

Summer 8-2019

Missing the Mark: Obama and Trump's use of similar communication strategies

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**Missing the Mark:
Obama and Trump's use of similar communication strategies**

An honors thesis presented to the
Department of Political Science,
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy,
University at Albany, State University of New York
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with Honors in Political Science
and
graduation from The Honors College

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August, 2019

Abstract

This paper examines the traditional notion that President Obama and President Trump were polar opposites. It seeks to answer the questions of how are similar or different the Trump and Obama campaign communication strategies are and how these strategies have changed from campaigning to governing mode. The paper seeks to answer these questions by looking at six key communication strategies. These six communication strategies and explanations are known as the social media strategy, branding, engaging with the public, autonomy over the messaging, focus on personality, and rhetoric. This paper looked at the relationship between these strategies by first analyzing the strategies relative to the candidates which they were running against and then to themselves. Through this analysis it was found that Obama and Trump's communication strategies were similar throughout both campaigning and governing. Analyzing the similarities between Obama and Trump helps show the public how social media has changed the ways in which communication is conducted and how elections are decided.

Acknowledgments

First off, I would like to thank Professor Weaver for all of the help he has provided me with throughout my undergraduate academic career and for both his help and flexibility with my thesis process. I am especially thankful for his advice and help during my “thesis crisis.”

I would also like to thank Professor Barta for making my graduation from the honors program this summer possible and Dean Chang for teaching me that research is indeed fun.

To my family and friends, I would also like to extend my gratitude for your support throughout these past two years, as I know I would not have survived without you.

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Introduction

President Trump has been contrasted with President Obama since before he was even elected. Communication scholars have said that Trump speaks at a “Fourth Grade Level” and that his election, in true populist style, was a result of a cultural backlash against Obama and overall greater globalization (Bostdorff, 2017). Trump’s victory has been most widely attributed to his Tweeting and consequential free media. However, Trump was not the first president to use Tweeting to his advantage. Obama was, instead, the first president to claim victory in a social media election. Trump and Obama make up the first two “Social Media Presidents” (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). However, there have never been two presidents as juxtaposed as them in American history. Both Presidents have run against Hillary Clinton, been characterized as both charismatic and anti-establishment, and had the unique ability to excite a crowd. They also both served their first two years as president with one party control of the government. This paper seeks to delve further into this enigma by first examining how similar or different Trump and Obama’s campaign communication strategies are and second, examining how these communication strategies have changed as the president’s transition into governing mode. The hypothesis is that Trump and Obama used similar communication strategies during their campaigns but different communication strategies while governing and after analysis it was found that the presidents used similar communication strategies throughout both their campaign and time as President.

Literature Review

Political communication has been traditionally difficult to define. Denton and Woodward’s definition of political communication is “a pure discussion about the allocation of

the public resources, official authority, and official sanctions” (McNair, 2017, p. 3). Their definition includes verbal and written political rhetoric but not symbolic communication acts. They focus their definition more on the intentions of the sender to influence the political environment. Garber, on the other hand, offers a more encompassing definition that includes not only rhetoric but also body language and political acts (McNair, 2017). This paper will use the definition of McNair which builds upon Denton and Woodward’s definition, focusing specifically on intentions.

McNair’s definition of political communication is “purposeful communication about politics” (McNair, 2017, p. 4). His definition encompasses three things: the first is all forms of communication used by politicians and political actors for the purpose of a specific goal, the second is communication addressed to the actors by non-politicians, and third is communication about these actors in the media (news reports, social media, etc.) (McNair, 2017). This definition is all encompassing and includes all political discourse (McNair, 2017). The definition differs from Denton and Woodward in the fact that they want not only to written communication but they also want to include symbolic and visual communication.

This paper will follow McNair’s definition by looking at political communication in its broadest sense. It will be using the idea of political communication to analyze similarities and differences in how the first two social media presidents have communicated both during their campaigns and while governing. Throughout this process the paper will focus primarily on the first aspect of McNair’s definition of political communication which discusses it in terms of communication used by politicians and political actors to achieve a specific goal. In this paper, that goal would be getting elected president and being re-elected for a second term.

Methods

This paper will analyze six strategies used by both presidents in their campaign. It will then analyze strategies they used while they were governing to determine whether or not their communication strategies were similar during their election campaigns and whether or not they remained similar throughout their time as President. It will first analyze the strategies relative to the candidates which they were running against and then to themselves. For the purpose of this paper strategy will be defined as any type of communication that is correlated to getting a candidate elected to office. The six strategies we will be looking at are the social media strategy, providing staff with more autonomy over messaging, the ability to create a brand, the extent to which they engage with the public, focus on their personality, and their rhetoric.

Campaign Communication Strategies

Historical Analysis of Previous Presidential Campaign Communication

Election campaigns are inherently communication campaigns. In order to get a better understanding of Trump and Obama's Campaign communication strategies it is important to do an analysis of the history of modern campaign communication strategies. For the purpose of this paper modern will be determined as post 1960 after the first televised debate. This paper will first examine Obama's 2008 and 2012 campaign communication strategies and then Trump's 2016 strategies. It will then compare and contrast them to see if President Trump and President Obama are indeed different as most scholars have said or if they actually are more similar than people typically believe. It will then expand this analysis to examine each president's governing style. To see if the similarities or difference between their strategies carry through to when they are in office. Comparing both the election strategies and governing strategies will allow us to truly see how similar or different these two presidents are.

Blumer and Kavanaugh (1999), discuss political communication in three phases. They describe the first phase as the “golden age of parties” where the communication system is dominated by the parties. The second phase is where our analysis begins. They discuss the 1960s as the “era of television” where JFK was the first president to win through televised debates. The third era is the digital era. They describe this as the “age of internet” which has seen the personalization of campaigning and a rise in populism due to more people being able to participate in elections. Enli (2017), suggests that this digital era does not describe the current atmosphere and instead describes a fourth phase starting from 2010 onward called the “era of social media”. He says that social media hasn’t replaced television but changed the way in which people watch it.

In each era there has been a president that has capitalized on these new forms of media before others leading to their election and increased control of the message. Over time the presidents that have successfully done this have stood out. However, in more recent decades with the emergence of the digital and social media age these presidents have become a bit more blurred. Some scholars have pointed to Obama as the first social media president but in the wake of Trump’s election some have suggested that he is the true social media president because of his striking use of Twitter during not only his election but also his presidency. In some ways, Donald Trump can be considered similar to both to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy because they all changed the way in which communication was used once it office. FDR succeeded as president by dominating the radio and JFK dominated via television. FDR sought to bypass traditional means of communication at the time to talk to the public and dissuade fears. These became known as his “fireside chats” and by 1933 radio was most popular form of communication because it was faster, cheaper, and easier. JFK embraced television during his

1960 campaign and then began to schedule live televised news conferences. By the 1960s, 90% of Americans had televisions in their homes (Nelson & Thurber, 2019). Each of these presidents used new forms of communication in their time to bypass the traditional conception of electoral and presidential communication strategies.

