## **Affect in Electoral Politics**

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Recent U.S. history provides vivid illustrations of the importance of politicians' emotional displays in subsequent judgments of them. Yet, a review of empirical research on the role of affect (emotion, mood, and evaluation) in electoral politics reveals little work that has focused on the impact of candidates' emotional expression on voters' preferences for them. A theoretical framework is proposed to identify psychological mechanisms by which a target's displays of emotion influence judgments of that target. Findings from the emerging literature on emotions and politics challenge the traditional assumption of political science that voters make decisions based solely on the cold consideration of nonaffectively charged information. The affect and politics literature, although somewhat unfocused and broad, represents an interdisciplinary domain of study that contributes to the understanding of both electoral politics and social interaction more generally.

Edmund Muskie was the odds-on favorite to win the 1972 Democratic presidential nomination, but on a snowy March day, during a stump speech in New Hampshire, Senator Muskie veered fatefully from conventional campaign behavior. He wept in public, or at least that is how it appeared. Muskie's lead in the polls faded quickly, and in June, George McGovern wrapped up the nomination. Muskie's misfortunes may be the most clearly consequential and widely known example of the apparent effect of emotional displays on electoral viability, but numerous others exist. Nonetheless, public displays of emotionally charged behavior are most certainly the exception, not the rule. Politicians strive to minimize extreme emotional outbursts, and when they do display emotions, it is generally within the normative guidelines demanded by the situation.

Campaign speeches, advertisements, conventions, rallies, and bumper stickers all serve to tap the emotions of the public, providing voters with visceral associations to candidates and encoding political messages

Preparation of this article was facilitated by a Presidential Young Investigator Award from the National Science Foundation Grant SBR-9058020 to Peter Salovey. We also acknowledge support from American Cancer Society Grant RPG-93-028-05-PB, National Cancer Institute Grant R01-CA68427, and National Institute of Mental Health Grant P01-MH/DA56826.

We thank Mahzarin Banaji, George Marcus, Duane Wegener, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier drafts.

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with feelings in memory. Voters lacking the time, information, or expertise to make a purely informed judgment may rely on their affective reactions to candidates and political messages.

With few exceptions (e.g., Hartmann, 1936), the empirical study of the role of affect in politics is a recent development. To date, this research has centered, perhaps appropriately, on the emotions of voters with regard to candidates, largely to the exclusion of studies of the impact of candidates' emotionality. Much of the research has been carried out by cognitive and social psychologists using electoral politics as a paradigm for studying mass perception of a single target of judgment (e.g., Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982). Political scientists with psychological leanings have also contributed to this literature (e.g., Marcus & MacKuen, 1993). Even marketing researchers have considered the role of emotions in politics (e.g., Newman & Sheth, 1985). Notably, investigators in this area frequently have addressed these questions in the context of understanding the relation between affect and cognition.

Although research on affect and politics has been carried out in relative isolation from mainstream social psychology, social psychological theorizing seems clearly relevant. Extensive and complex literature exists on the role of affect in social judgment. This literature is broad, encompassing the multiple facets of affect (i.e., emotion, mood, evaluation) and social judgment (e.g., persuasion, person perception), but it offers some structure and considerable precedent with which to interpret and integrate research on politics.

Wherever possible, this review cites relevant work from the more general affect and social judgment literature to provide a theoretical context for the discussion of research on affect and politics (for thorough reviews of this work, however, see Forgas, 1995; Petty, Gleicher, & Baker, 1991). Technically, research on affect and politics can be viewed as a subset of the affect and social judgment field; voters and politicians are but specific cases of social perceivers and targets. Despite this obvious link, much of the literature on affect and politics is agnostic with respect to psychological theory; it is driven more by a direct interest in political outcomes and less so by concern for mental and social processes more generally. Consequently, the literatures on social judgment and political behavior stand apart. In attempting to reconcile them, two observations are particularly noteworthy. First, as alluded to earlier. although the theoretical approaches used have certain parallels, much of the political research, particularly that conducted outside of psychology, is phenomenon oriented. The second and more striking discovery is the neglect of the role of the emotions of the target of judgment (e.g., the candidate) in both literatures. The affect and social judgment literature provides a framework with which to assess the breadth, depth, and inclusiveness of research on affect in politics. Conversely, the high salience of target affect (i.e., the affect experienced or expressed by the target of judgment) in the more circumscribed political sphere might also serve to inform the more general social judgment literature. An important goal of this review is to convey the paucity of, and therefore great opportunity for, research on the role of candidate emotional displays in political judgment and to provide a theoretical framework that will spark and guide future research on the topic. Such research would fill a void in two heretofore separate literatures.

### **Defining Terms**

Because the study of affect and politics has lacked cohesion over its brief history and encompasses theory from a broad range of disciplines and subdisciplines, the lexicon in this area is undeveloped and at times inconsistent. This article attempts to bring together literature from the various approaches to affect and politics without compromising the integrity of the research. Parts of the vocabulary warrant a priori clarification and elaboration. First, the normally broad and ambiguous meaning of the word politics is restricted to electoral politics, and the scope of this review is primarily confined to electoral politics in the United States. Second, the words politician and candidate are considered interchangeable because, again, the concern here is with electoral politics. Finally, terms such as candidate appraisal (or preference or evaluation),

voter decision making, voter choice, and political person perception all refer to the process of voters judging candidates.

Affect is commonly defined as emotion, mood, or evaluation (Forgas, 1991), although experts debate whether evaluation is fairly included (e.g., Crites, Fabrigar, & Petty, 1994). Emotion is characterized by acute, differentiated arousal, whereas mood is more lasting, generally less intense, and may cease to be consciously connected to a triggering stimulus. Evaluation, often construed as summary judgment, plays a central role in much research on voters' decision making. Social judgment refers to an attitude or decision based on social information. This information can be about or derived from another person or persons. In the context of this article, the target is the person about whom (or on the basis of whose message) a judgment is made. Therefore, effects of target affect on social judgments refer to the manner in which the emotions expressed by a person influence others' attitudes toward him or her and the message he or she conveys.

# Public Opinion, Perception of Candidates, and Voting

Much of the vast literature on electoral politics is relevant to the discussion of affect and politics; some theories and findings are particularly fundamental. Voter choice models, the role of the mass media, candidate image, and attentional biases are prominent among those topics. Accordingly, a brief review of such areas of research is provided.

Political theorists have grappled perennially with explanations of how voters decide for whom to cast their ballots. Downs (1957), for example, developed an influential voter choice model based on economic theory explaining that, by and large, the voter "approaches every situation with one eye on the gains to be had, the other eye on the costs, a delicate ability to balance them, and a strong desire to follow wherever rationality leads him" (pp. 7-8). Although this view has been dominant historically, in recent years other political scientists have built on Downs's caveat that voters rely on information shortcuts (e.g., generalizations based on the party affiliation of the candidate) because these voters cannot always gain access to or process all the information necessary to make a completely rational voting choice (Conover & Feldman, 1986; Popkin, 1991). Popkin terms this strategy low-information rationality and ardently defends its legitimacy in politics. Popkin and a growing number of theorists take into consideration the numerous factors—such as influence of family and friends, emotions, and even candidates' physical appearance—that moderate the rationality of voters' decisions. Such propositions, although relatively revolutionary in political science (Green & Shapiro, 1994),

are central to social psychological theories of decision making, stressing the flaws in human reasoning (Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974) and the differential processes and outcomes of central (or systematic) and peripheral (or heuristic) modes of information processing (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1979, 1986).

