weeks alone, spending overtook the first nine and a half months of the year. Year-to-date spending is almost 50 percent greater in House races (from almost \$142M in 2008 to over \$210M today) and has almost doubled in Senate races compared to 2008 (from \$158.5M to \$314M).

***To view entire release as a pdf, click here.

***For tables, select your format (xls and xml have more information): pdf xls or zipped xml

Press Releases

2010 Campaign Ad Studies Published

An Uptick in Negativity: Last Few Weeks Provide Confirmation – 2010 Campaign Most Negative in Recent History

Subscribe by RSS

Subscribe by Email

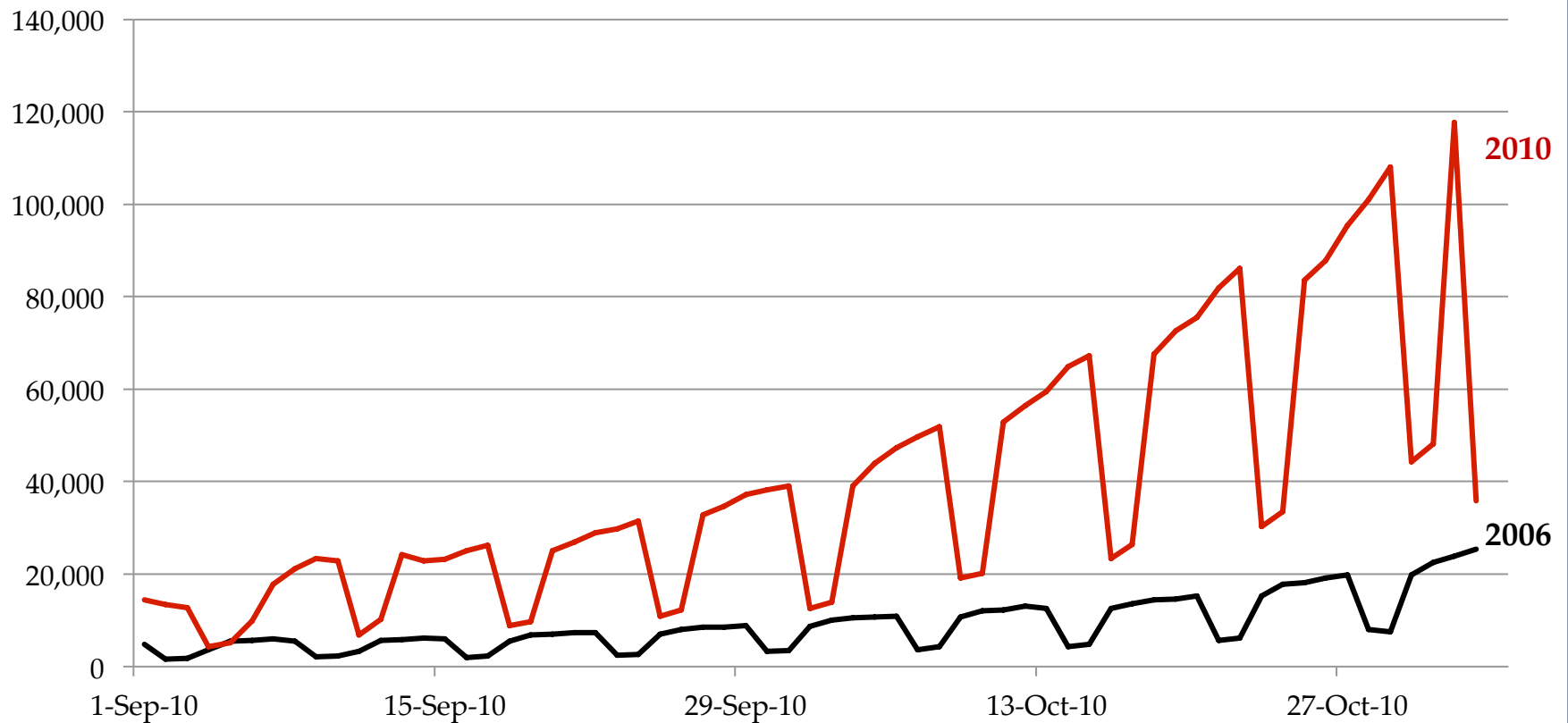
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Political Advertising Analysis



TRENDS IN VOLUME AND SPONSORSHIP



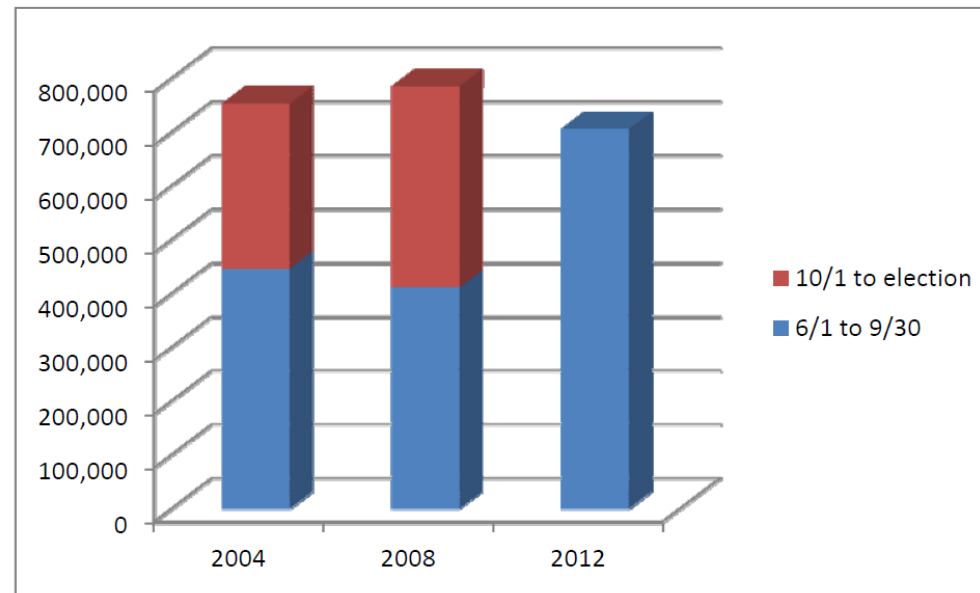
2010: Record Breaking Year for Ads





2012: Record Pulverizing!

