Theses, Dissertations, and Culminating Projects   Graduate School

1969

Economic themes and style variables in presidential nomination acceptance speeches 1928-1968

Francis M. Gaffney
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Follow this and additional works at: https://spark.siue.edu/etd

Recommended Citation

Gaffney, Francis M., "Economic themes and style variables in presidential nomination acceptance speeches 1928-1968" (1969). *Theses, Dissertations, and Culminating Projects*. 56.
https://spark.siue.edu/etd/56

ECONOMIC THEMES AND STYLE VARIABLES IN
PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES:
1928-1968 ,

by

Francis M. Gaffney

Bachelor of Arts

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Master of Arts Degree

Faculty of Government and Public Affairs
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville Campus
August, 1969 .

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

The Graduate School
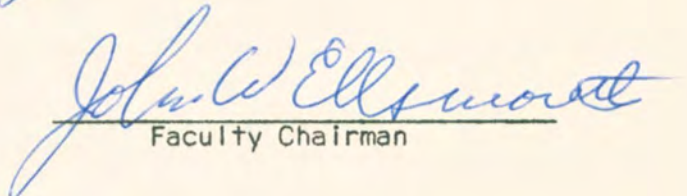
<u>July 21</u>, 19 <u>69</u>

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION

BY ___ Francis Michael Gaffney ___

ENTITLED ___ Economic Themes and Style Variables in Presidential ___

___ Nomination Acceptance Speeches: 1928-1968. ___

BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF ___ Master of Arts ___

John W. Ellsworth
_____
Thesis Director

John W. Ellsworth
_____
Faculty Chairman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure   Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In their analysis of the 1948 presidential election
and the process of votes in the making, Lazarsfeld, Berel-
son and McPhee distinguished between two types of issue
discussions. The authors suggested that the content of
presidential campaign debate can, quite frequently and
without serious distortion, be dichotomized into "position"
and "style" issue articulations.[1]

"Position" issues within their framework refer to the
question, "In whose interest should government be run?"
"Style" issues refer to the question, "In whose style
should the government be run?"[2]

The distinction between the two types of issues can
be further emphasized by focusing on the typical content of
each type of issue articulation. "Position" issues, in
general, tend to be quite specific and usually contain ref-
erences to matters of money, material power and economic

---

[1] Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William
McPhee, Voting (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,
1954), p. 184.

[2] Ibid.

interests. "Style" issues, in contrast, are more diffuse and generalized. As their name suggests, they contain references to matters of style, taste and life patterns.

Historically, "position" issues seem to arise out of concrete socio-economic conditions, and decline in importance as the socio-economic conditions which called them forth are mitigated. "Style" issues, on the other hand, gain the center of the stage only when "position" issues are not particularly important. As an example of the inverse relationship between "position" and "style" issues, the authors point to the relative importance attached to the Prohibition issue during the 1928 and 1932 presidential campaigns.[3] In 1928, Prohibition, a "style" issue, was extensively discussed by both presidential candidates; in 1932, Prohibition declined in importance when the more real issues posed by the Great Depression were at stake. In short, a decrease in "style" issue discussion results in a concomitant increase in "position" issue discussion. Moreover, the converse is also true; a decrease in "position" issue discussion results in a concomitant increase in "style" issue discussion.

Subsequent research in the field of electoral behavior by Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes,[4] has lent

---

[3] Ibid., p. 185.

[4] Angus Campbell, et al., The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964).

additional support to the relationship between "position" and "style" issues hypothesized by Lazarsfeld, Berelson and McPhee. These researchers, in their study of the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections, found that there was a marked drop in the intensity of voter concern with economic issues after the 1952 elections as the Great Depression faded from memory.[5] Moreover, their survey data indicate a corresponding increase in references to "style" issues and to the questions posed by America's new role as leader of the free world, over the same time period.