Although early political psychology research on public opinion and voter decision making emphasized issue- and ideology-based selection, much of the recent research corroborates that candidate image (including physical appearance and expressiveness), party identification, and situational factors (e.g., subjective economic condition) influence voter choice. Physical aspects of the candidate, including such seemingly peripheral factors as attractiveness and facial expressions, have a substantial effect on voters' attitudes. People have been shown to rate candidates as more or less trustworthy and competent based simply on their impression formed from photographs (Rosenberg, Kahn, & Tran, 1991; Rosenberg & McCafferty, 1987). Furthermore, facial expressions isolated from the accompanying voice of candidates during debates or speeches strongly influence voters' impressions of target candidates (Patterson, Churchill, Burger, & Powell, 1992).

Along with policy positions and physical aspects of candidates, public opinion may be formed on the basis of candidates' attributional styles. Seligman (1990; Zullow, Oettingen, Peterson, & Seligman, 1988) has applied his theory of explanatory style to electoral politics. Seligman and colleagues were able to "postdict" senatorial and presidential electoral outcomes (even upsets) with remarkable reliability through content analyses of campaign speeches to compare candidates' levels of optimism. Candidates who speak more optimistically (i.e., attribute negative events to external, specific, and transient causes) have greater chances of success. One could infer that differential levels of optimism are perceived by voters and weighed in candidate selection.

Public opinion is largely mediated by the news media's presentation of political information (i.e., the availability, slant, and selection of news), in addition to the influence of candidates' actual dispositions and behaviors (Iyengar, 1990; Iyengar, Kinder, Peters, & Krosnick, 1984; Mullen et al., 1986; Newton, Masters, McHugo, & Sullivan, 1987; Shields & MacDowell, 1987; Sullivan & Masters, 1988). Logically, the amount and content of information in news stories significantly affect voters' subsequent evaluations of politicians (Iyengar et al., 1984). Biases within the news media, whether toward particular issues, parties, or candidates, provide another source of influence on public opinion. An archival investigation of television commentary on the 1984 vice-presidential debates demonstrated that commentators' evaluations of candidates' emotionality

were largely a function of the commentators' partisanship. Commentators tended to report favorable emotions on the part of the candidate from their party (Shields & MacDowell, 1987). In a more direct demonstration of media influence on voters, Mullen et al. (1986) concluded that a bias displayed by a network newscaster (specifically, Peter Jennings who, unlike his major network competitors, smiled more when referring to Ronald Reagan than when referring to Walter Mondale during the 1984 U.S. presidential campaign) was associated with the voting patterns of those who viewed that newscaster's reports consistently. In many ways, the television medium has shaped modern politics: "In both the United States and Western Europe, television has apparently contributed to the development of a system more centered on political leaders who mobilize support in part by their 'style' of behavior," and these presentations have a bearing on their target audiences: "viewers' attitudes toward candidates can be influenced by the experience of watching brief excerpts on television" (Sullivan & Masters, 1988, pp. 362-363).

When considering the conclusions drawn by Iyengar et al. (1984), Mullen et al. (1986), Shields and Mac-Dowell (1987), and Sullivan and Masters (1988), we must also take into account the active role of voters in seeking out, attending to, and remembering political news. Prior attitudes toward candidates and issues can strongly affect people's attention to and acceptance of related information. Lord, Ross, and Lepper (1979) coined the term biased assimilation to describe how people who hold a prior attitude on an issue tend to accept information supporting their view and scrutinize (and reject) information threatening it (see also Hastorf & Cantril, 1954). Illustrating this phenomenon, significant differences were found between Nixon supporters and opponents in the amount of news about the Watergate scandal they sought, retained, and believed (Sweeney & Gruber, 1984; see also Carretta & Moreland, 1982). Supporters scored lowest on all dimensions. In a related vein, Lau, Sears, and Centers (1979) contended that citizens have a positivity bias, or an overall tendency to evaluate their leaders positively despite general displeasure with the state of affairs. This bias thus favors incumbent candidates in elections.

Political person perception (i.e., candidate appraisal) is, of logical necessity, a critical component of the affect and politics research surveyed in this article and will most likely continue to be in subsequent investigations. Although public opinion research has traditionally regarded voter behavior as a cognitive (or rational) process (Downs, 1957), researchers and analysts have more recently demonstrated that political preference with regard to candidates as well as issues is affect laden. Kinder (1994) agreed with this assessment, stating that the cognitivism in psychology has, until recent decades, precluded the investigation of affective influences on

social judgments, whereas, more acutely, "the public opinion field's preoccupation with information processing went too far, too; ... emotion must also be accommodated in our analysis of political life" (p. 279). Public opinion, particularly with regard to candidates, is at least partially an affective phenomenon.

### Voters' Affective Reactions to Politicians

As is evident to social scientists and the lay public alike, people do not approach targets of evaluation in a cold, objective manner. Our impressions, attitudes, and opinions are intertwined with our feelings. This is perhaps especially true with regard to politics, in which issues of ideology and power converge. In fact, politicians and political consultants have been attentive to the role of emotions in voter decision making considerably longer than have social scientists. Such attentiveness is evidenced in campaign speeches and slogans such as the one in Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign in 1964: "In your heart, you know he's right."

The vast majority of research to date on affect in politics has been focused on the affective responses by voters (or, more accurately, potential voters) to politicians and political messages and the influence of these responses on voters' political attitudes and behaviors. Affective reactions play a major, if not the dominant role in candidate selection. Most investigators acknowledge at least a partial role for feelings in political decision making. To some degree, research on affective reactions to politicians parallels the social psychological literature on mood and attitude formation and change. To a considerable extent, however, the political behavior literature has a trajectory all its own.

#### **Affect and Attitude Change**

Much of the research on affect and social judgment has been conducted within the domain of attitude change, which is clearly relevant to politics. At least three primary modes by which affect can influence attitude change have been identified and investigated: (a) affect as information, (b) mood congruence, and (c) style of processing (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Petty, Gleicher, & Baker, 1991; Petty, Priester, & Wegener, 1994; Petty, Schumann, Richman, & Strathman, 1993). Each of these modes is apparent, some more than others, in the political literature.