Figure 1. Volume of Presidential Advertising in 2004, 2008 and 2012



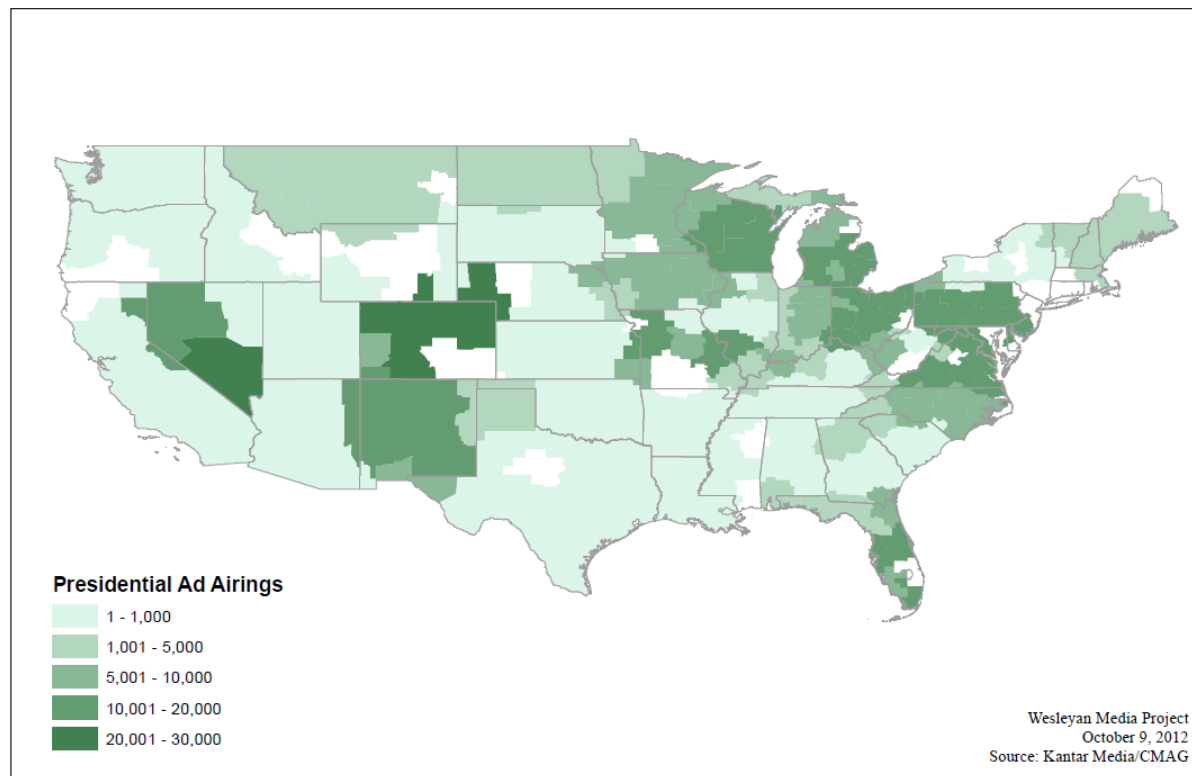
Numbers include broadcast television and national cable advertising. Data from 2004 and 2008 come from the Wisconsin Advertising Project.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.



2008: Obama takes a nat'l strategy

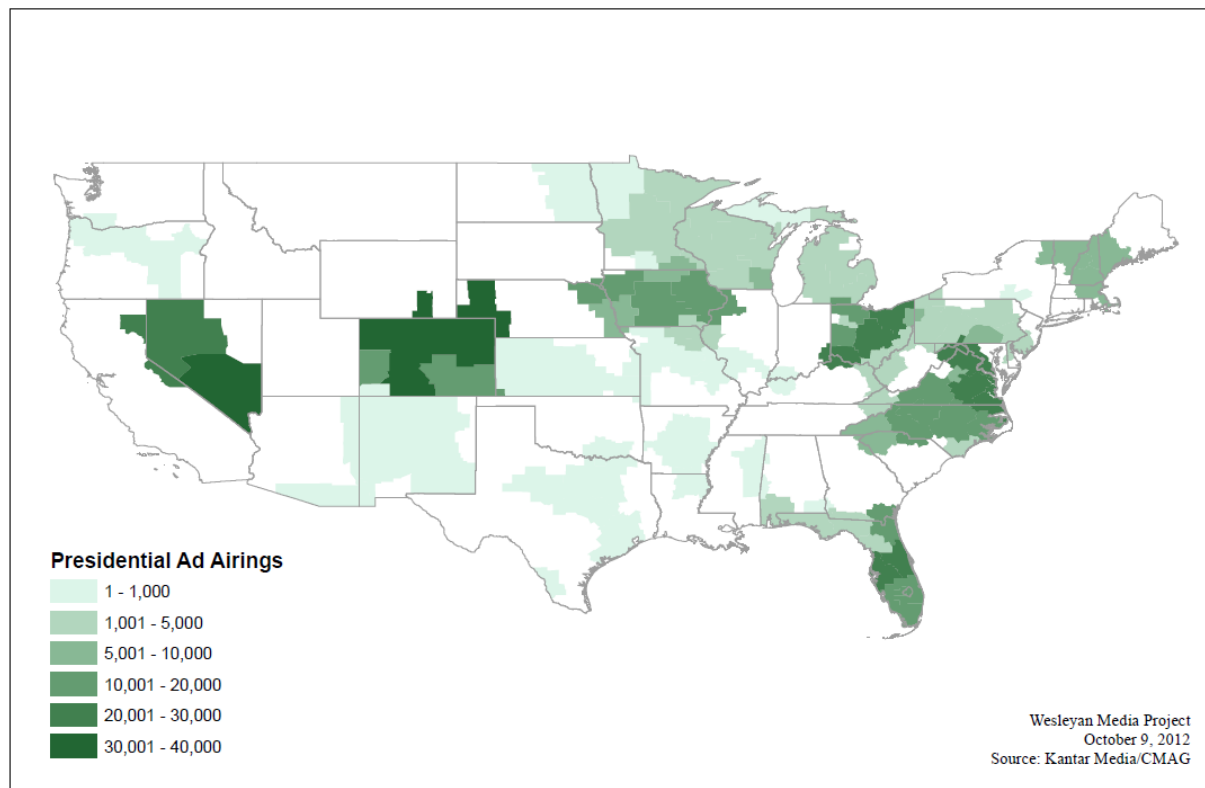
Total Presidential Ad Airings (June 6-Sept 30, 2008)