Specifically investigating trends in issue discussion during presidential campaigns, Smith, Stone and Glenn,[6] in their content analysis of twenty presidential nomination acceptance speeches, noted a decrease in references to economic matters over time, the decline in "position" issue discussion being most precipitous since 1952. At the same time, but without specifically investigating the relationship between "position" and "style" issue discussion, they found that the concerns reflected in more recent speeches are more general and diffuse than the concerns reflected in earlier speeches.[7]

---

5 Ibid., pp. 15-18.

6 Marshall S. Smith, Phillip J. Stone, and Evelyn N. Glenn, "A Content Analysis of Twenty Presidential Nomination Speeches," in The General Inquirer, ed. by Phillip J. Stone, et al. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1966), p. 359.

7 Ibid., p. 375.

Utilizing the Lasswell Value Dictionary, J. Zvi Namenwirth, in a content analysis of long and short term trends in concern with wealth in sixty-two party platforms, also notes a decline in concern with "position" issues (wealth-other issues) since the height of the Great Depression in the 1930's.[8] In addition, the author finds that references to wealth are correlated with certain economic indicators. Namenwirth's study does not consider changes in "position" and "style" issue discussion as shifts in the economic indicators occur. Instead, the author focuses on the relationship between changes in the values articulated in the party platforms and shifts in the economy.

If the seemingly disparate findings of the four studies outlined above are brought together and gleaned for their elements of commonality, at least three conclusions emerge. First, there is a rather substantial body of literature which points to the possible existence of secular trends in "position" and "style" issue discussion during presidential campaigns. Second, the phenomenon which can be described as a polar tension between "position" and "style" issues has only been hypothesized, and

---

8 J. Zvi Namenwirth, "Some Long and Short Term Trends in One American Political Value: A Computer Analysis of Concern With Wealth in 62 Party Platforms," in The Analysis of Communication Content: Developments in Scientific Theories and Computer Techniques, ed. by G. Gerbner, et al. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, in press).

not subjected to systematic analysis. Third, and perhaps
only implicit in the literature reviewed, the analysis of
secular trends in "position" and "style" issues presents a
unique opportunity for the researcher to assess the impact
of major shifts in the economy on the content of the
speeches given during a presidential campaign.

The primary objective of this study is to offer a
preliminary measurement of the scope of change since 1928
in "position" and "style" issue discussion, and possible
substantive implications of such changes. As a conse-
quence, the study can be termed heuristic, or hypothesis
generating. There is also a second objective: to demon-
strate the applicability of computerized content analysis
to a rich source of political data, the verbal text of
campaign speeches.

This paper does not purport to be a systematic study
of either secular trends in "position" and "style" issue
discussion through time, or a vigorous analysis of the
characteristic patterns of interaction between the economy
and the political system. It is, rather, a tentative
attempt to investigate three limited hypotheses related to
trends in "position" and "style" issue discussion in
twenty-two presidential nomination speeches from 1928 to
1968.

In order to investigate these hypotheses, "position"
issue discussion, within the framework of this analysis,

was analytically defined as a specific reference to either concrete economic conditions or to the major economic groups. Examples of the former would include references to jobs, prices and taxes; examples of the latter would include references to business, the farmer and labor. "Style" issue discussion, for the purpose of this analysis, was analytically defined as a general and diffuse reference to either national goals and ideals or to values and morality.

In both instances these analytical definitions were replaced by rigid operational definitions, contained in the dictionary utilized in this computerized content analysis.

MAJOR HYPOTHESES

Three major hypotheses are investigated in the study and each is derived from previous research on issue salience in presidential campaigns. The first major hypothesis was derived from the research outlined above, and focuses attention directly on the presence or absence of a secular trend in "position" issue discussion through time. Specifically, the suggestion of the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan which states that there was a marked decline in the intensity of voter concern with economic issues (a type of "position" issue within the framework of this paper) after the 1952 election, will be tested. Reformulated in the starker language of a statistical null hypothesis, the hypothesis reduces to a test of no trend in "position" issue discussion since 1928 in presidential nomination acceptance speeches, against the alternate hypothesis of a negative linear trend through time with the most precipitous break coming in the 1952-1956 period. The acceptance of the alternate hypothesis in this case would constitute a confirmation of the Survey Research Center's hypothesis.