Affect-as-information. Affect-as-information reflects the most direct impact of affect on attitudes. According to this model, one can infer (however consciously or unconsciously) from one's affective state

one's evaluation of an attitude object (person, thing, or message; e.g., Clark & Williamson, 1989; Clore, 1992; Schwarz & Clore, 1983; Schwarz, Strack, Kommer, & Wagner, 1987; see Schwarz, 1990, for a thorough analysis). For instance, one might use his or her feelings of happiness to assess how he or she feels about an attitude object. A related model is that of *mood-as-input* (Martin, Ward, Achee, & Wyer, 1993), which holds that, depending on the processing goals (e.g., information attainment versus enjoyment) of the person making a judgment, mood will relate differently to degree of processing. For example, with a processing goal of attaining sufficient information, those in a sad mood will seek more information than those in a happy mood. The opposite is true when the goal is enjoyment of the task.

As noted earlier, affect can serve as information to the perceiver that is then used in evaluating a target of judgment. This appears to be the case in political decision making as well, and has been borne out in experimental research. For instance, Ottati and Wyer (1993) reported a study in which participants in an induced positive mood gave higher ratings (regardless of issue agreement) to candidates than did those in neutral or negative moods. Ottati and Isbell (1996) also reported that participants experiencing positive or negative moods tended to evaluate a displayed candidate in line with the valence of their mood. These mood-congruent effects, however, were obtained only with "low-expertise" participants. "High-expertise" (i.e., politically knowledgeable) participants showed a "contrast" effect in that they tended to evaluate the candidate in the opposite direction of the valence of their mood. Ottati and Isbell pointed out that these findings were consistent with an online model of misattribution (when, with low-expertise participants, mood is assimilated as information into the judgment) and overcorrection (presumably when high-expertise participants overcorrect for the influence of mood). Although how and why participants would overcorrect for the influence of mood, as opposed to simply being less sensitive to it, is not clear, this finding is corroborated by Dalto, Ossoff, and Pollack (1994) who compared the effects of imageversus issue-oriented campaign messages experimentally, finding that more politically concerned (i.e., expert) individuals reacted less positively to the imageoriented speech than did less concerned individuals.

Rahn, Kroeger, and Kite (1996) proposed a theory of *public mood*, defined as a "diffuse affective state, having distinct positive and negative components, that citizens experience because of their membership in a particular political community" (pp. 31–32). Not only is public mood, as defined by Rahn et al. (1996), a consequence of political events (e.g., those that invoke national pride), but it can also influence political behavior by serving as information to voters and thereby shaping their attitudes.

Considerable research reports that affective reactions to candidates serve as powerful predictors of overall evaluations (e.g., Abelson et al., 1982). Such evidence supports the interpretation of affect as information. However, because this research is focused more on the relative importance of affective and cognitive responses than on the process by which affect is assimilated into the evaluation, it is discussed later in the context of the relation between affect and cognition.

Affective congruence. Affective congruence hypotheses predict that, to the degree that the perceiver's mood state matches the affective tone of a message, he or she will attend and be more receptive to the message (cf. Bower, 1981). Niedenthal and Setterlund (1994), noting that little evidence exists supporting the effects of mood congruence on perception, demonstrated that this effect is more likely when a specific affective match (e.g., sad–sad or angry–angry) is found, rather than simply a valence match (e.g., negative–negative) between one's emotional state and the information to be processed.

In light of affective congruence hypotheses when investigating people's affective reactions to politicians, one might consider the prior affective state of the respondent and how it interacts with the emotional tone of the political target or message. The concept of emotional resonance—the congruence of the emotional content of the message with the existing feelings of the receiver (Roseman, Abelson, & Ewing, 1986; Weiss & Fine, 1956)—addresses this relation. Using purely verbal political statements (i.e., pamphlets), Roseman et al. found that political messages evoking pity and anger resonated with individuals already experiencing those emotions. For example, people feeling anger on a given topic responded best to political appeals with an angry tone. Fear and hope, on the other hand, cross-resonated so that fearful participants (on a given topic, such as nuclear war) responded most favorably to hopeful appeals. People generally responded negatively to fearoriented appeals, which Roseman et al. noted was consistent with past findings regarding the ineffectiveness of fear appeals when they do not provide coping strategies (Leventhal, Watts, & Pagano, 1967). These findings suggest that political messages can serve a psychological function beyond providing information relevant to opinion formation. People may indeed seek out and respond to political messages that aid them in achieving relatively pleasant affective states. This explanation seems more plausible for hope than for anger appeals, although anger is probably less aversive than fear. The phenomenon is illustrated by Roseman et al. (1986) in the real-world contrast between Jimmy Carter's and Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign messages regarding the economy and the cold war. Carter emphasized fear, but Reagan drew upon hope and anger. The electoral result, although of course causally inconclusive, is consistent with these findings.

### Affect, motivation, and style of processing.

Perhaps the most prolific vein of research on affect and persuasion is that investigating the effect of mood on manner of information processing (e.g., Alloy & Abramson, 1979; Bless, Bohner, Schwarz, & Strack, 1990; Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994; Isen & Means, 1983; Mackie & Worth, 1991; Schwarz & Bless, 1991; Wegener, Petty, & Smith, 1995; see Schwarz, Bless, & Bohner, 1991, for a review). A complex web of findings indicates that negative moods (e.g., sadness) can sometimes lead to more careful, systematic processing of information than positive moods (Alloy & Abramson, 1979; Palfai & Salovey, 1993; Sinclair & Mark, 1992). Positive moods, on the other hand, can increase efficiency in decision making because they make us less likely to review previously seen information (Isen & Means, 1983) and more likely to make novel associations (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987). Additionally, as with affective congruence, the specific emotion rather than just the valence appears to influence the style of processing (Bodenhausen et al., 1994). The complexity of the relation between mood and persuasion is further revealed by recent findings that happy people will process messages more systematically when the messages are not mood threatening or are positive and mood enhancing (Wegener et al., 1995), suggesting a motivational mediator (i.e., a motivation to avoid ruining a positive mood).

The view that different moods motivate people to process information more or less carefully has been applied in the political realm as well. Specifically, anxiety has been posited as an important motivating force in information seeking and voting behavior (Marcus & MacKuen, 1993). Drawing from the broader emotions literature, as opposed to attitude change models, Marcus and MacKuen contended that threat and the consequent anxiety can break the voters' partisan trance and focus them on specific campaign issues and candidate traits. Factor analyzing data from survey questions eliciting a variety of reactions to presidential candidates, Marcus and MacKuen (1993) provided empirical evidence for the intuitively appealing proposition that anxiety and enthusiasm motivate political involvement. This work provides a cogent argument against the view of emotion as the irrational component of voting behavior (or general behavior, for that matter). "Rather than being antagonistic or detrimental to citizenship, emotion enhances the ability of voters to perform their citizenly duties" (Marcus & MacKuen, 1993, p. 681).