2012: Much more highly concentrated

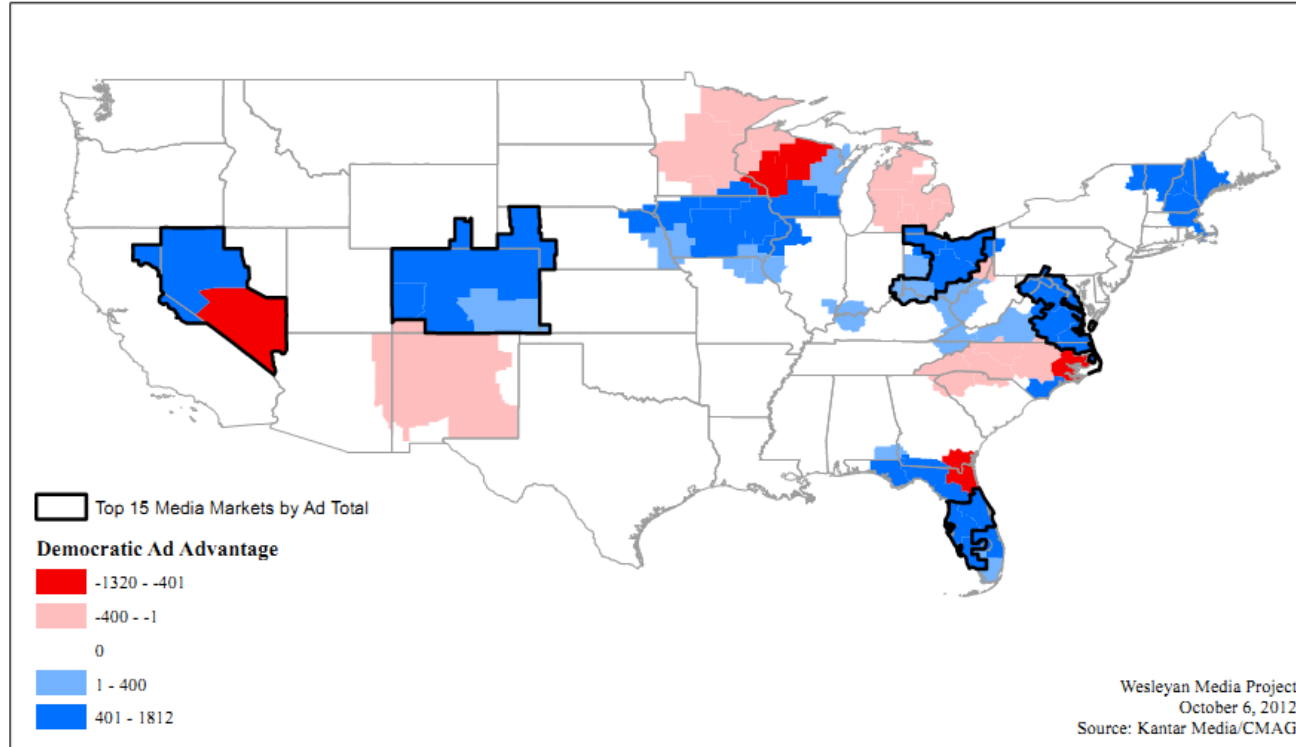
Total Presidential Ad Airings (June 6-Sept 30, 2012)





Obama Dominating Key Battleground Markets for 5 Weeks Ending 9/30/12

Figure 1: Democratic Ad Advantage in Presidential Race by Media Market (September 9-30)





Interest Group Activity Skyrockets

Table 3: Top Spenders in Ad Race (General Election Campaign)