Campaigns are a time for experimental communication strategies. However, in each era unlike Trump, Obama, JFK, and FDR there have been candidates that are not as successful in implementing new media. Two candidates have sought to use new media technologies to curry favor with voters but have failed. Democratic challenger, Senator Edward Kennedy, participated in CBS primetime documentary about his career and potential campaign. However, Kennedy was unprepared for the interview and could not even answer the question of why he wanted to be president. The other candidate was Governor Michael Dukakis. Dukakis was seen as weak on national defense so he planned a press stunt followed by a policy speech on national defense spending. Instead of communicating a strong image the campaign instead resulted in laughter from reporters as the event was televised to the world.

A communication strategy that Trump experimented with in his campaign was earned media. Earned media is media coverage that a candidate receives from a news outlet for free. Trump's tweets and ability to drive the news agenda placed a new emphasis on earned media. However, this strategy has been prevalent in campaign communications for a long time. The only thing that has changed is the means of attaining it. One president that was successful in earning free media was Bill Clinton. His unique way of attaining this was going on Saturday Night Live in 1992 wearing sunglasses and playing the saxophone. The clip was replayed multiple times across major news stations and allowed him to reach out in a much more personal level to a new type of voter. This also allowed him to frame his opponent as older and out of touch (Nelson &

Thurber, 2019). Clinton's Saturday Night Live appearance also exemplified the increased aspect of personal campaigning that Blumer and Kavanaugh (1999) discuss as a new aspect of the digital era.

Johnson (2011) discusses the differences in campaign communication strategies across the 20th versus 21st century specifically focusing on how the online revolution changed them. For instance, how instead of going on late night TV to earn free media Trump used social media to achieve the same effect. He notes seven factors about the 20th century model of campaigning. He first notes that political consultants are in command and control mode and that these strategists employ a top-down method of communicating that does not actually involve the voters in critical campaign decisions (Johnson, 2011). He further notes that campaigns relied heavily on TV as their chief medium of communication and that this allowed campaigns time to craft messages, advertisements, and responses. He states that most campaign work was done based on instinct and past experience and that, in general, fundraising was done with big ticket events. He says that all of these contribute to the voters being spectators in elections (Johnson, 2011). He analyzes how these seven aspects changed in terms of the 21st century and found that political consultants still dominate campaigns but that the top down model has given way to a more fluid model which encourages more citizen input and involvement. He notes that television is still important in campaign advertising but that the timeline in which campaigns have to respond has decreased dramatically due to the internet (Johnson, 2011). He says that guesswork and experience has been replaced by data and metrics and that although campaigns still rely on big dollar donors, they also have increased the amount of small donations they receive from the general public. Overall, he concludes that in the 21st century voters have a greater sense of participation in campaigns (Johnson, 2011).

In explaining these shifts, Johnson discusses what he describes as the “online revolution.” He says that this began with Bob Dole announcing his website address in the 1996 debates but was not really noticed until 2004 when the Governor of Vermont, Howard Dean began his campaign. Dean’s campaign was deemed influential because it created three innovations that carried over into modern campaigning (Johnson, 2011). The first was interactive communication between supporters and campaign, the second was that he was able to use the technology to gather together supporters and organize, and the third was that he pioneered online fundraising. Although Johnson discusses Dean as playing a big role in the overall transitions of campaign strategies others such as Gerodimos and Justinussen (2015) have argued that his role was a lot less prominent and that his campaign resulted in a “Façade of interactivity” because he made the tools available but didn’t listen to voter comments. Instead, they argue that his website was more used as a “static campaign flyer.”

Johnson does a good job at analyzing the history of what Blumer and Kavanaugh (1999) discuss as the “digital era.” However, Johnson was developing his framework in 2011 which was a pre-Twitter, pre-Trump era. Pearson and O’Connell (2012) do a good job of analyzing the changing landscape of political communication strategies in what Enli (2017) refers to as the “fourth phase” or the “era of social media.” They note that in 2009, Twitter was a novelty in politics, but in 2012, it’s a necessity. From 2008 to 2012 people using social media doubled and Twitter went from 3 to 500 million while Facebook exceeded 1 billion users in 2012 (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). This increased usage of the media has created an overflow of information and in the social media age it is also important for candidates to be able to break through the clutter. “With the proliferation of the 24/7 news cycle came 24/7 politicking” (Johnson, 2011, p. 23). Being on top of the news cycle 24/7 and controlling the news cycle is a strategy that Trump

was extremely successful at. The communication scene has changed drastically since Obama's first 2008 campaign and in this new era, both Trump and Obama have had to change their communication strategies in order to stay ahead of their opponents and to adapt to the new media environment.

Obama's Campaign Communication Strategies

“So while Hillary Clinton and John McCain set out to run the last campaign all over again, [Barack] Obama forged ahead and ran the first campaign of the twenty-first century”
– Garret M. Graff (2009)

(Johnson, 2011 p. 1).

Obama was the first successful candidate to use social media in his campaigns. In his first election he ran against a total of 20 other major party candidates and was successful (Johnson, 2011). In terms of social media, President Obama was ahead of the times and created an innovation gap. McCain's lag in adapting to the changing media environment greatly impacted the amount of media coverage he received (Bimber, 2014). Nelson and Thurber (2019) have referred to the 2008 election as the “YouTube election” saying that the platform heavily impacted the debates and how campaigns advertised. Obama's campaign manager “David Plouffe stated that “Technology was core to our campaign from day one and it only grew in importance” (Johnson, 2011, p.6). In 2008 Obama had 100 staff members to work on social media and by the 2012 election that figure increased dramatically (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). Through online communication Obama was able to get supporters to hold 100,000 events, had 10,000 applicants for 3,000 organizing fellows, and made 3 million phone calls in the last 4 days of his campaign (Johnson, 2011). In 2011, Obama announced his re-election bid with a Youtube video and a tweet (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). “Pearson & O'Connell (2012) note

that, ‘in 2009, Twitter was a novelty in politics, in 2012, it’s a necessity’” (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015, p. 115).