The second major hypothesis is a logical extension of the first, and was drawn from the work of Lazarsfeld, Berelson and McPhee, and that of the Survey Research Center. Each group, using its own formulation, has pointed to the presence of a polar tension between "position" and

"style" issue discussion, or to state it in equivalent but somewhat more precise terms, they have suggested that there is an inverse relationship between "position" and "style" issue discussion through time. Restated formally, the possibility that "position" issue discussion and "style" issue discussion are unassociated will be tested against the alternate possibility that "position" issue and "style" issue discussion are associated, and that the association is negative. Again, the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis will represent a limited confirmation of the existence of a polar tension between "position" and "style" issue discussion.

The final major hypothesis relates directly to the antecedents of change in "position" issue discussion. As previous research, especially that conducted by J. Zvi Namenwirth has suggested, there is a relationship between the state of the economy and "position" issue discussion. Therefore, references to "position" issues will be correlated with economic indicators in an attempt to discover the extent to which acceptance speeches mirror objectively determinable economic conditions. Again restated in the form of a research hypothesis, the hypothesis that "position" issue discussion and certain economic indicators are uncorrelated will be tested against the alternate hypothesis that "position" issue discussion and certain economic indicators are correlated and that the correlation is

either positive or negative depending on the economic index used.

The rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis in this case will point to one possible link between the changing economic environment of the political system and the system's response to these environmental perturbations.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH DESIGN

The overall research design utilized in this paper
has a twofold purpose. First, it serves as a theoretical
justification for the sample of data selected, and for the
methodology employed in the analysis of the data. Second,
the research design makes explicit and integrated the two
classes of inferences which are made about the nomination
acceptance speeches, and are directly related to the major
hypotheses under investigation.

The first class of inferences made in this paper
focuses directly on the texts themselves, and seeks to
describe and measure the attributes of the messages con-
tained in the documents, without reference to either the
intentions of the sender or the effects of the message
upon those to whom it is directed. The second broad class
of inferences seeks to explicate the causes or antecedents
of the changes in message content.

Inferences about the attributes or main character-
istics of the messages under consideration can be divided
into two main categories: those which focus on secular
trends in Democratic and Republican "position" and "style"
issue discussion since 1928; and those which focus on the
similarities between Republican and Democratic discussion
of these two issue types through time.

The model on which inferences made about secular trends in "position" and "style" issue discussion are based, is represented diagramatically in Figure 2-1.[1] In the diagram, A and B refer to the sources of the document, i.e., the Democratic or Republican nominees, X and Y to the content variables "position" and "style" issue discussion. The variable T in this diagram and all subsequent diagrams refers to time. The arrows with solid lines indicate time series analysis of concern with these issues, and the broken line indicates the inference to be drawn from the analysis. As the diagram indicates, Democratic and Republican "position" and "style" issue discussion are being analyzed separately within this framework.

Figure 2-2 represents the research design utilized in making inferences about similarities between Democratic and Republican "position" and "style" issue discussion through time. As the diagram indicates, the inferences within this model are based on a comparison of time trends in issue discussion for Democratic and Republican nominees. In the diagram, A refers to Democratic sources and B refers to Republican, X and Y are the content variables "position" and "style" issue discussion, the T subscripts indicate that the overall trend in Democratic "position" issue will

---

[1] The Research Designs displayed in Figures 2-1 through 2-4 are based on those suggested by Ole R. Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 24-41.