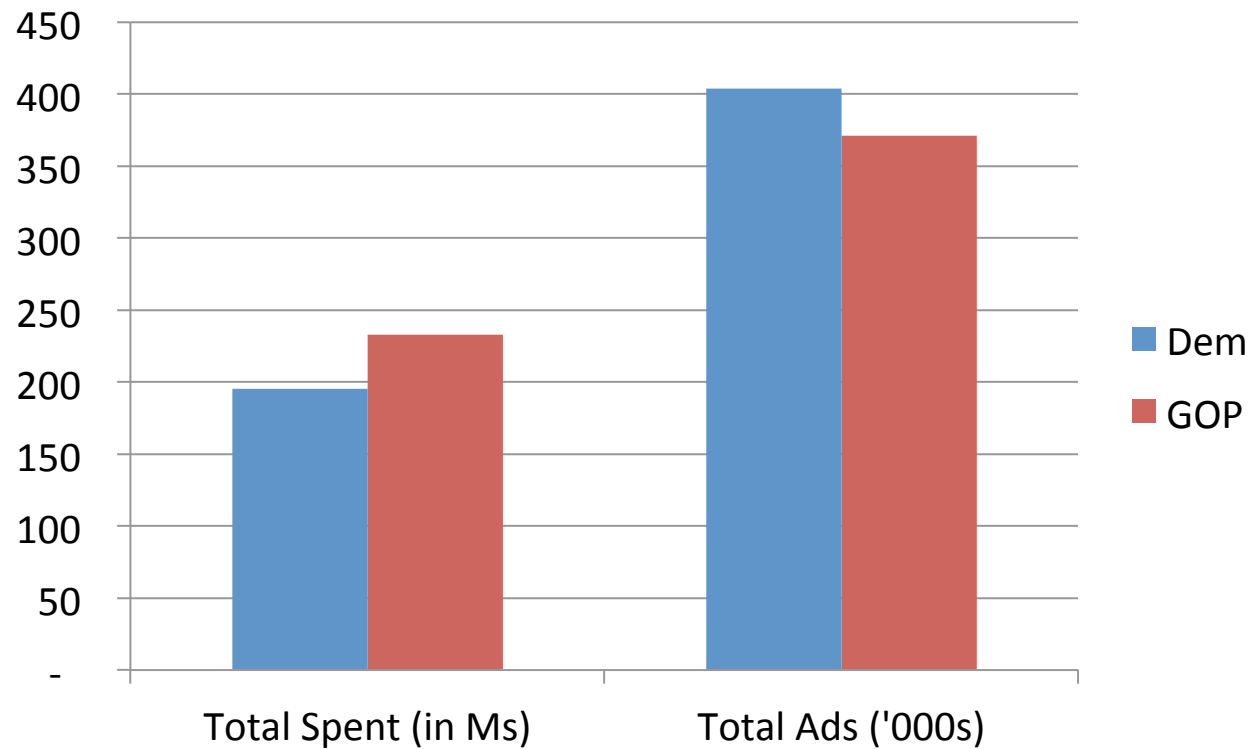
Sponsor	Party	Est. Cost	Ads
Obama, Barack	Dem	\$163,763,350	363,010
Romney, Mitt	Rep	\$57,272,390	126,748
Crossroads Grassroots Policy Strategies	Rep	\$41,478,930	68,857
Americans For Prosperity	Rep	\$35,936,070	43,088
Restore Our Future, Inc.	Rep	\$33,945,950	41,159
American Crossroads	Rep	\$17,859,310	28,474
Republican National Committee	Rep	\$17,658,350	26,059
RNC & Mitt Romney	Rep	\$15,962,220	23,861
DNC & Barack Obama	Dem	\$15,309,000	7,210
Priorities USA Action	Dem	\$14,592,420	31,707
Concerned Women For America	Rep	\$4,400,360	3,132
American Future Fund	Rep	\$3,775,150	3,929
Americans For Job Security	Rep	\$2,986,050	4,320
Republican Jewish Coalition	Rep	\$1,384,180	1,622
Planned Parenthood Action Fund	Dem	\$1,369,800	1,751

Totals are from April 25 through September 30. Numbers include broadcast television and national cable advertising.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.



Money Isn't Everything





Connection to Polls

- Ad advantages lend opportunities to persuade
- Frequently correlated with poll movement
- Dem advantage is dissipating...expect tightening



EMAIL PERMALINK
Tweet Like <21k

Did Obama Just Throw The Entire Election Away?