“The Obama campaign was the best financed, best run, and most sophisticated combination of online technology, social networking and grassroots activism, and blending of old and new media.” (Johnson, 2011, p.1) Obama’s use of social media as a campaign strategy was still very new. Because of this he did not write any of his own social media messages in 2008 and instead opted for trained professionals to craft his content (Enli, 2017). In 2012, only 1% of Obama’s tweets throughout the election cycle were actually his. He often indicated this by signing “b.o.” on the bottom (Enli, 2017). In 2012 many of the other presidential candidates had caught on to the effectiveness of using social media. However, one of the reasons that Obama’s tweeting strategy in 2012 was successful was because he gave his digital media staffers much more autonomy over messaging and techniques than Romney provided his staffers with (Enli, 2017).

Obama not only used Twitter as a communication strategy in his campaigns but he also used Facebook heavily. The Obama campaign treated Facebook as a tool of top-down promotion, as opposed to a means of substantive civic interaction. The majority of the messages that the campaign posted in the 67 days before the 2012 election were picture posts with a caption (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). More than half of these photos were pictures of Obama speaking or hugging supporters and over 13% were pictures of his wife and children (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). With a more personal focus also comes more positive rhetoric. Obama’s 2012 Facebook campaign was mostly positive and avoided highly polarizing or negative attacks (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). His campaign also chose not to respond or make defensive posts in response to attacks by Romney (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015).

Overall, his campaign focused more on symbolic and affective aspects of political communication rather than political argumentation and issue-oriented campaigning (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015).

As discussed earlier, the main focus of Obama's posts was his personality instead of policy (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015). The policy statements that were made by his campaign were often obstructed by people's fascination with Obama's character. Gerodimos and Justinussen state that "by focusing on Obama's family and personality, the campaign essentially controlled the discussion because neither of those topics is particularly conducive to substantive and in-depth political engagement on the part of citizens" (Gerodimos & Justinussen, 2015, p. 128). By controlling the message and using social media platforms to put out videos and advertisements it forced news outlets to report on it because "it was news" (Nelson & Thurber, 2019). This in a way allowed him to "earn media coverage" (Enli, 2017). This also represents how campaigning in the social media age has taken on a more personal focus (Enli, 2017).

Obama's social media campaign excited voters. He was able to use the social media platform to create a brand. This brand was the Change campaign and developed out of his youth. Madden (2018) characterized, Obama's 2008 "Change campaign" as extremely successful. It was particularly successful in garnering the support of first-time voters. In 2008, Obama won 69% of voters age 18-24. He was able to do this through not only his use of social media but his use of phone technology and SNS (Kiyohara, 2009). This allowed him to talk directly to his base and then activate them through rallies and events. Part of Obama's appeal in 2008 was his charisma. Bligh and Kohles (2009) have suggested that charismatic leadership theory highlights aspects of Obama and his followers, that in combination with the unfolding economic crisis were particularly relevant in helping understand how as a relatively inexperienced political outsider he

was able to ascend to the US Presidency. In contrast to traditional political rhetoric of change, Obama was much more focused on hope and positivity towards the future. Chants of “Change we can believe” and “Yes we can” were prevalent at his rallies that near the end of the campaign topped nearly 100,000 people in both St. Louis, Missouri and Virginia (WSJ Staff, 2008). Obama’s rallies were greatly contrasted with his opponent John McCain who never received a crowd that big and whose rallies often took on a much more negative tone.

Overall, Obama used social media throughout his campaign in a new way that his opponents did not. His campaign was able to use new media in creative ways due to the greater autonomy they were given over messaging. However, the campaign did not use this social media to heavily emphasize policy but instead to focus on Obama’s personal attributes that would make him a great president. In the same way that Obama used new communication strategies throughout his campaign, Trump did as well. Trump went on to make social media the primary focus of his campaign and he use Twitter in a way that no one else had before.

Trump’s Campaign Communication Strategies

*“Without Tweets I wouldn’t be here”
-President Donald Trump to Financial Times in April 2017*

(Nelson & Thurber, 2019, p. 241)

Trump used Twitter throughout the election to court media attention. He is best known for his Tweets and many have said he “Tweeted his way to power.” Many major news outlets have acknowledged that their coverage of his tweets are part of the reason that Trump is president today. Tweets have become a part of how Trump is viewed by the American public. Trump received a superior amount of earned media coverage in relation to his opponent Hillary Clinton. According to the Tyndall report, across the three major news broadcasters, ABC, CBS,

and NBC, Donald Trump's presidential campaign received 1144 minutes of coverage while Hillary Clinton's campaign received merely 506 minutes over the course of the general election. ABC had the biggest differential in coverage between the two candidates, covering Donald Trump's campaign for 235 more minutes (greater than the entire total coverage of Clinton) while NBC came in a close second covering Trump's campaign for 234 more minutes than Clinton. In each case the news station covered Trump's campaign at a differential greater than Clinton's entire coverage by that broadcasting station. Overall, MediaQuant said that Trump earned more than \$6 billion in free or earned media over the course of the presidential campaign while Clinton received less than \$3 billion (Nelson & Thurber, 2019).

Some have suggested that Trump did not achieve this via any particular communication strategy but instead sought to cause "chaos everyday" and "scramble the news agenda" (Nelson & Thurber, 2019). However, every campaign has a strategy of some sort and in digital era (Blumer & Kavanagh, 1999) no one runs a campaign without professionals by their side. That said, Trump did attain the appearance of a "no strategy" campaign by using the "dead cat strategy" (Madden, 2018). The dead cat strategy is when a candidate successfully changes the subject by distracting from what the original topic was about. This is different from traditional pivoting because it is less intentional and much more destructive. This strategy allowed Trump to continually deliver shock value which is considered a cornerstone of media success (Madden, 2018). This strategy originated with President Lyndon B. Johnson and it allowed Trump to control the conversation and set the agenda (Madden, 2018). One example of the way Johnson manipulated public discourse to his strategic advantage was "telling his aides to accuse his congressional opponent of sleeping with barnyard animals. When he was questioned as to the veracity of this claim, Johnson reportedly said, 'I know it's not true; I just want to hear him deny

it!” (Madden, 2018, p. 31). Johnson’s strategy served as a precursor to Trump’s modern communication strategy.