Ottati, Terkildsen, and Hubbard (1997) reported that experimental participants processed a political message less carefully (and more heuristically) when a candidate's facial displays expressed happiness, regardless of the content of the message, than when he or she expressed anger or neutral emotion. This finding held only for those viewers who were relatively low in motivation to process political messages. Those who were highly motivated, on the other hand, appraised the candidate more carefully. Ottati et al. explained these results in terms of a cognitive tuning model (Schwarz & Bless, 1991) wherein the positive emotion expressed by the target conveys safety, thereby reducing the need for careful judgment. Ottati et al. argued that this finding reflected the role of affect as information (as discussed earlier) more than it did the motivational role of affective states, but it may in fact represent an intersection of those two models, thereby reflecting the complexity and pervasiveness of affect in social judgments.

#### **Affect Versus Cognition**

When introducing emotions theory into the political judgment domain, the issues surrounding the relation between affect and cognition inevitably become salient. The most often cited dialogue about the relative primacy of affect and cognition (Lazarus, 1984; Lazarus, Coyne, & Folkman, 1984; Zajonc, 1980, 1984a, 1984b) has already received considerable attention in the psychological literature. The discord about the relation of affect to cognition is focused primarily on whether affective reactions can be aroused prior to, or indeed independent of, explicit cognitive processing. In fact, much of the disagreement is a result of disparate descriptions of both affect and cognition (i.e., neural impulses considered to be cognition; startle and evaluation defined as affect). Preferences for objects that have been perceived, even subliminally, but that cannot be consciously identified (i.e., mere exposure effects) have been invoked to demonstrate the formation of attitudes in the absence of cognitive mediation (Bornstein, Leone, & Galley, 1987; Zajonc, 1968). New light has been shed on the subject through recent demonstrations of the influence of affective processes in the absence of awareness of the stimuli that provoke them (Krosnick, Betz, Jussim, & Lynn, 1992; Murphy & Zajonc, 1993; Niedenthal & Showers, 1991). This implicit affect has even been demonstrated with regard to social targets such as people's faces (Niedenthal, 1990). The controversy about the independence of affect and cognition, decreasingly contentious in psychology with developments such as the discovery of an identifiable affective neural substrate that appears to be subcortical (LeDoux, 1989), remains a central focus of debate in the political science literature as the validity of rational choice theories begin to be challenged (e.g., Green & Shapiro, 1994).

With regard to electoral politics, the discord is about whether voters can make appraisals and decisions about

candidates based on affective reactions that are independent of, or prior to, higher order cognitive appraisals. Most contemporary research indicates at least some independent influence of affect on political judgment, and several theorists contend that affect is a more powerful predictor of electoral choice than purely cognitive appraisals. Marcus (1988) used data from a national survey to test the differential power of candidate personality appraisals, emotional responses, and policy positions to predict overall preference for a candidate. He concluded that affective reactions to candidates have an independent and greater effect on voting behavior than the more cognitive reactions. Given these results, Marcus (1988) suggested that candidates might actually do well to avoid issue-oriented campaigns and concentrate on emotional appeals. Marcus (1991) further posited that affect plays an important and wholly legitimate role in political decision making by providing information processing structure and motivation for voters.

Considerable consensus exists about the independence and significance of affective factors in voting. In a classic article (discussed later) comparing people's affective reactions toward candidates with their trait inferences about candidates, Abelson et al. (1982) drew upon survey data to assert that "affective registrations are not at all redundant with semantic judgments" (p. 619). People tend to respond to politically laden issues with an affective (i.e., gut) reaction, rather than in a careful, rational manner (Kuklinski, Riggle, Ottati, Schwarz, & Wyer, 1991). More than a few political commentators have posited that Ronald Reagan's popularity exemplified the primacy of affective reactions, hence the consistent discrepancies between public opinion toward Reagan's policy stands and the overall evaluation of the candidate—a phenomenon displayed most prominently in the oxymoronic category of "Reagan Democrats."

In probably the most widely cited and replicated study in this literature, Abelson et al. (1982) used affect checklists to determine if respondents had ever felt particular emotions (e.g., anger, happiness, hope) about several politicians and their actions. Abelson et al. also asked respondents for their trait-based (e.g., honesty, competence) impressions of these politicians. Finally, overall summary evaluations, typically predictive of voting, were solicited. This analysis of a nationwide survey indicated, among other conclusions, that voter affect toward candidates is a stronger predictor of voting behavior than trait inferences about candidates. This finding has been corroborated in numerous subsequent investigations (Anderson & Granberg, 1991; Christ, 1985; Granberg & Brown, 1989; Jones & Iacobucci, 1989; Ragsdale, 1991; Sullivan & Masters, 1988). Ragsdale (1991), using the same database as Abelson et al. (1982), demonstrated that an electoral choice model based on affective reactions to candidates outpredicted two competing rational choice models. Prior to the Abelson et al. study, Markus and Converse (1979) conceded a smaller, moderating role to affect, secondary to party identification. More recently, Rahn, Aldrich, Borgida, and Sullivan (1990) have found a middle ground between these views, contending that the effects on voting behavior of affect and partisanship are "quite similar" and account for most of the variance in voting decisions.

Abelson et al. (1982) also found that those surveyed could have concomitant positive and negative feelings (e.g., pride, anger, hope, fear) toward the same candidate, but they tended to be consistent in their trait inferences (i.e., competence, integrity, performance), attributing either positively or negatively valenced traits to a given candidate. They explained that this finding suggests that cognitions about a particular target are more subject to consistency pressures than are affective responses. Another important finding of the Abelson et al. (1982) study, with regard to building an understanding of the role of affect in candidate appraisal, is that positive affective reactions serve as stronger predictors of candidate preference than do negative affective reactions (see also Kinder & Sears, 1985, p. 691; Marcus, 1988; Sullivan & Masters, 1988). This finding argues against the efficiency of negative campaigning (discussed later), but the temptation may nevertheless be irresistible to many candidates.

Although positive affective responses to politicians are reported to be the strongest predictor of voter preference, negative affect is also relevant. A perennial dilemma seems to exist for candidates based on the demonstration that people's feelings toward them tend to become more negative following television news analyses of their speeches and debates, regardless of the valence of the analysis (Newton et al., 1987). Assuming the news media strive for parity in coverage of candidates, however, this phenomenon should result in no net effect during the long-term course of the campaign.

As noted, negative affect is often deliberately invoked by politicians, but generally toward opposing candidates. Such negative campaigning, although controversial, has become commonplace in U.S. electoral politics. Some empirical basis for the effectiveness of negative campaigning exists. Newhagen and Reeves (1991), who showed experimental participants clips of real campaign advertisements, found that people have better (faster and more accurate) recall for political television advertisements generating purely negative feelings than for ads invoking positive or mixed emotions. This finding is supported by social cognition research on attention to and memory for negative versus positive information (Pratto & John, 1991). However, one should note that Newhagen and Reeves's participants reported disliking the negative advertisements, which could offset the benefits of negative advertising for political campaigns. This speculation appears to have been borne out in the 1992 U.S. presidential election and in the 1996 Republican presidential primaries wherein the news media reported high public disapproval of negative campaigning. Campaigners subsequently sought to convey the impression of avoiding such strategies.