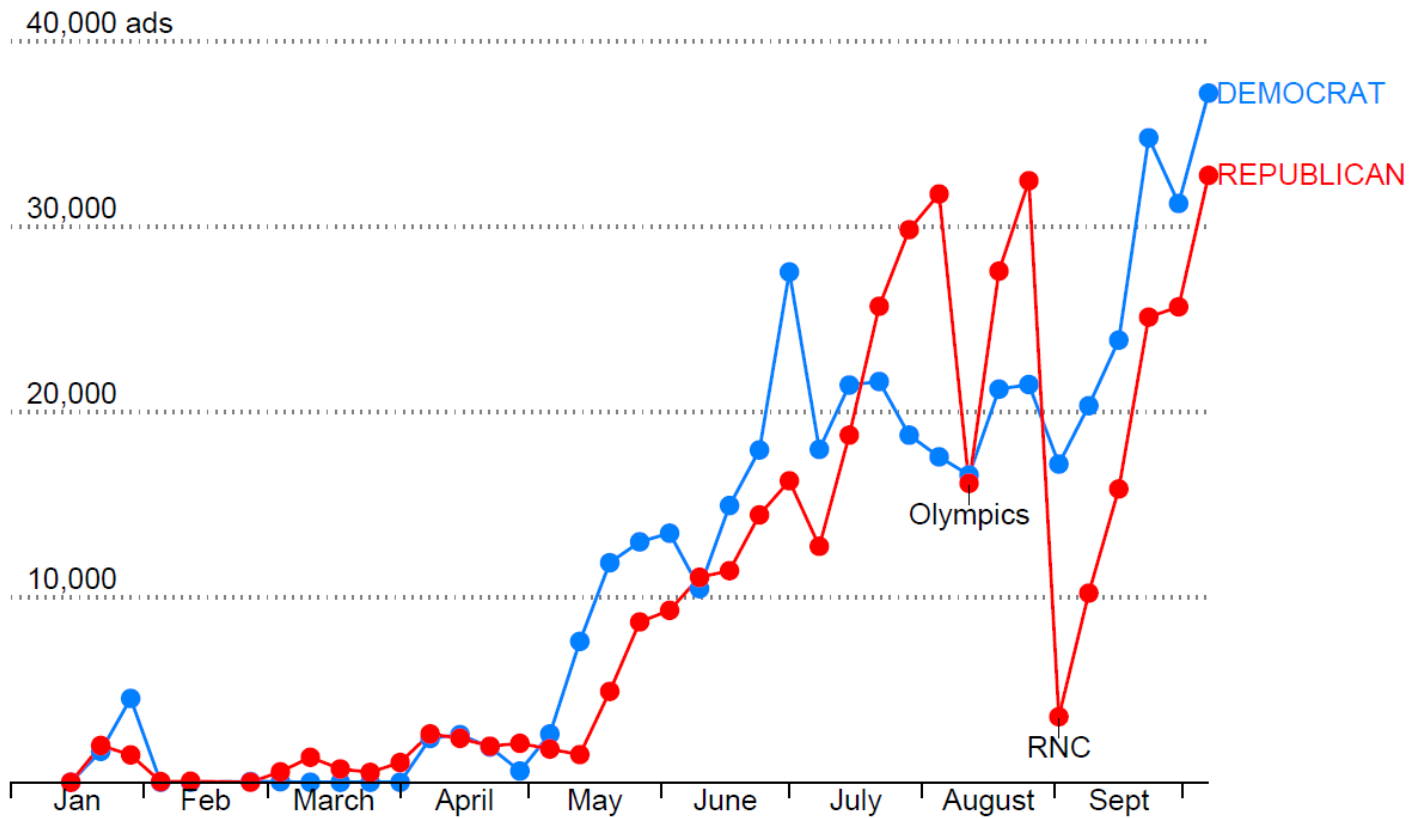
8 Oct 2012 07:13 PM



The Pew poll is *devastating, just devastating*. Before the debate, Obama had a 51 - 43 lead; now, Romney has a 49 - 45 lead. That's a simply unprecedented reversal for a candidate in October. Before Obama had leads on every policy issue and personal characteristic; now Romney leads in almost all of them. Obama's performance gave Romney a 12 point swing! I repeat: a *12 point swing*.



Volume of Campaign Advertising in the Presidential Election through 10/7



The data are weekly counts of ad airings, as measured by CMAG|Kantar Media and including spending by the two candidates, the parties, and independent groups. Graph by John Sides.

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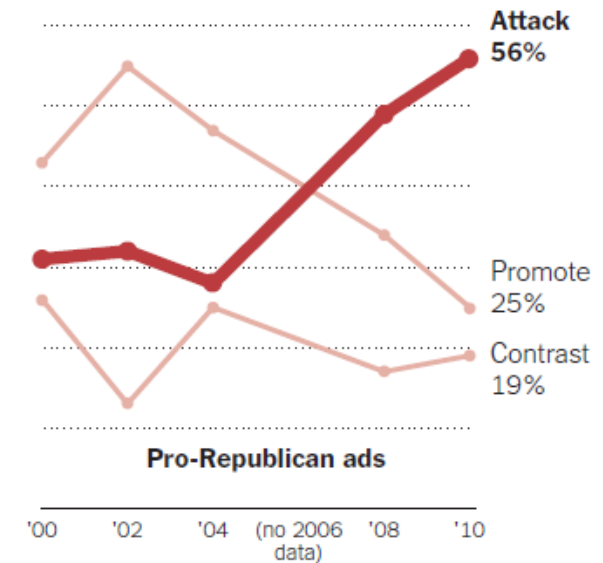
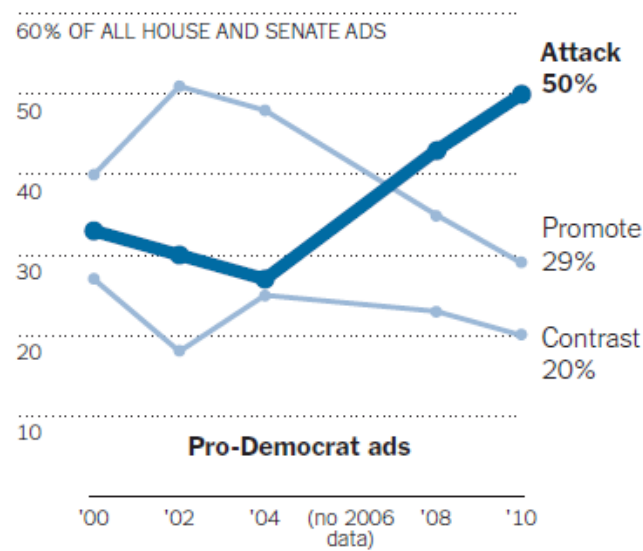


TRENDS IN TONE



Tone of 2010 Campaign

Politics on TV is getting more negative. A continuing study of political television advertising finds that in this election cycle, **attack ads** — those solely about a candidate's opponent — increased to half or more of all commercials. The share of ads that **promote** a candidate has fallen steadily since 2002; those that **contrast** candidates (using only part of the ad to attack an opponent) are consistently the least numerous. Figures are for all ads that aired between Sept. 1 and Oct. 20 of each election cycle.