The success of Trump’s “Dead Cat” Tweeting strategy was due to having more autonomy over the communication process. In the age of social media having more freedom over the communication process allowed him to seem more authentic to the voters. The 2016 Trump campaign was more willing to engage with the general public and didn’t control as much as Clinton (Enli, 2017). Tweets after 7pm were directly from Trump and during the day they were usually from staffers who he dictated to (Enli, 2017). Therefore, his campaign had a more amateur appearance but higher authenticity level than Clinton. Hillary Clinton’s tweets were usually well thought out and although she is traditionally seen as tech savvy, having announced her 2012 campaign via a YouTube video, she had a lag in adapting compared to Trump. In August 2017 Pew Research found that 2/3 of adults receive their news from social media (Madden, 2018). Her need to control the message resulted in her seeming less authentic.

The freedom Trump had to construct his own communication strategies and tweet resulted in the creation of his brand. Trump has two traditional identities as a business man: “Mr. Trump the Builder” and “Mr. Trump the Deal Maker” (Madden, 2018). He is known as a great marketer and was able to successfully market himself through twitter because he was able to control the message and bypass traditional media. By using his identity as Trump the Builder, he was able to use the slogan “Make America Great Again” and turn that into a personal brand because he was going to “rebuild” America. With this idea of Trump as a Builder he was able to represent the blue-collar billionaire which was missing from modern politics and appeals to disaffected voters (Wells et al., 2016).

Trump was able to use his populist brand in order to excite and activate his base. “Mr. Trump excited and mobilized these particular groups in a way no previous candidate had and primarily by fueling and lending credence to their economic angst, as well as their unique social and cultural sensibilities” (Madden, 2018, p. 22). He was charismatic and held lots of rallies. Trump held a total of 26 rallies during the general election and visited 12 states while Clinton only held 19. His biggest rally was in Mobile, AL with approximately 28,000 people in attendance which was over 10,000 more than Clinton’s biggest rally (Smith & Kreutz, 2016). Trump’s rally style also differed from what was seen as traditional as his rallies have been seen as entertainment and full of gesture.

Personality is extremely important in political campaigns in the social media era (Enli, 2017). Trump’s personality was central to his campaign and Twitter allowed him to showcase it. After an analysis of Trump’s rhetoric scholars have said that Trump’s communication was done on a “fourth grade level” while Obama was said to have communicated on a “ninth grade level” (Madden, 2018). This was part of Trump’s personality and his affinity for brief statements via twitter and repetition of words such as winning, politically correct, MAGA, and believe me. Another part of his personality and rhetoric style was to create caricatures of his opponents. Trump was quick to brand Hillary Clinton “Crooked Hillary” due to her email scandal. He referred to others during the primary as “Lyin Ted” and “Liberal Elites” (Madden, 2018). These statements were very effective to marketing and branding during the election and are a part of Trump’s personality.

Overall, Trump’s used Twitter during his campaign to set him apart from his opponents. His campaign did not use this social media to heavily emphasize policy but instead to focus on his personal attributes and thoughts. His twitter was used to activate potential voters but it also

came with the use of more negative rhetoric. This rhetoric was also used during his rallies and came to characterize his campaigns.

Similarities and Differences between the Campaigns

Table 1
Trump and Obama Strategies during Campaign

Strategies:	Similar	Different
Use Social Media	I	
Providing More Autonomy	I	
Branding	I	
Engaging Voters	I	
Focus on their Personality	I	
Rhetoric		I

When analyzing and comparing strategy this paper is looking at how the strategy worked relative to the president’s opponent instead of the strategy in terms of one election cycle to another. It will be analyzing the strategies of Obama relative to McCain and Romney and Trump relative to Hillary. Then it will be seeing if these strategies were both used successfully by Obama and Trump. After looking at Obama and Trump’s campaign communication strategies six strategies were identified. The first was the basic use of social media, in particular, Twitter. The second is providing their staff with more autonomy than their competitor. The third is that they created a brand. The fourth was that they were able to excite voters and the fifth was that

their campaign put a great emphasis on their personality. The sixth and what some consider to be the most important is the rhetoric they used.

Both Trump and Obama used social media, specifically Twitter to their advantage. Their use of social media resulted in earned media. Each of them benefited from their opponent's inability to adapt and lag in innovation. MediaQuant said Trump earned more than 6 billion in free or earned media over the course of the presidential campaign while Clinton only got less than 3 billion (Nelson & Thurber, 2019). They went on to say that Trump earned more than 3.5 times that of Obama in 2012 and more than 6 times that of Romney. Although Trump used this strategy more effectively, both Trump and Obama executed it properly. Trump built upon Obama's strategy from 2012. Obama got less free media than Trump but he still got twice the amount of his opponent, like Trump did.

Both Trump and Obama allowed their campaign to have more autonomy over the social media platforms than their opponent. In his 2012 Campaign, Obama provided his digital media staffers with much more autonomy than Romney did. While Obama had much more autonomy in his campaign than Romney, the difference between the amount of autonomy that Trump provided his staff compared to Clinton was even greater. In that way, Trump had higher autonomy than both Clinton and Obama (Enli, 2017). Trump's strategy varied from Obama's in that he maintained control of his Twitter after 7pm but overall the strategies were mostly the same. It is important to note that Trump's post 7pm Tweets have been what sets him apart from Obama the most and have served as a major point of contrast between their rhetoric.

Trump's ability to maintain control of his Twitter while running for office is something that was virtually unheard of and had never been done in electoral politics to date. This contributed to his "anti-political correctness" image because he was able to tweet what he was

thinking, uncontrolled by campaign managers and staffers. This often resulted in unpolished tweets and controversial statements that came to characterize him on the campaign trail. This ability to tweet set him apart from other candidates but also had ramifications. The rhetoric he used in his tweets became crucial to his brand but also remain a crucial point of difference between him and Obama.

Both Obama and Trump were very successful at developing their own brand. Trump used social media to develop the “Make America Great Again” brand and build upon the idea of “Mr. Trump the Builder.” Obama was able to use social media to create his “Change” brand. Both of these brands were key to the success of each candidate and stood in stark contrast to that of their opponent. In each case, the president had a brand that was able to create excitement and engagement while their opponents failed at doing so.

Each president was able to excite their base via social media and activate them via rallies. Both of these strategies resulted in an increased engagement among their supporters. Trump was able to excite his populist base by representing a “blue collar billionaire” that appealed to disaffected voters. Obama was able to use his brand to present himself as being an agent of change and hope for the future. This appealed to many Americans who felt that the previous administration had failed them with the financial crash.

Although their personalities were very different both of their campaigns placed a heavy focus on the candidate’s personality via social media. Obama’s campaign usually tweeted more about his personality than specific policy proposals. Trump’s campaign focused more on his personality as an “end to political correctness” politician. Both presidents were also very charismatic people and were able to give speeches that compelled their audiences.