Messages contained in nomination acceptance speech produced by source A or B at time T_1

Messages contained in nomination acceptance speech produced by source A or B at time T_2

Messages contained in nomination acceptance speech produced by source A or B at time T_n

Content Variables X or Y

$A \longrightarrow X_{T_1}$

$A \longrightarrow X_{T_2}$

$A \longrightarrow X_{T_n}$

Trends in nomination acceptance speech for the variable under consideration

FIGURE 2-1

Content
Variables
X and Y

Messages contained
in nomination
acceptance speech
produced by source
A at time $T_1 \longrightarrow T_n$

Messages contained
in nomination
acceptance speech
produced by source
B at time $T_1 \longrightarrow T_n$

A
X $T_1 \longrightarrow n$

B
X $T_1 \longrightarrow n$

Similarities between Republican and Democratic discussion of issue
types in nomination acceptance speeches

FIGURE 2-2

be compared with the overall Republican discussion of the same issue type.

Figure 2-3 represents a slight variation of Figure 2-2. In Figure 2-3, Democratic trends in "position" issue discussion are compared with corresponding trends in Democratic "style" issue discussion. The same type of comparison will be made between Republican "position" and "style" issue discussion.

The second class of inferences made in this paper about the content of nomination acceptance speeches is concerned with the causes or antecedents of the message. The inferential process is employed in this case, to discover if there is a relationship between concrete events and the content of the message which follows in the wake of those events. Here, the message is viewed as a measure of concern with values and attitudes called into question by the events. Figure 2-4 displays the research design employed to investigate this relationship. In this Figure, S represents the situation variable, which is compared with the content variable X. The postulated relationships being that changes in situation S will result in changes in X. Within the framework of this research, S will always be represented by one of the four economic indices and X will be "position" issue discussion in a nomination speech.

Message contained
in nomination
acceptance speech
produced by source
A at time $T_1 \rightarrow T_n$

Message contained
in nomination
acceptance speech
produced by source
A at time $T_1 \rightarrow T_n$

Content
Variable
Y

Content
Variable
X

A
X
$T_1 \rightarrow n$

A
Y
$T_1 \rightarrow n$

Difference between trends for "position" and "style" issue discussion for nominees of the same party

FIGURE 2-3

Messages in nomination speeches produced by sources A or B in situation S_1 at time T_1

Messages in nomination speeches produced by sources A or B in situation S_2 at time T_2

Messages in nomination speeches produced by sourced A or B in situation S_n at time T_n