Conover and Feldman (1986) used longitudinal survey data to demonstrate the primacy of emotional rather than cognitive responses to the economy—and associatively, political leaders. Leaders (particularly incumbents in election years) will do well to invoke positive, rather than negative, emotions about the economy. An illustration of this strategy in action is presidential incumbent George Bush's public denials of the U.S. economic recession during 1990–1992. Challenger Bill Clinton's campaign workers, on the other hand, exhorted their candidate to focus on this issue, constantly reminding him: "It's the economy, stupid!"

Although a preponderance of the literature supports the conclusion that affective and cognitive processes can have independent effects on candidate preference, some research also supports interdependence. Proposing an interaction of affect and cognition in judgment, Granberg and Brown (1989), who drew data from national election surveys, found that affect, independent of relevant cognitions or accompanied by ambivalent cognitions, is a less stable predictor of voter behavior than affect accompanied by certain cognitions. Moving even further away from supporting an independent effect of affect on political judgment, Rahn et al. (1990) used national survey data to test their causal model of candidate appraisal. They contend that affective reactions to candidates, although an important mediator of the evaluation process, are based solely on cognitive appraisal and that affect is, therefore, postcognition.

What might be perceived as contradictory evidence in the literature about the relation between affect and cognition and their distinct or collective impact on electoral judgments, should perhaps be viewed as a demonstration of the complex nature of political decision making. Regardless of the sequential or causal relation between affect and cognition in this domain, both processes (in their many manifestations) most likely influence voter behavior with varying degrees of interdependence and importance as a function of numerous factors, such as voter sophistication, issue involvement, message content, and candidate personality. Nevertheless, the preponderance of evidence points to a dominant role for affect.

Confidence, however, in conclusions about the primacy of affect in political decision making, based on the research reviewed, is limited. Such research is highly vulnerable to criticisms regarding the construct validity of the measures of affect and cognition (Crites et al., 1994). Crites et al. aptly contended that "structural characteristics of the measures (e.g., response format of the scales) have sometimes been confounded with the

construct [i.e., affect or cognition] being measured" (p. 620). Thus, affective and cognitive responses, as measured, may be incomparable. Furthermore, even with sophisticated multivariate modeling techniques, conclusions about the causal relations between affect, cognition, and candidate preference are suspect without experimental corroboration. Therefore, experimental manipulation of affective and cognitive factors relating to candidates (and targets of social judgment more generally) offers great promise for contributing to the political and psychological literature and should be pursued accordingly.

## Affective Reactions to Nonverbal Displays

Voters' affective responses are by no means related only to the verbal content of candidates' appeals. Nonverbal, affective displays appear to elicit affective responses that may, in turn, moderate appraisals of candidates. In a study based largely on theories of primate facial displays, McHugo, Lanzetta, Sullivan, Masters, and Englis (1985) found a remarkable discrepancy between people's verbal self-reports and the physiological measures of their emotional reactions to Ronald Reagan's facial displays. Participants' self-reported emotional responses varied depending on prior attitudes toward Reagan such that supporters tended to emulate Reagan's emotions, but opponents did not. However, on physiological measures of emotion (i.e., electromyography, skin conductance, and electrocardiography), participants responded congruently with Reagan's displays regardless of their prior attitudes toward him. The authors speculated that "verbal reports of felt emotions following exposure to an expressive display may involve additional appraisal" (McHugo et al., 1985, p. 1526). In a later study, McHugo and colleagues (McHugo, Lanzetta, & Bush, 1991) were able to differentiate prior attitudes even on the physiological measures of affective reactions to Reagan, but reiterated that physiological "display effects were much stronger than [self-reported] attitude effects" (p. 35).

These findings, that visual emotional displays may have a stronger effect on emotional reactions to a leader than prior attitude, should probably not be generalized beyond the United States or, in fact, beyond Ronald Reagan. Striking cross-cultural differences have been observed between French and U.S. citizens' reactions to leaders' displays (Masters & Sullivan, 1989). "French participants are less likely than Americans to be influenced by a leader's [visually] expressive behavior when they can hear a[n accompanying] verbal message, and more likely [than Americans] to respond with positive emotion after displays of anger/threat" (p. 134). Furthermore, emotional reactions to leaders vary within cultures too, depending in large part on the target of evaluation. Comparing reactions to Reagan's and

Walter Mondale's displays during the 1984 presidential campaign, Masters and Sullivan (1989) found that physiological responses to Reagan were consistent across party lines, but not so for Mondale. This effect could, of course, be an artifact of Reagan's experience as an actor and Mondale's purported "Norwegian charisma" (Shields & MacDowell, 1987).

Research on the effects of people's affective reactions to political candidates has not been exhaustive, but results have been impressively consistent. A common thread running through the findings is that affect plays an important and pervasive role in voter behavior. Type of emotion is also relevant, as illustrated by Roseman et al.'s (1986) demonstration of emotional resonance, Marcus and MacKuen's (1993) assertion of anxiety as a motivator, and the consensus that positive affect is a better predictor of voter behavior than negative affect. Cross-cultural and cross-candidate studies remind us that social norms and personalities add variance. Therefore, conclusions must take into account, on some level, a multitude of factors involved in social interaction. Nonetheless, voters' impressions and actions are shaped largely, albeit not exclusively, by their feelings.

## Sideline: Research on Emotional/Personality Needs of Voters

A tradition exists within psychology that approaches affect and politics from a different perspective. Usually contributing to the psychohistory literature, theorists with a psychodynamic inclination have devoted thought to the emotional needs that have shaped leaders and influenced their ambitions and behaviors. More pertinent to the discussion here, several researchers and practitioners have considered how voters' emotional (or personality) needs affect preferences for candidates. For example, in an informal investigation conducted by a psychiatrist recollecting his clients' references to political candidates, Alexander (1959) suggested that with sufficient resources one could predict electoral outcomes by analyzing the family structures (e.g., parental relationships) of a large cross-section of the voting population. In a more illustrative approach, Milburn (1991) discussed Reagan's popularity in terms of his ability to fulfill the emotional needs of the public for reassurance and nationalistic pride, pointing out that Reagan was extremely popular despite holding unpopular policy positions. On the other hand, Sutherland and Tanenbaum (1984) reported that personality needs account for relatively limited variance in voting patterns. Given the mixed results and the difficulty of studying personality needs experimentally in large groups, this line of research does not promise much by way of empirical substance, but is nonetheless another area for consideration in piecing together affective aspects of political candidate selection.