Aside from their personalities, their rhetoric is one place where they really differed and is one of the main reasons that they are always juxtaposed. Obama used professionalism in his campaigns and hardly ever wrote his own tweets. Meanwhile, Trump used de-professionalism and was known to speak on a fourth-grade level. He often goes off script at campaign rallies and tweets whatever he thinks is relevant. Obama was said to have spoken at a ninth-grade level. He always made sure to speak in carefully crafted messages. The main differences rhetorically between them was the degree to which they were “politically correct.” Trump rejected the idea of political correctness that he saw Obama as embodying. This rejection was also a rejection of the establishment and resulted in Trump having a much more negative tone to his rhetoric than Obama who chose to take a more hopeful approach.

It is important to acknowledge the significance of the rhetorical difference between Trump and Obama throughout their campaigns. This is the major source of criticism and difference between the two. Trump has sought to attract people via the politics of resentment, which is rather different to Obama’s rhetoric of hope. Trump ran an outsider campaign and chose to mainly reject experts and the elites (Shapiro, 2018). With the rejection of the expert class Trump was able to criticize more freely without worrying about offending experts because he stated that his opinion was just as valid as theirs, if not better. The important implication of this on political communication was that Trump’s base, which consisted of about half of Americans, didn’t care about the opinions of the expert class either. This allowed Trump to criticize many different types of people including his own government. Shapiro has characterized this as Trump running against his own government (Shapiro, 2018). As part of this, Trump has sought to suggest that the body politic has been invaded by both immigrants and corruption and this has been represented through the rhetoric of “Build the Wall” and “Drain the swamp.”

As an explanation for this, Bostdorff discusses how Trump's rhetoric was a backlash against Obama's presidency (Bostdorff, 2017). He stated that Obama's rhetoric as the democratic nominee did not focus on anger although he criticized his opponents. Instead he says that Obama's rhetoric was focused on instilling calmness and "promoting confidence in his ability to bring needed change" (Bostdorff, 2017, p. 697). When examining Trump's rhetoric, he states that "we can discern the promise and peril of anger" (Bostdorff, 2017, p. 698). Trump used rhetoric to cast images of a dystopian future that incited anger in the American public. The changes that Obama created throughout his presidency left certain sections of Americans behind and it prompted a sense of loss and victimhood in Americans that fueled Trump's rhetoric and propelled him to the White House. This illustrates how the rhetoric of political change can vary based on the candidate and the strength with which the difference in rhetoric has, characterizes each president.

After looking at these strategies there were five where they shared similarities and one where they strayed. The main difference between Trump and Obama is their personalities and rhetoric. This is a very important difference when voting but not as important when it comes to strategies. The same strategies can work for multiple different types of candidates depending on the climate surrounding their election and who they are running against. This major difference usually overshadows their similarities and has caused scholars to contrast them. However, after analyzing their communication strategies it is pretty clear that they share 5/6 and that they are indeed more similar than different when it comes to campaign communication strategies.

Governing Communication Strategies

Now that it has been determined that Trump and Obama used similar campaigning strategies it is important to look at how their strategies carried over to their presidency and whether or not they still remained similar. Traditionally, it has been known that when presidents take office, they typically abandon campaigning techniques and focus solely on policy making. However, some scholars have argued that Trump has kept what they refer to as “a permanent campaign.” In the age of social media, it is not abnormal for presidents to campaign. They usually heavily endorse candidates during the midterms and advocate for their party. Trump has also been criticized for his use of social media while president. However, he is not the only president to have sought out other means of communication during his presidency. FDR sought to bypass traditional means of communication and talk directly to the public via his “fireside chats” (Nelson & Thurber, 2019). The main focus of analysis in this section will be looking at how the candidates use of social media and rallies changed since being in office.

Historical Analysis of Previous Presidential Governing Communication

Communication strategies often change when presidents enter office. Historically, modern presidential communication has been linked to radio from the 1920s onward and television since the 1950s. News networks have always focused on the presidency because news coverage of the president is profitable (Smoller, 1990). The news networks covered four types of presidential news. The first was personal profile which often begins during the electoral season, the second is legislative proposals which is when the news network shifts to cover the president’s legislative agenda (here it focuses on substances and on the politics of persuasion), the third is policy evaluation where they evaluate the effectiveness of the policies, and the final type is presidential reassessment where they reassess an initially positive image to usually be more

negative (Smoller, 1990). The huge emphasis that the media places on coverage of the Presidency became known as the “six-o’clock presidency” (Smoller, 1990). This was in part due to the big emphasis that presidents would also place on the media coverage. The idea was that when the average American turned on their television they would learn and see news about the president. Therefore, each president was now defined by how they were portrayed on the evening “six-o’clock” news.

The quantity of presidential news affects the president’s ability to lead (Cohen, 2008). Because the national news networks often concentrate on presidential news, presidents often used it as their main form of communication with the public. Many presidents use the major broadcasting systems such as ABC, CBS, and NBC to make major, prime time addresses to the nation. They all recognized the impact of the news media and redirected their activities to address the needs of these sources (Cohen, 2008). Ronald Reagan believed that television was the most important medium covering the presidency. His presidency became known as the “sound-bite” presidency (Smoller, 1990). He was able to control what the news media covered and direct the conversation by taking fewer questions, holding fewer press conferences, and keeping some reporters more distant from him (Smoller, 1990).

Other president’s such as Nixon have had more tense relationships with the press during their presidency. Nixon was one of the first presidents to feel the effects of the switch from even coverage between congress and the president to almost a sole focus on it by 1963 (Patterson, 2017). In the new era of 24/7 cable, there was an increased demand to create picture focused news. As a result, modern presidents have had to deal with national cable news and try to control and respond to coverage. Nixon was known to have said “The press is your enemy... Enemies. Understand that? . . . Because they’re trying to stick the knife right in our groin” (Patterson,

2017, p. 3). Many other president's such as Clinton have also claimed unfair negative coverage from the press. Clinton exploded in a *Rolling Stone* interview saying "I've fought more damn battles here than any president in 20 years with the possible exception of Reagan's first budget and not gotten one damn bit of credit from the knee-jerk liberal press. I am damn sick and tired of it" (Patterson, 2017, p. 3). Due to this, many presidents have sought to bypass the traditional coverage. Reagan fed news stories straight to local media bypassing cable news while Clinton preferred one on one interviews to provide their side of the story (Patterson, 2017).