Content Variable X or Y

$A \quad X \quad S_1 T_1$

$A \quad X \quad S_2 T_2$

$A \quad X \quad S_n T_n$

Effects of the events in the economic environment on the content of the message
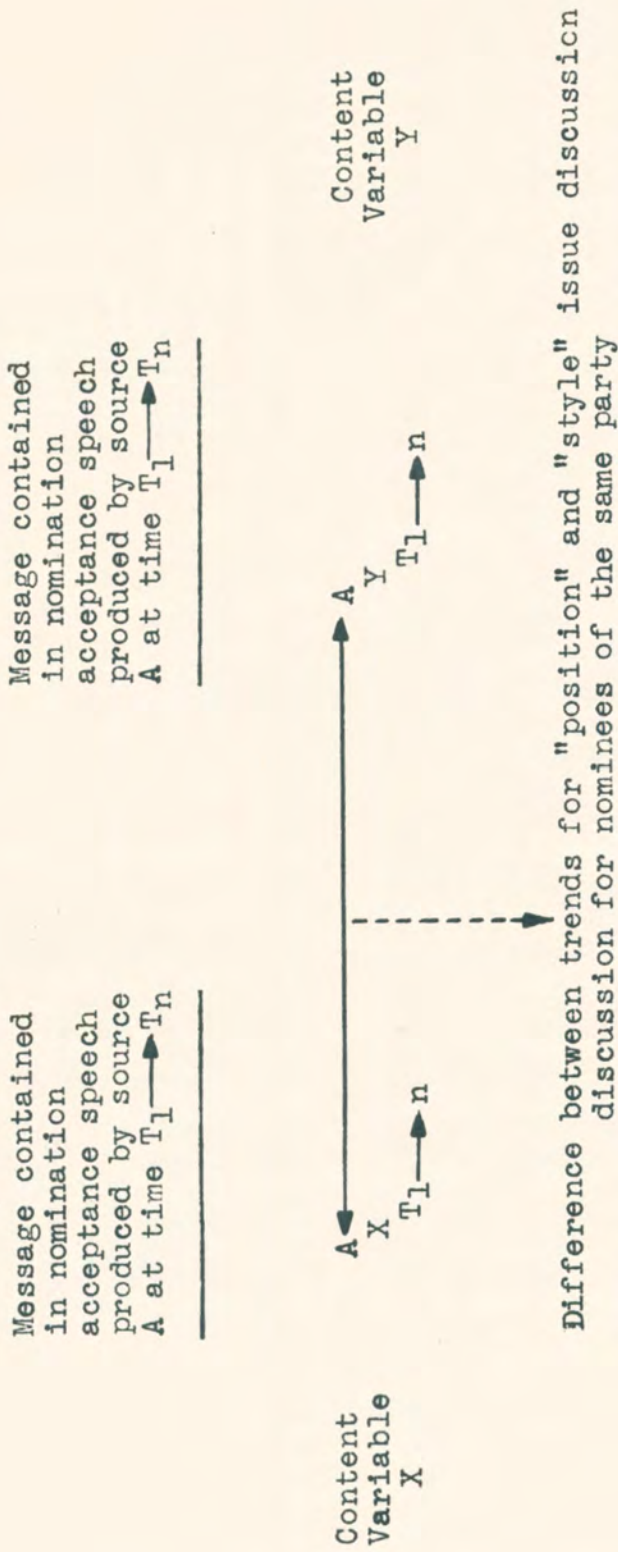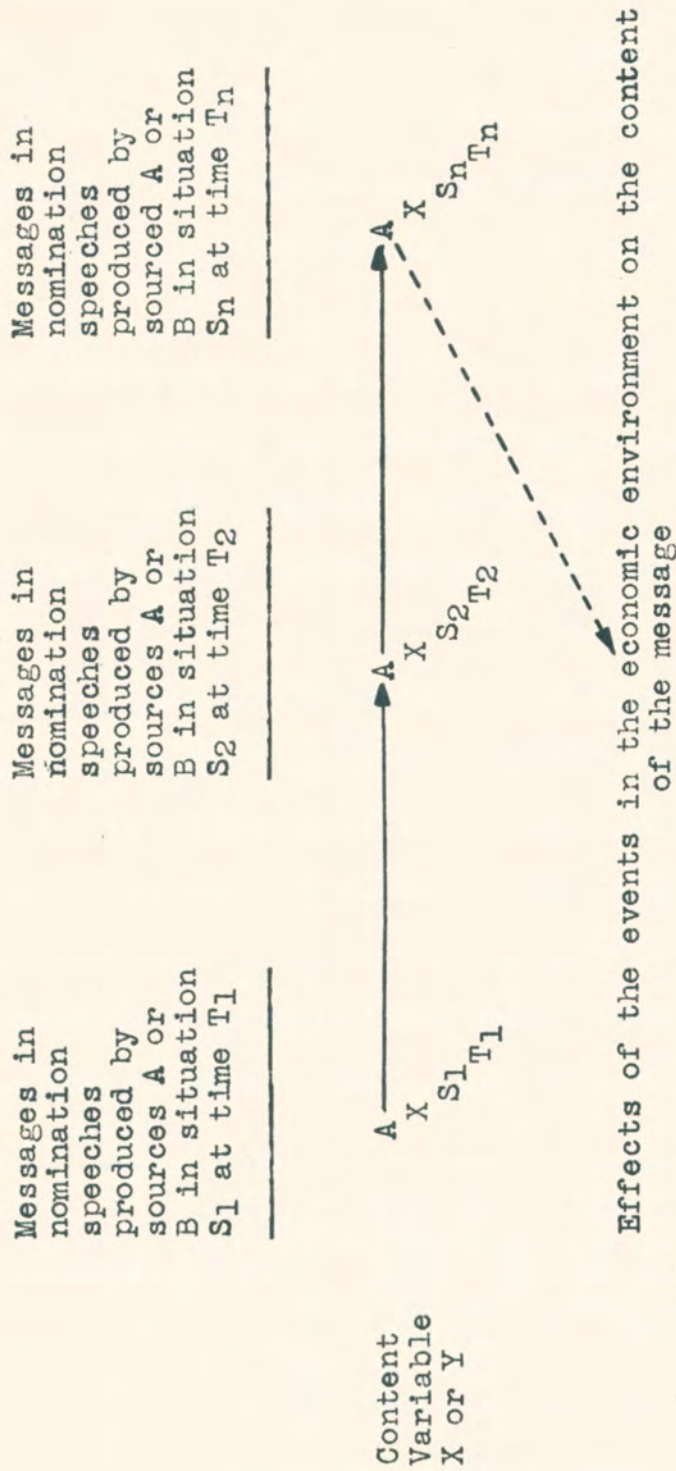
FIGURE 2-4