#### **Emotional Expression by Politicians**

Emotional reactions to politicians play a critical role in voting decisions and electoral outcomes. But what of the emotions of the politicians themselves? Discussion of politicians' emotions has historically focused on extraordinary displays. The prototypical example of a politician's excessive emotional display is contained in the image of Democratic presidential primary frontrunner Edmund Muskie weeping in response to slurs about his wife by a conservative newspaper publisher. Although the relation has not been demonstrated empirically, Muskie's subsequent rapid decline in the polls has been widely attributed to this event. Not all such displays have been easily connected with electoral success or failure, but most have received extraordinary media and public attention. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder sobbed audibly during her announcement to a crowd of supporters that she was withdrawing from the 1988 presidential race. Even though such a display would be considered reasonable and very human by many people, it was seized upon by the media particularly because it invited controversy about gender stereotypes. Nelson Rockefeller gained notoriety for indignantly gesturing with his middle finger to a crowd of protesting University at Binghampton students in 1976. Rockefeller had already been dropped from the Republican ticket as the vice-presidential candidate so, as with Schroeder, his behavior was inconsequential with regard to his immediate electoral success, but nonetheless it was extremely controversial. On the other side of the spectrum, Michael Dukakis was criticized when, as the 1988 Democratic presidential candidate, he demonstrated a lack of emotion in response to a question posing the hypothetical assault and rape of his wife. In this case, as with Muskie, an argument could be (and has been) made for the emotional display (or lack thereof) affecting electoral results.

Although such controversial, emotion-related incidents occasionally occur, they are for the most part anomalous in politics. Politicians strive for an image of competence and rationality that is generally inconsistent, in U.S. culture, with extreme emotional behavior. Accordingly, research on politicians' emotions, in the rare instances that it has been carried out, has concentrated on the more typical, moderate emotional displays, how they differ between politicians, and how the public responds.

As for the affective experiences of politicians, they no doubt have pervasive, important effects on campaign behavior as well as public policy decision making. Research has focused, however, on the externally displayed emotions of candidates, probably for the following three pragmatic reasons. First, displayed emotions are more directly related to voter behavior. Internal affect of politicians is likely to influence voting only very indirectly (i.e., the politician's feelings influence

attitudes and behavior that ultimately affect voters' impressions of the politician). Second, displayed emotions are, by definition, visibly identifiable and even quantifiable, whereas emotional experiences of candidates would be difficult, if not impossible, to assess in even a quasi-scientific manner. Finally, public reaction to politicians' expressed emotions provides a practical, real-world paradigm for investigating the role of emotion in psychological processes such as attitude formation, decision making, social judgment, and social influence.

#### **Target Affect**

With the exception of research on the recognition of emotional expression (Ekman, 1973, 1984), investigations of affect and social judgment have focused on observer rather than target affect. Most of this work has been carried out on the role of the observer's affect as a moderator of judgment. Within the persuasion literature, one might have expected target affect to be investigated as a source variable (i.e., the emotionality of the source of a persuasive message might relate to persuasion). Yet even in this extensive literature (see Chaiken, Wood, & Eagly, 1996, and McGuire, 1985, for comprehensive reviews), target affect appears to have been overlooked.

As Manstead (1991) lamented, there are few exceptions to the neglect of the effect of target affect on social judgments. Among them is a recent study by Halberstadt and Niedenthal (1997), which demonstrated that the affective state of perceivers influenced their use of emotional dimensions in judgments of target faces. LaFrance and Hecht (1995) have shown that people who are accused of a transgression receive more lenient judgments if they smile, even if the smile does not appear sincere, because they are perceived as more trustworthy. One can certainly appreciate the implications of this finding in the political realm.

A program of research on perceptions of target affect has been carried out by Ekman and colleagues (e.g., Ekman, Friesen, O'Sullivan, & Scherer, 1980) who have studied the process of judging others' emotional displays. Such research, however, has been primarily concerned with the recognition and identification of emotion and the differential judgments obtained from verbal and nonverbal emotion cues, rather than with the impact of affect on social judgments. Perhaps the most direct investigation of the effect of target affect on observer judgment of the target is documented by Labott, Martin, Eason, and Berkey (1991) who asked participants to make explicit judgments of people who laughed, cried, or expressed no emotion. Participants preferred men who, counterstereotypically, had cried and women who had not. Not surprisingly, those who cried were seen as more depressed and emotional than those who laughed. When given the opportunity, participants engaged in more personal conversations with those who expressed no emotion than with those who cried or laughed. Labott et al.'s findings suggest a powerful effect of target emotional expression on social judgment and interpersonal behavior.

In a direct investigation of perceptions of politicians' emotional behavior, Shields and MacDowell (1987) found that the evaluations of politicians' emotions were moderated by the observer's party identification. This content analysis of news commentary by television professionals, political experts, and laypeople regarding the 1984 Bush-Ferraro vice-presidential debate revealed numerous, unsolicited references to candidates' emotions. In general, partisan commentators tried to paint a negative emotional portrait of the opposing candidate and, of course, a positive one of the candidate from their party. Democrats, for example, went out of their way to downplay Geraldine Ferraro's emotions, most likely because of sensitivity to the stigma of women as too emotional to succeed in politics. The small sample size and archival nature of the investigation strain its generalizability, but it serves as an informative, pioneering foray into the study of politicians' emotionality.

The effects of target affective display have also been explored by Patterson et al. (1992), who found that voters could perceive differences in expressiveness between Reagan and Mondale and that voters were more favorable, generally, to Reagan's nonverbal expressions. However, because they did not test the relation between expressiveness and favorability (or other dimensions of judgment) for the candidate, this study cannot speak directly to the impact of emotional expression on candidate appraisal.

The research by Ottati et al. (1997), described earlier in the contexts of processing style and affect-as-information, is also relevant here because it speaks to the effect of target affect on political judgments. In that study, low-motivation participants made less careful, more heuristic judgments of a candidate when he displayed happy facial expressions than when he had angry or neutral expressions. These results suggest an indirect path from candidate emotional expression to political judgments (i.e., via differential information processing style), but nevertheless provide some insight into the possible effects of candidate emotional expression.

#### **Emotional Reactions to Emotional Displays**

Much of the research (discussed in the previous section) measuring people's affective reactions to facial displays is also relevant to the issue of politicians' emotional display style because it has focused specifically on reactions to the emotional expressions of lead-

ers (Masters, 1991; Masters & Sullivan, 1989, 1993; Masters, Sullivan, Lanzetta, McHugo, & Englis, 1986; McHugo et al., 1991, 1985; Sullivan & Masters, 1988). Findings in this line of research, consistent with those of Shields and MacDowell (1987), suggest that prior attitudes toward candidates influence reactions to the candidates' emotional displays, at least as indicated by verbal reports. Physiological responses, on the other hand, can be agnostic with respect to prior attitude. depending on the expressive style of the politician and the cultural context (Masters & Sullivan, 1989). The discrepancy between verbal (explicit) and physiological (implicit) reactions suggests that, at least under some conditions, affective responses are moderated by prior attitudes, just as they probably moderate attitude change.

Sullivan and Masters (1988) illustrated the power of candidates' emotional displays, and demonstrated that "changes in viewers' attitudes were more likely to be influenced by the emotional responses to happy/reassuring facial displays than by cognitive variables such as party identification, issue agreement, or assessment of leadership ability" (p. 345). Masters and Sullivan (1993) used their research to illustrate the interaction between politicians' affective displays and viewers' ultimate evaluations of them: "A leader's expressive display of emotion, if repeatedly seen, can modify viewers' attitudes directly by eliciting emotions or trait attributions that affect their attitude toward the leader" (p. 158).