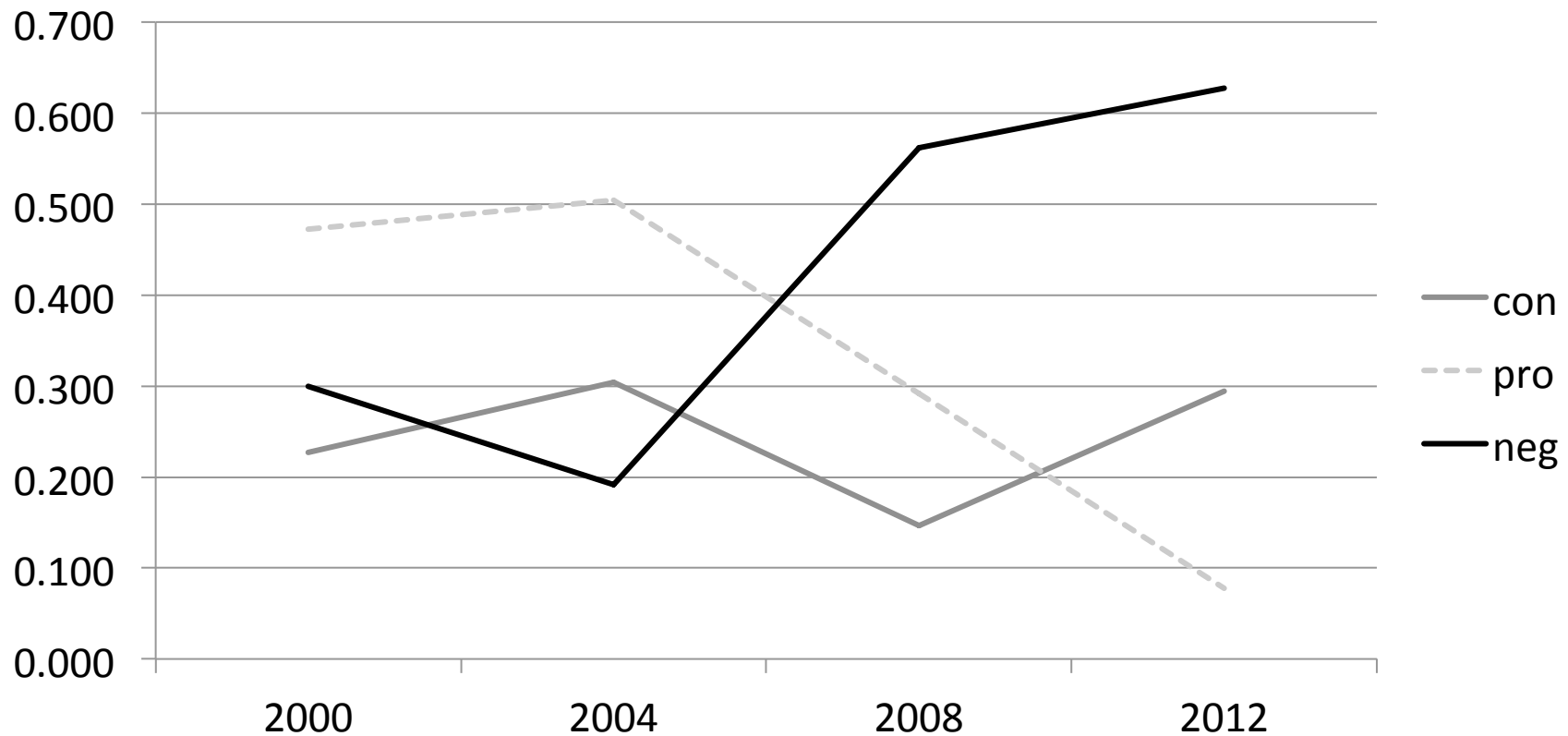


Sources: 2010 figures based on Wesleyan Media Project with data from Kantar Media/CMAG. 2000-2008 figures by Wisconsin Advertising Project with data from CMAG. Ads studied are for House and Senate by all sponsors (candidates, parties, groups, and coordinated).