New types of media such as social media, and especially Twitter have become new ways for presidents to be able to bypass these traditional forms. Social media has become a favored alternative to even one-on-one interviews because the presidents are allowed to push out an unedited version of their story. This has allowed them to have more control and attempt to drive the coverage and set the agenda more. However, they have also brought more criticism as every member of the public also has the ability to comment on their actions. As a result, social media has changed the way in which presidents have chosen to communicate throughout their presidency. Twitter has been used by government officials recently, to improve their image by appearing responsive to public, attract public attention and engage thought with other leaders and potential voters, assert administration viewpoints, galvanize supporters to take action, and for blunt criticism (Katz et. al., 2013).

Obama's Governing Communication Strategies

"President Obama is trying to talk directly to the American people, these days... making the case for his ambitious agenda in forums as varied as Jay Leno's late-night television show and a news conference on Tuesday. Now Mr. Obama will have a chance at even more direct engagement... in what the White House is billing as the first Internet video news conference by an American President"

-New York Times
(Katz et.al, 2013, p. 51)

At the time of Obama's election in 2008 he was deemed the "social media President" (Katz et al., 2013). As President, Obama still used social media and sought to use online platforms and the internet as a way of "opening the White House to all Americans" (Katz et al., 2013). The way Obama's administration used social media changed and it largely shifted from an emphasis on personality to policy. It was used as a way to talk directly to the people, answer policy questions, and develop policy ideas. As the first president of the social media age, Barack Obama allowed his staff to have autonomy and try out new ways of engaging with the public. As a result, Obama was the first president to communicate via live video format (Katz et al., 2013). His administration organized the first ever town hall where the president would answer questions live for 75 minutes. They used the suggestion box submissions and voting as a money-saving way of gathering ideas via Twitter and held "Online Office Hours" via Twitter (Katz et al., 2013).

Obama also used social media to keep his supporters excited throughout his presidency. Obama used the autonomy that social media provided him to try new ways of communication and to engage the public. His administration created a White House engagement invitation in 2012 as the top link on the White House homepage (Katz et al., 2013). Obama also had a first ever Google+ Hangout interview in 2012 which was the first completely virtual interview. He also held the first presidential texting event where youth texted the president about student debt. This kept his base engaged with his policy making and allowed Obama to continue to communicate effectively with the public even when he was not campaigning.

As President, Obama was able to use the emphasis he placed on policy to create a brand for himself as President of the United States. He was able to use the Affordable Care Act as his signature presidential policy. It eventually became known as Obamacare and it quickly turned

into Obama's brand. There is debate as to whether or not this branding was done intentionally by him or as an attempt to negatively attack him from the Republican party. However, regardless of this, it is undeniable that he was able to use this as a brand, as even after his presidency Obama was remembered for Obamacare and the policy withstood attacks from the Republican's in early 2016.

The Obama administration's rhetoric remained largely hopeful while he was president. In fact, Olson found that Obama's campaign and governing rhetoric were consistent. He suggested that Obama used the rhetoric of the campaign to help build a basis for governance (Olson et. al, 2012). He tried to follow through on what he promised to do and maintained positive rhetoric to describe his policy accomplishments. Overall, much of Obama's rhetoric as president was both positive and scripted. He was a typical teleprompter president when he gave speeches throughout his presidency. It is also important to note that he did not continue holding rallies while he was president.

Overall, as President Obama focused less on himself and placed a greater emphasis on more creative communication strategies that could help him implement the promises that he had made throughout the campaign. All of these strategies were both ways to engage the public and control the message. Like Clinton, Obama chose to control the message by having one-to-one interviews (Surso, 2018). These interviews allowed him to share his views and opinions with the press and public without being ambushed by unwanted questions. In these settings he could be a little bit more honest. As president, this communication strategy was not new but did prove very effective for him.

Trump's Governing Communication Strategies

*“In his first words as President of the United States, as if still on the campaign trail, Donald Trump described a country in ruins”
-Bob Garfield*

(Gladstone & Garfield, 2017)

Trump is an extremely controversial President. He is known for “Tweeting to Power.” One of the main sources of controversy and topics during his transition from candidate to president was whether or not he would continue tweeting throughout his presidency. Trump’s use of social media has continued throughout his presidency. His tweets range from personal thoughts, criticisms, and policy announcements. When it comes to Twitter, Anderson has found that Trump criticizes more Republican lawmakers than Democrats as president. Additionally, he disseminates a significant amount of information from conservative talk shows, such as Fox and Friends (Anderson, 2017).

Trump’s tweets are not only a way for him to engage with the public but also a way for the public to engage with him. The tweets that the public most frequently engaged with fall into a few categories. These range from policy ideas and statements, self-praise, praising others, personal attacks and media criticism (Anderson, 2017). Trump’s most successful three categories of public engagement via tweets are policy at 39%, personal attacks at 20%, and personal praise at 13% (Anderson, 2017, p. 41). This actually challenges what much of the public believes about Trump’s Tweeting habits. It is important to note that although a large portion of Trump’s public engagement is with more policy tweets since being elected, they are still largely focused on him. The policy statements that he makes are often controversial and unpolished which maintains his “outsider” and “anti-political correctness brand.” Overall, there has been a slight shift in what Trump tweets about. The tweets that Trump makes about policy

often have a personal emphasis and focus on his opinions about certain policy, attempts to fulfill his policy statements, commitments he made during the campaign, or criticisms of others for blocking his policy proposals.

Trump has continued to use social media to brand himself throughout his presidency. Many have said that his tweets have become his brand. However, throughout his campaign he focused on his brand in terms of being a builder and a political outsider. As both a candidate and as president, Trump has rejected both the media and expert class. Trump is unique in that he was one of the first presidents to continue to claim the idea of being a political outsider while he was in office. In this way, even throughout his presidency he has stuck to being “on brand” (Shapiro, 2018).

Trump has been criticized for his rhetoric as president and his use of campaign style rallies. During his transition he held a “thank you tour” which consisted of a total of nine different rallies in nine different states (Homans, 2018). He also held over 20 rallies in his first few years as president (Homans, 2018). Trump’s rhetoric as president has been the opposite of the traditional “teleprompter president.” He does not like scripted events and prefers one-to-one interviews as president to press conferences (Durso, 2018). This allows him to have more control over the way in which he is portrayed in the media. Trump has been criticized for his communication style as president for being unprofessional and having a more campaign like feel. Some evidence of this is his continuation of the “Dead-Cat” strategy he used on the campaign trail (Madden, 2018). Trump has used this strategy to invite chaos as president and attack both adversaries and allies. He has criticized many allies but also government agencies such as the justice department and the intelligence agencies because he felt that they were hard to rein in (Shapiro, 2018). Trump was the first president to carry this strategy over into office and Twitter

provided him the informal platform with which to do so (Shapiro, 2018). This is one of the many aspects of his communication style that has set him apart from previous presidents.