The manner in which we draw conclusions about the emotionality of politicians depends somewhat upon the context of the situation and the dimensions of expression (i.e., visual, tonal, semantic) to which we attend. Masters et al. (1986) contended that all such dimensions of a leader's presentation contributed to understanding of the emotion expressed. In support of this contention, Sullivan and Masters (1988) found the same effect for responses to politicians' facial displays with or without soundtrack. These findings are contradicted, however, by Krauss, Apple, Morency, Wenzel, and Winton (1981), who asserted that semantic content is the primary factor in the evaluation of another's affect. Such an assertion must be considered in light of the narrowly generalizable stimulus used in Krauss et al.'s study-the 1976 Dole-Mondale vice-presidential debate. Both of these politicians are renowned for their intelligence and eloquence, but also for their physical rigidity and limited emotional repertoires, traits that would favor semantic primacy in conveyance of affect.

#### **Display Rules**

One cannot ponder the impact of candidates' expressed emotions without considering the normative guidelines bearing on social behavior. Specifically with

regard to affect, Ekman and Friesen (1969; Ekman, 1984; see also Matsumoto, 1993) postulated that display rules, varying across cultures, dictate appropriate emotional expressions, depending on the situation. Ekman (1984) defined these culturally prescribed display rules as simply "overlearned habits about who can show what emotion to whom and when they can show it" (p. 320). Ekman's work on display rules is clearly relevant to political behavior; however, it does not address directly how observers react to, or form judgments of, targets based on their emotional displays.

If a particular set of display rules govern politicians in American culture (and this would seem likely), then adherence to and violation of such rules would probably influence public opinion. Furthermore, different sets of display rules most likely exist for politicians, as they do for others, in the private, professional, and public domains, forcing politicians to perform veritable juggling acts with their emotional displays. Such political dilemmas are illustrated in the recent criticism leveled against President Clinton for laughing (briefly) during the funeral proceedings of his friend and Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown. Although displays of happiness are not uncommon, and are often encouraged during occasions of grief, President Clinton was judged harshly. Whether this is a consequence of his violation of a general emotional display standard for leaders or a function of the inherently adversarial nature of partisan politics (i.e., criticism may have originated from those with opposing political interests), it reflects the particular sensitivity of the public to leaders' emotionality. As this incident suggests, the ability to appraise and regulate one's own emotions (perhaps in accordance with display rules), as well as the emotions of others, would be useful in any social situation, but is particularly powerful in the mass, political realm. Salovey and Mayer (1990) included skills such as these as dimensions of emotional intelligence and specifically applied their theoretical framework to politics in an analysis of Senator Gary Hart's 1988 campaign fiasco (Salovey & Mayer, 1994).

Complementary to the concept of emotional intelligence is Roseman et al.'s (1986) theory of emotional resonance (introduced earlier), which holds that political messages that resonate with the feelings (on a particular issue) of the target audience are more persuasive than those that do not. Although Roseman et al. used only printed political messages as stimuli in their study, we may reasonably infer that the phenomenon would hold, perhaps even more powerfully, for oral and visual presentations by candidates. An emotionally sensitive politician would use her or his skills to assess the general feelings of the audience and direct the emotionality of the presentation accordingly. Although this may not be an explicit strategy of politicians, it is most likely a common intuitive mode of action.

Further anecdotal evidence suggests that politicians may exploit public reactions to emotionality to shape

attitudes. A rather blatant example of this would be George Bush's repeated public statements that he wept in private the night he made the final decision to initiate the air attack on Iraq in 1991. Whether Bush's report was accurate, his decision to announce publicly this private display of sensitivity was a clear attempt to affect public opinion through emotional behavior (albeit unseen). Bush may have struck a brilliant compromise; gaining credit for his tenderness and compassion without suffering the humiliating consequences of being observed in a moment of weakness.

#### **Emotion-Related Stereotypes**

Differences in display rules, or expectations of emotionality, as a function of social category (e.g., gender) have been a topic of some consideration. Psychologists interested in gender differences in emotional displays (Condry & Condry, 1976; Fabes & Martin, 1991; Shields & MacDowell, 1987; Simon, 1994; see La-France & Banaji, 1992, for a review) have investigated the stereotypes of emotion associated with men and women. For instance Condry and Condry (1976) found that when observing a young child behaving in an ambiguous manner, people attributed different emotions to the child depending on whether they were told the child was a boy or a girl. Boys were more likely to be judged as angry and aggressive than girls.

Politicians may have to contend not only with culture-specific display rules and stereotypes, but with standards or expectations contingent upon their party or ideology. That differential stereotypes and expectations of emotional expression are held toward liberal versus conservative politicians seems likely. If so, adherence to or violation of such emotionality stereotypes by candidates could affect voters' impressions of them. The existing literature on emotions-related stereotypes, focusing primarily on gender, does not address this issue directly.

Political ideology has been used as an independent variable in research on personality differences (Eisenberg-Berg & Mussen, 1980; McClosky, 1958; Udolf, 1973) but, with the exception of Tomkins (1991), not in connection with emotionality. An informal survey carried out by Stroud, Glaser, and Salovey (1997), suggested a consistent difference in the stereotyped emotionality of liberals and conservatives, even when controlling for the ideology of the respondents; liberals are thought to be more emotional in general than conservatives. However, experimental results do not support such a global emotionality stereotype. Stroud et al. measured participants' liking of hypothetical political candidates who varied in intensity of emotional expression. Manipulating target emotional intensity by showing a videotape of an actor portraying a congressional candidate, Stroud et al. found that the more emotional target was rated more positively than the unemotional target when the target's political party label was not given, but when the party label was given, participants preferred the unemotional target. However, the manipulation of party label (Democrat or Republican) did not affect ratings of the candidate's emotionality. Furthermore, when the candidate's party label was not provided, participants did not identify him differentially as a Democrat or Republican based on his or her emotional intensity.

## Research Priority: The Impact of Candidate's Emotional Displays

In the cases of Muskie, Schroeder, Rockefeller, Dukakis, and others, violations of display rules seem at least noteworthy, generally controversial, and devastating in some instances. Most politicians are adept in their use of emotional display rules; they are emotionally intelligent, if you will (cf. Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Consequently, violations, although intriguing, are rare and account for few outcomes in the grand scheme of electoral politics. The real, pervasive impact of politicians' affective behavior seems to lie in their ability to push the envelope of emotional display rules—invoking interest, passion, and support—without disrupting the public's fragile concept of a competent leader.