MARJORIE CONNELLY AND BILL MARSH/
THE NEW YORK TIMES

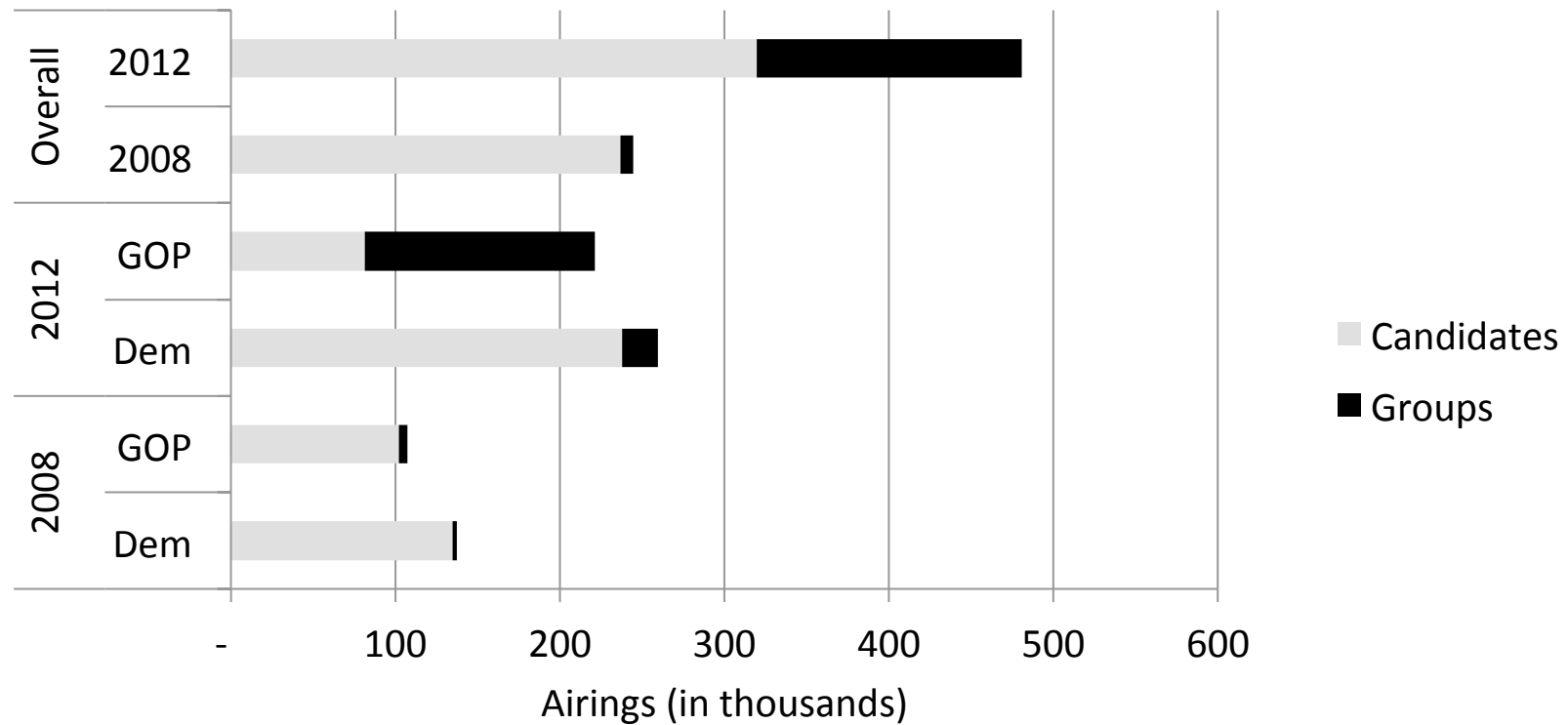


2012 Continues Uptick in Negativity



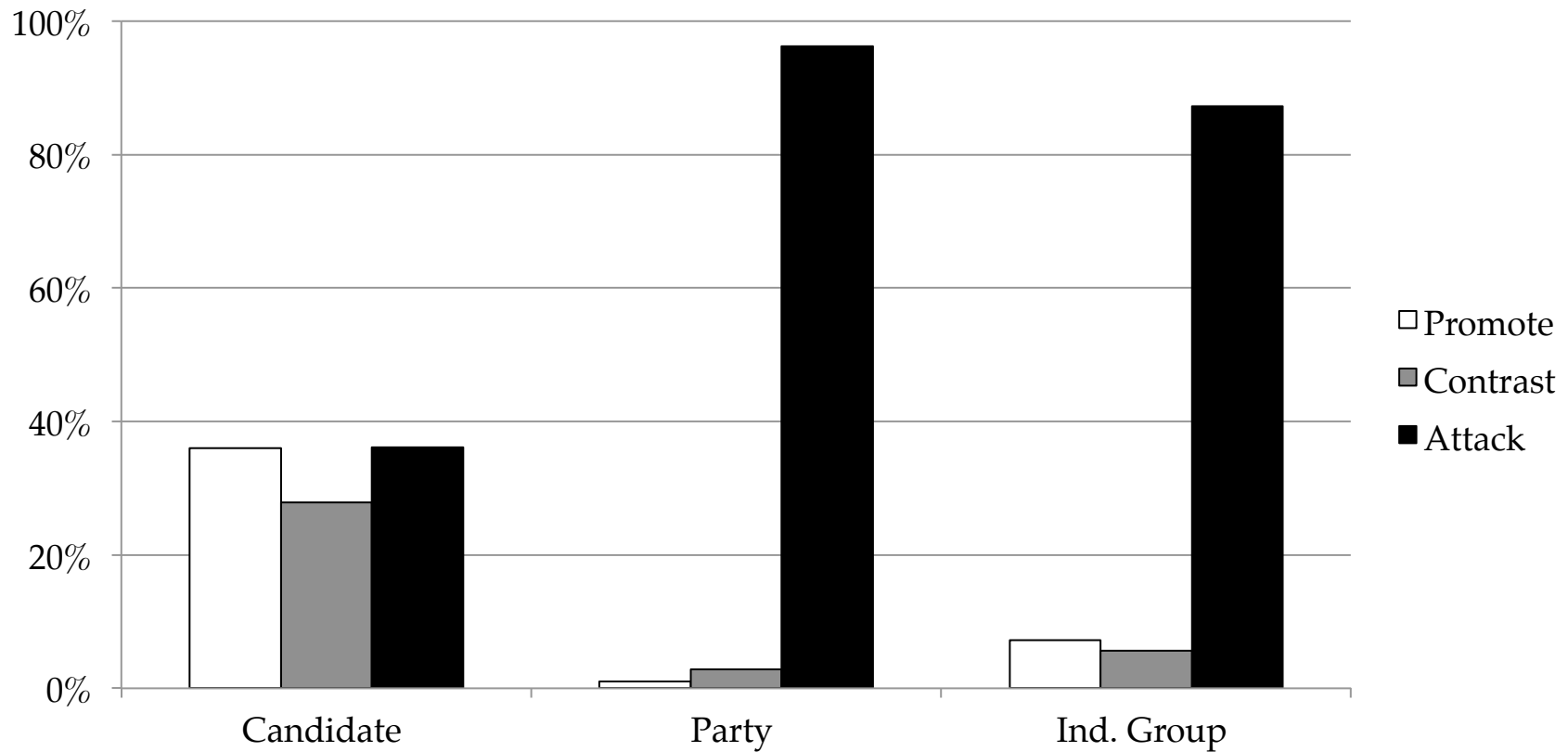


Outside Groups vs. Candidate Ads



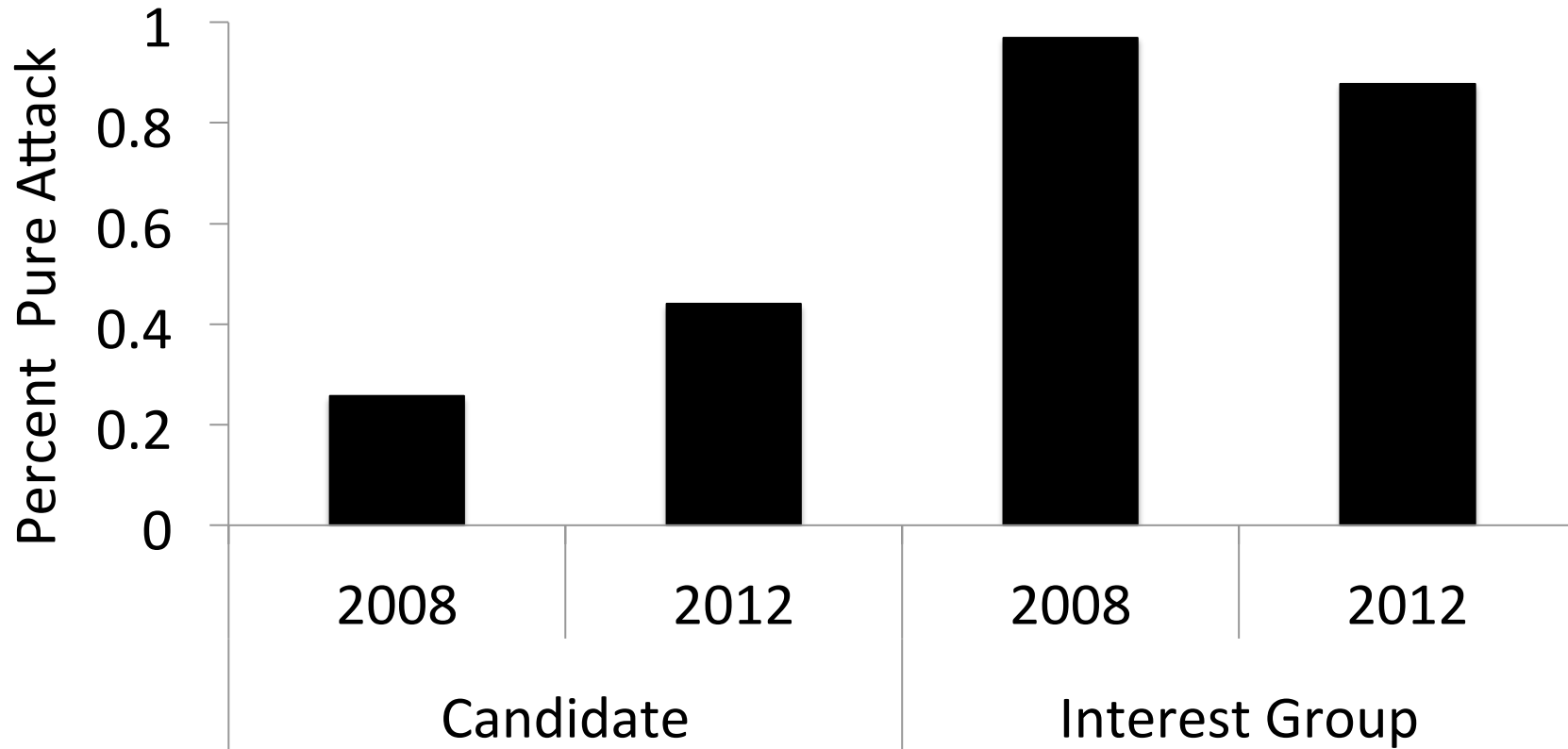


Parties, Groups More Negative





Candidates Also Attacking More



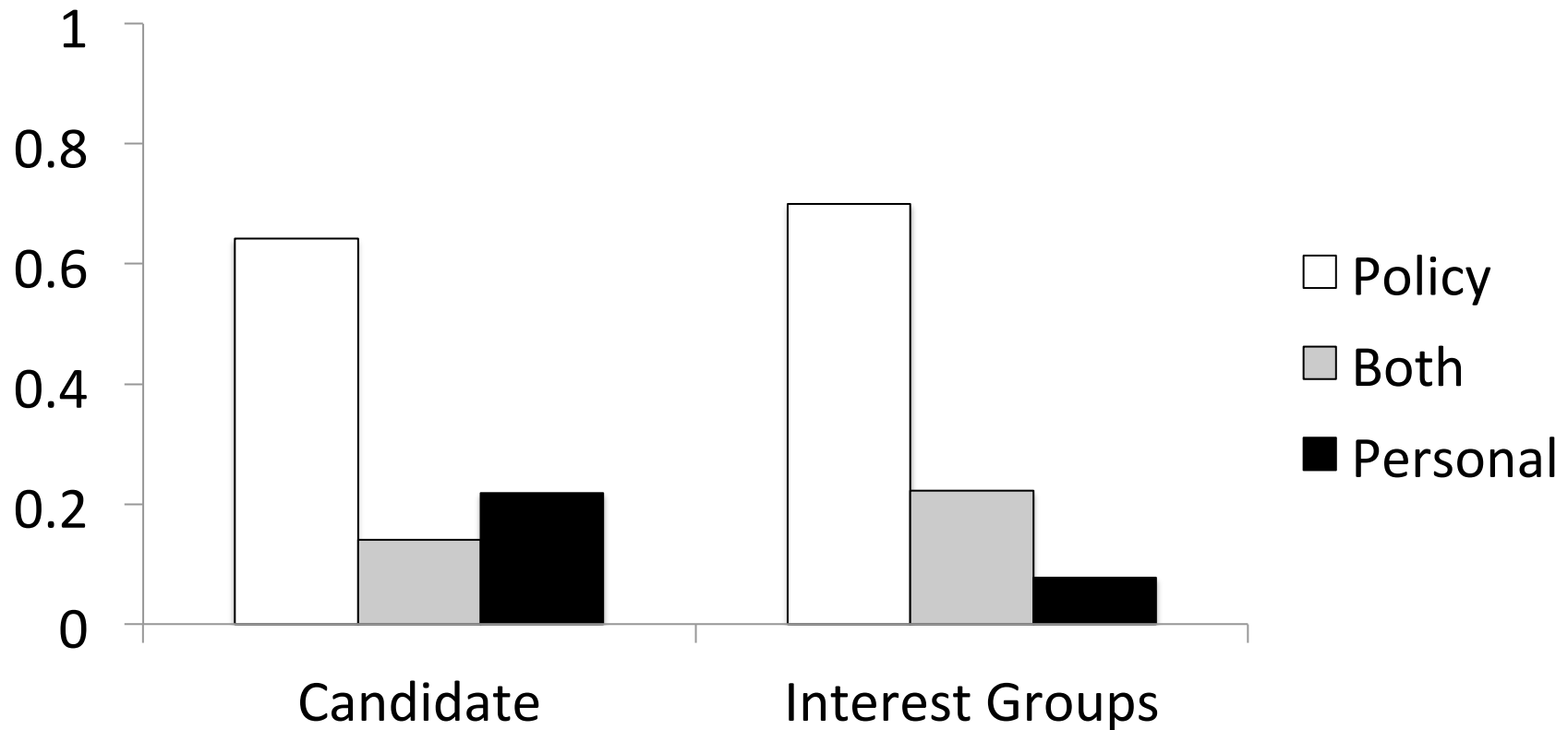


Concerns Over Negativity?

- No large suppression and maybe slight mobilization effect on turnout (Lau et al. 2007)
- Compared to positive ads, negative spots are
 - more memorable (Brians and Wattenberg 1996)
 - more substantive than positive ones (Geer 2006)



Candidates & IGs Policy Focused





Concerns Over Negativity?

- No large suppression and maybe slight mobilization effect on turnout (Lau et al. 2007)
- Compared to positive ads, negative spots are
 - more memorable (Brians and Wattenberg 1996)
 - more substantive than positive ones (Geer 2006)
 - stimulate higher interest in campaign (Bartels 2000) and more information-seeking (Brader 2005)
- Little evidence that they corrode trust (Brooks & Geer 2007, Geer 2006; Jackson et al. 2009)

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