THE DATA

For the purpose of investigating the hypotheses out-
lined above, two types of data are utilized in this study.
The basic data, in the form of index scores, were derived
from the acceptance speeches of the Republican and Demo-
cratic nominees for the Presidency from the year 1928 to
the year 1968.

No changes were made in the texts and each word and
sentence was analyzed. The speeches were coded for two
descriptive variables: party affiliation and year of
delivery. Table 2-1 gives basic information about the
speeches.[2]

One major problem which exists in the data stems
from the fact that the acceptance speeches are not the
product of the candidate's effort alone. Rather, they
reflect the advice and influence of his political advisers
and trained speech writers. Therefore, no inferences can
be made about the candidates themselves from the content
of the speeches.[3] As a consequence, this is a study of

---

[2] The text of the speeches was drawn from the following
sources: the Official Proceedings of the Republican
National Convention for the Years 1928 through 1960; the
Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention
for the Years 1928 through 1960; the New York Times of
July 17 and August 27, 1964; and direct transcription of
the Nixon and Humphrey Addresses for the year 1968.

[3] Smith, et.al.. "Content Analysis of Acceptance
Speeches," p. 363.

TABLE 2-1

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPEECHES

YEAR	REPUBLICAN	NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF SENTENCES	DEMOCRAT	NUMBER OF WORDS	NUMBER OF SENTENCES
28	Hoover	7929	418	Smith	8542	382
32	Hoover	7027	345	Roosevelt	4198	191
36	Landon	4031	215	Roosevelt	2001	105
40	Wilkie	5566	340	Roosevelt	3517	127
44	Dewey	2089	126	Roosevelt	1783	77
48	Dewey	1225	77	Truman	2758	127
52	Eisenhower	1102	45	Stevenson	1727	77
56	Eisenhower	4259	180	Stevenson	3109	155
60	Nixon	5578	198	Kennedy	2191	112
64	Goldwater	3265	134	Johnson	2343	122
68	Nixon	4547	252	Humphrey	3737	210

"position" and "stÿle" issue discussion in twenty-two nom-
ination acceptance speeches and not a study of fourteen
men.

It is assumed, however, that speeches do give some
indication of the nominees' differential concern with a
particular issue or issue cluster, and that this measure in
turn can be used to assess the relative priority of a value
or cluster of values within the total value scheme of each
and all the documents which were analyzed in this paper.
This study is predicated on the presumed validity of this
assumption.