Although we have seen no shortage of investigations of the role of affect in social judgment, some even bearing, however indirectly, on the influence of target affect, the vast majority of research and theory has focused on the moods or emotions of the person making

the judgment. This emphasis may be a function of the focus in social psychology on cognitive factors in judgment and decision making with affect seen mostly as a moderator of otherwise systematic processes. As a result, a relatively thorough exploration of the effect of observer affect on judgments in the persuasion and mood and memory literatures has occurred. Simultaneously, the relative neglect of target affect variables has left a significant void in the understanding of the role of affect in social judgment. Nevertheless, social psychology concerns, by definition, behavior as it relates to and is influenced by social factors. In attempting to understand how people make judgments of others (i.e., social judgments), investigating how the affective behavior of the targets of judgments influences those judgments may prove crucial. The fields of public opinion and social psychology would benefit from greater emphasis on target affect. Conveniently, because electoral politics provides fertile ground for studying such effects, both shortcomings can be addressed simultaneously. Systematic study of the effects of target emotional display on social judgments is clearly warranted.

## Candidate Expression of Affect: An Integrative Framework

Numerous explanations can be generated to account for the influence of emotionality on candidate appraisal. Figure 1 poses an integrated framework to consider multiple plausible paths from a candidate's expressed emotionality to voter preference. This framework is not intended, by any means, to be the last word on the effects of target emotionality on social judgment. Such a contention would be premature given that research

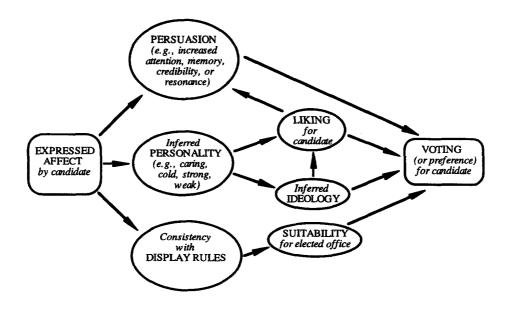


Figure 1. A model of the influence of candidate emotionality on voter preference.

findings are relatively sparse. Rather, we intend that this proposed framework, invoking established social psychological theory, can serve as a point of departure for research on the relatively neglected role of emotional expression in political judgment and social judgment more generally.

As Figure 1 illustrates, a candidate's emotionality has three immediate consequences, each of which ultimately influences appraisal of the candidate. First, emotionality can moderate the persuasiveness of the candidate's messages by increasing vividness of, and therefore attention to and memory for, the message. Similarly, a candidate whose emotions resonate (Roseman et al., 1986) with the perceivers' feelings (on a given issue) can elicit more agreement. This persuasiveness can, in turn, increase one's preference for the candidate, who is now perceived as generally wise and on target.

A second possible consequence of emotional expression is inferences about the personality traits of targets. A visibly angry candidate may be seen as passionate, strong, or both. A candidate who expresses sadness over a tragedy is more likely to be seen as caring and compassionate, but perhaps also weak, and one who shows fear is more certainly to be perceived as weak. Inference of generally desirable traits leads to liking the candidate, which in turn should predict preference and voting. Simultaneously, inferred personality characteristics may lead to an inference of ideology based on such stereotypes as the compassionate liberal or the strong conservative (Stroud et al., 1997). This ideological inference is likely to be influential because ideology and party identification are consistent predictors of voting behavior. Inferred ideology can influence voting directly or indirectly, as when preferences are based on similarity. However, inferred ideology is most likely to be influential only in those rare instances when a candidate's party or ideology is unknown. The liking engendered by inferred personality attributes can also influence voting indirectly by affecting persuasiveness. One's liking of a message source is a reliable predictor of persuasion.

A third explanation of the influence of target emotion on judgment has to do with whether the expressed emotion adheres to or violates emotional display rules (Ekman & Friesen, 1969). If, as Ekman and colleagues have argued, cultural norms guide the expression of emotions, violations of (and adherence to) these norms have social consequences. These consequences would seem particularly acute in the realm of electoral politics in which candidates are often under intense public scrutiny, as illustrated by the incident in which President Clinton evoked scorn by laughing during a funeral. If candidates are perceived as violating display rules—general cultural rules or those specific to politicians—they are less likely to be perceived as suitable to hold public office and serve as community leaders.

Display rule violations can also lead to decreased liking and subsequently diminished voter preference.

The proposed framework describes multiple paths by which the emotional expressiveness of political candidates can affect the public's view of and behavior toward them. These paths may differ in their importance depending on the office under consideration. Voters may have very different expectations for presidents than they do for state legislators or county sheriffs. Likewise, this framework may generalize to nonpolitical targets. Given the rather impoverished state of research in this domain, our framework is intended to serve as a source of organization, drawing upon wellsupported psychological theory to point to probable modes by which target emotionality might influence social judgments. Investigations aimed at testing aspects of this model will doubtlessly serve to address a deficit in our understanding of social and political judgments.

#### Conclusion

Social psychological research on electoral politics has helped to illuminate the voter decision-making processes once thought to be comprised of rational choices based on cost-benefit analyses of electoral outcomes. So-called irrational factors have been demonstrated to influence voter decisions. In particular, feelings toward politicians and political issues increasingly determine, in part, political behavior.

Prominent among the research on affect in politics, Abelson et al. (1982) and Marcus (1988) have demonstrated that voters' affective reactions to candidates are stronger predictors of candidate preference than are trait inferences about candidates. This is not to say that emotional reactions to candidates are not based, at least in part, on nonaffective variables (e.g., party identification, issue positions). Affective and cognitive appraisals most likely exist in a recursive loop. Appraisals of candidates, although drawn from both cognitive assessments and affective reactions in varying proportions, may be catalogued affectively. This notion would be consistent with Marcus's (1991) endorsement of affect as a legitimate and necessary part of the political decision-making process, simplifying the processing (attainment, assimilation, and encoding) of vast amounts of complex political information. A simple feeling toward a candidate may summarize thousands of bits of information. On the other hand, such cognitive parsimony could impede or defend against attitude change as well, contributing to the overall trend of rigidity in party and candidate preference by U.S. voters.

Future research needs to focus especially on the emotions of politicians themselves. Theories of emotions, such as Ekman and Friesen's (1969) display rules, Salovey and Mayer's (1990) emotional intelligence,

and Roseman et al.'s (1986) concept of emotional resonance, as well as models of attitude change as a function of message source factors, can be applied to explaining the impact of politicians' emotional behavior styles on the public's perceptions of them. Possible factors to be investigated might include (but are certainly not limited to): degree of candidate emotionality in expression as a predictor of electoral success; gender differences in, and stereotypes of, emotional expression among politicians (as initiated by Shields & MacDowell, 1987), and the effects thereof; and the relation between candidates' adherence to emotional display rules (or candidates' emotional competence) and electoral success. Some of these variables are included in the proposed model depicted in Figure 1.

Electoral politics is rife with emotion, from the commonplace feelings of hope, pride, anger, fear, and anxiety that compel people to take political action, to the subtle and ubiquitous smiles and grimaces on the campaign trail, and to the relatively extreme and consequential reactions such as the one that overcame Edmund Muskie and changed the course of history. Explorations of such phenomena promise to enrich our understanding of political and other social judgments.

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