Changes in Communication Styles

This paper will now analyze whether or not Trump and Obama's governing communication strategies changed or stayed the same to their campaigning communication strategies. This will allow us to then be able to analyze their governing communication styles with more context to how it relates to their overall communication style.

Trump's use of social media has remained the same from the campaign trail to the Presidency. However, the content of his tweets have shifted slightly more to policy. Trump's administration has not had the same freedom it had during the campaign to experiment with communication strategies. This can be seen in Trump's White House press office as there has been a lot of turn over due to unsatisfactory press results. Besides tweeting and personal interviews, the Trump administration has not been as free to try out new communication strategies as they were during the campaign. Trump has furthered his personal brand and continued to engage with the public throughout his presidency. His rhetoric also appears to remain mostly the same between his campaign and presidency. It is still mostly negative even while his administration is in the White House.

Overall, it appears that Trump maintains his campaign style communication techniques throughout his Presidency. This creates an appearance of what some scholars have referred to as a "permanent campaign." However, this is not necessarily the case. The Washington Post has suggested that Trump is not necessarily campaigning any earlier than other presidents but instead he is just being more upfront about it (Doherty, 2017). Trump is instead using social media to continually market himself as any other president would through the policy decisions he makes.

He has also used rallies to sustain excitement surrounding his presidency and engage with the public. Many other presidents have sought to engage with the public and undoubtedly, any president is going to be thinking about how their decisions have ramifications on their re-election at any given moment.

Although it often appears so, after analysis Obama also did not change his techniques too much when he became president. Obama continued to use social media throughout his presidency although the content of his tweets and posts shifted mostly to policy. He also continued to use social media to engage with the public and interact with them. He allowed his staff to have the same autonomy they experienced in the campaign and to try new communication techniques as president (making him the first president to engage with the public via the internet in this way). Obama continued to create a personal brand while he was president. Although the way he did this was different from the campaign, he was able to take a policy issue and use it as a branding strategy. The big things that Obama did change throughout his presidency were that he focused less on his personality and his rhetoric became toned down as he mainly focused on policy issues.

Similarities and Differences between the Governing Styles

Table 2
Trump and Obama Governing Strategies

Strategies:	Similarities	Differences
Using Social Media	I	
More Autonomy		I

Branding	I	
Engaging Public	I	
Focus on their Personality	I	
Rhetoric		I

**note that 'engaging voters' has been changed to 'engaging public' because it is no longer an election cycle*

Now this paper will analyze the similarities and difference between Trump and Obama's governing communication strategies. Both Obama and Trump continue to use social media throughout their presidency. In the case of Obama, it was very clear that as he shifted towards the presidency the content of his social media shifted from a focus on the personal to a focus on policy. What was shocking to find was that Trump also shifted his focus slightly more to policy. Although his shift to policy within his use of social media is less than Obama's and has gone much more unnoticed because of his controversial policy statements, it is still there. Compared to his campaign Trump's focus has shifted slightly more to policy.

Trump and Obama's strategies of autonomy differ as president. Obama continues his use of autonomy over from the campaign and allows his staff freedom to come up with creative new ways of communicating with the public. On the other hand, Trump does not continue this same freedom over from his campaign. Instead, he has a stricter format because of all of the turnover in his administration and his difficulties with the press as president.

Both Trump and Obama have continued to create a brand as President. Obama does this through his policy achievements such as Obamacare. His brand shifts as President from someone who is hoping to enact change to someone who did and Obamacare is the projection of this. On

the other hand, Trump creates a brand as President. However, this brand takes on a very different format than Obama's brand. Trump builds upon the brand that he started in the campaign. He projects the image of a political outsider from within the White House. Casting himself as an agent of change that will "Drain the Swamp" with his new leadership and policies.

Trump and Obama were the first presidents to use social media in campaigns to engage with the public. They both made active attempts to engage the public throughout their presidency. Obama did this by trying to get the public's input on policy proposals. Trump did this through tweeting and having the public engage as well as holding rallies and his "thank you tour."

Although it may not seem like it. Both president's strategies to emphasize their personality during the campaign changed once they got into office. They both shift to emphasizing policy more as president. Trump focuses on his personality more than Obama as president however, it is still slightly more toned down from when he was a candidate. Trump has often been criticized as not focusing on policy as President. However, since he was elected, he has placed a great deal of emphasis on following through on his policy promises. One of the main reasons that Trump and Obama are usually assessed differently on this point is that their rhetoric is very different. For instance, Obama's tweets about policy took on more of the form of a press release while Trump's took on policy more in terms of his successes as president.

Rhetoric remains the overall main difference between Obama and Trump in both the campaigns and governing styles. Their personalities, styles, and rhetoric are completely different. The difference in their rhetoric and tone is huge and emphasizes their different levels of professionalism. Trump is seen as unprofessional and someone who goes off script. Obama was seen as a teleprompter president. The different levels of their rhetoric have remained consistent

with how they were in the campaign. Trump often used critical rhetoric of both opponents and allies throughout his presidency. His use of the “Dead Cat” rhetorical strategy as president resulted in an overall image of a chaotic presidency. In contrast, Obama aimed for a more coherent and positive rhetorical approach. He focused on his success while Trump focused more on criticisms of others. The different levels of their rhetoric have remained consistent with how they were in the campaign.

Out of six strategies only four remain similar after they become president. Obama primarily focuses on policy throughout his presidency and does not use Twitter in the same way as Trump. Trump maintains his emphasis on his policy successes as President, continues to hold campaign style rallies, and tweet. Contrary to popular belief and the original hypothesis, Obama and Trump still share 4/6 strategies throughout their presidency. Obama’s strategies changed more. However, Trump and Obama still remain more similar than different throughout their Presidencies.

Conclusions

Although President Trump has been juxtaposed with President Obama since his candidacy, they actually have very similar communication strategies. There is no doubt that President Trump and Obama are completely different people with both opposing policy views, parties, and both personal style and rhetoric. However, they are the first two social media presidents, and as a result, have taken on very similar communication strategies to arrive at the White House. Trump and Obama’s campaign communication strategies were very similar. In fact, they shared over five out of six strategies to become president. The only thing they did not have in common was their use of rhetoric. Another surprising discovery was that Trump and Obama did not change their overall communication strategies too much when they transitioned

from campaigning to governing. After analysis of their governing styles, it was even more shocking to find that Trump and Obama also shared four out of six communication strategies as president. The two strategies that differed as president were autonomy and rhetoric. Rhetoric was the one constant that difference between the two presidents throughout the study and is most likely the main explanation for why they are always juxtaposed. The similarities during the campaign are definitely more significant and outweigh the similarities between their governing styles. However, when combining these two analyses together it is found that President Trump and President Obama have overall similar communication strategies.

Implications

Impact on Future Campaigns

American election styles often set trends in political communication (Durso, 2018). Therefore, it is fair to ask whether or not Trump and Obama's strategies as the first social media presidents will have a lasting impact on political communication. Shapiro discusses three communication strategies that President Trump used that he believes will be continued on in the future campaigns. The first was the idea of direct communication with voters, the second is governing against his own government, and the third is the dismissal of expertise (Shapiro, 2018).

It is important to look at how these factors were not only reflected in both president Trump's and Obama's campaigns and presidencies but also the 2020 candidates. Both President Trump and Obama used social media as a means of direct communication with the voters. This can also be seen in the campaign communication style of almost everyone running for president right now. Every candidate has social media and is using it to advocate or engage the voters. The

idea of Trump running against his own government as a political outsider is not necessarily something new although Trump has capitalized it more than candidates in the past. This strategy might not have a lasting impact as it appears that many of the 2020 candidates are aligning themselves more with the party as a backlash against Trump's outsider image. The third strategy as the dismissal of expertise will also have to be looked at from the perspective of the 2020 candidates and what they do in response to Trump's image.

Something else that Trump did that will most likely continue to last for a while in political communications is his criticism of the media. Although Trump is seen as one of the harshest critics of the media many other presidents have done this in the past and will likely continue to do it in the future. Obama was strict on releasing info to the press (Risen, 2016). His administration prosecuted eight whistleblower cases while only three were prosecuted in the previous administration. At the time, many academics said that his crackdown on the media by ordering subpoenas and monitoring phone records, was almost as bad as Nixon.

Trump's populist communication style has been seen spreading to some European countries, including England. The use of social media and populist rhetoric is probably the communication style that will have the biggest lasting impacts on not only US politics but also the world. The political rhetoric in America has become more and more polarizing as the rejection of experts and the elite class has taken hold and become more popular. Social media has provided everyone with a voice and with the influx of more voices comes both more opinions and more criticism. This negative rhetoric will most likely continue to polarize throughout future elections.

Impact on Governing Styles

Along with analyzing the implications of American social media elections on political communication as a whole, it is also important to look at how social media has impacted the presidency and more specifically governing styles. American governing styles often do not carry over and set trends the way that campaigning styles do. However, social media has changed the way that presidents have chosen to govern and it is important to investigate whether or not Trump and Obama's governing styles will have lasting impacts.

One of the biggest lasting impacts for future presidents will be how they chose to use social media to help them govern. Trump chose to use Twitter to do this and it has been his biggest source of criticism throughout his presidency. A Washington Post-World ABC News polls from July 2017 found that 67% of Americans thought Trump should stop tweeting while 70% thought it was unpresidential (Nelson & Thurber, 2019, p. 261). The American public have not been the only ones critical of Trump's tweets. Many political insiders have also expressed their distaste for Trump's tweeting as president. Former Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, has been quoted saying that "he [Trump] didn't know anything about government ... I wanted to scold him all the time" (Perper, 2019). In many news reports Republicans from within his own party have been heard complaining that Trump is, in some respects, his own worst enemy because his tweets seem to undermines his own governance.

Trump on the other hand has responded via Twitter that "My use of social media is not Presidential-its MODERN DAY PRESIDENTIAL" "Make America Great Again!" (Nelson & Thurber, 2019, p. 261). With candidates and many other government officials now using Twitter on a daily basis it is fair to take his comments into consideration. Is this the new normal? And will tweeting be continued throughout future presidencies to come? President Obama and

President Trump have both used Twitter throughout their presidency. Trump has over 55 million followers on Twitter and Obama has nearly double that at 103 million followers (Shapiro, 2018). Twitter has become an integral part of the political communication scene due to these two social media presidents. Although Trump has drawn a major source of criticism over his tweets, it is highly unlikely that future presidents will decide not to follow this new trend. Twitter provides them with direct connection with the voters and the ability to bypass the media and gain control which almost every president in history has sought to have the ability to do. It is likely that future presidents may not use as harsh of rhetoric, which has been the major source of contention with Trump's tweets, but it is highly unlikely that they would use Twitter on the campaign trail and then give it up once in office.

Reflection on Social Media Presidency

Social media will have the longest lasting impact on political communication as a whole. Within the span of 10 years it has already changed how politicians both campaign and govern. This new social media age has both advantages and disadvantages. The consequential question is whether or not these advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Many of the advantages and disadvantages of the era of social media are being expressed now throughout Donald Trump's Presidency.

Some of the advantages that social media provides presidents is that they are able to communicate with the public and voters in a more personal way than they ever could before, they can send messages directly to the public without having to go through other media outlets, and they are able to send messages out quickly. These advantages allow the presidents to have more control over how they are portrayed and allows to give their version of events. Some disadvantages of social media presidents include that their every move and comment is

documented, that it can be used in a careless or unfiltered way by leaders, and that now everyone has the ability to comment and criticize them via social media.

These advantages and disadvantages are both specific to the presidency but also more general and can be applied to the overall use of social media. For most Americans, the good outweighs the negative in terms of social media. In an ever evolving and faster paced environment the benefits of increased communication do outweigh the possible negative effects and as long as the public continues their use of social media, presidents will as well. It is, however, important for social media presidents to remember to be wary of how they use their new platform and how their interactions effect not only themselves but also the American public.

Limitations and Ideas for Further Research

It is important to note the limitations of this paper. First of all, when doing the analysis and comparison it is important to remember that Obama has over two terms of campaign ad governing style research to look at. Trump has only been in office for three years and has not run a second campaign so it is tough to see if he will stay consistent with his communication strategies and if they will remain effective in the future. Because of this there has been a lack of depth in the quality research available into Trump's governing communication style and his use of Twitter as President. Most of the research that exists focuses on his attacks on the media.

This paper would benefit from a deeper analysis over a longer period of time ideally at least two, two term social media presidents. The problem with using Obama and Trump is that social media was not really fully fledged and used by the average American until 2012 and Trump only has one term to analyze which is 2016. The election in 2016 came as a shock to most

people and therefore, there is a lot of research about the campaign but not as much about the administration.

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