The second source of data consists of four indica-
tors which measure changes in the distribution, allocation
and production of scarce goods in society. These economic
indicators are:[4] the unemployment rate; the wholesale
price index (Bureau of Labor Statistics) by major product
groups for all commodities; the wholesale price index (BLS)

---

[4] These data were obtained from the following sources:
U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the
United States: Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, D.C.:
U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965).
     U.S. Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the
United States: Colonial Times to Present; Continuation to
1962 and Revisions (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government
Printing Office, 1965).
     U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstracts of the
United States: 1968 (89th ed.; Washington, D.C.: U.S.
Government Printing Office, 1968).
     All data, with the exception of the unemployment rate
are converted to the standard reference base period 1957-59
= 100. Conversion factors to adjust those indices which
were in the 1947-49 = 100 standard reference base period
were obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of
Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C.

by major product groups for farm products; and the con-
sumer price index (BLS) for all items. These indices and
their values for the years of the elections are displayed
in Table 2-2.

TABLE 2-2

ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND THEIR INDEX VALUES FOR THE YEARS OF THE ELECTIONS

YEAR	UNEMPLOYMENT %	ALL COMMODITIES WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (AVERAGE)	FARM PRODUCTS-01 WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX (AVERAGE)	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
28	4.4	53.0	64.6	53.7
32	23.6	35.6	29.4	47.6
36	16.9	44.2	49.4	48.3
40	14.6	43.0	41.3	48.8
44	1.2	56.9	75.3	61.3
48	3.4	87.9	117.1	83.8
52	2.7	94.0	116.8	92.5
56	4.3	96.2	96.6	94.7
60	5.6	100.7	96.9	103.1
64	5.2	100.5	94.3	108.1
68	3.8	108.1	99.7	121.6

METHODOLOGY

The General Inquirer system of computerized content
analysis utilized in this study was originally developed
at the Laboratory for Social Relations Research at Harvard
University. It was adapted to the IBM 1401-1311 machine
configuration by Mr. Phillip Miller of Washington Univer-
sity.[5] Although the system was originally developed for
studying psychological and sociological material, a broad
range of dictionaries, data preparation systems and data
analysis procedures have since been developed.

The core of the General Inquirer system is the dic-
tionary.[6] Each word in the dictionary is defined by one
or more tags representing categories in the investigator's
theory. These tags and their corresponding categories
constitute, within the framework of the General Inquirer,
a rigid operational definition of the hypothesis under
investigation and make explicit the assumptions which
underlie the research.

For the purposes of this analysis, the Ellsworth

---

[5] For a detailed description of the systems development
see: Phillip J. Stone, et al., "The General Inquirer: A
Computer System for Content Analysis and Retrieval Based
on the sentence as the Unit of Information," Behavioral
Science, VII, No. 6 (1962), 484-494. See also Phillip J.
Stone, et al., ed., The General Inquirer: A Computer
Approach to Content Analysis (Cambridge: The MIT Press,
1966).

[6] Holsti, Content Analysis for Social Sciences, p. 156.

Political Dictionary,[7] which is outlined below, was stored on disk inside the IBM 1401 computer. The nomination acceptance speeches from 1928 to 1968, which had been punched into IBM cards, were input into the computer, and the internally stored "tagging" program directed the computer through the following subroutines. Entry words, which were listed on the dictionary in their "unchopped" form, were tagged immediately, whereas root words which appeared in the dictionary in their root form were first "chopped" to their root, deleting frequently appearing endings such as: e, s, es, ed, ing, ion, ly, before being tagged. If an entry word was not found on the dictionary, it was printed separately on a "leftover" list. After the computer had tagged or printed on the "leftover" list each word from the first sentence of the document, it restored the sentence to its natural language form and applied the string of tags assigned by the words to the sentence, and generated one magnetic tape record. The computer then proceeded to the next sentence, and continued analyzing each word and sentence until it sensed an "end of document" input card. After all the documents had been tagged, the computer was reprogrammed with the "text and tag" program.

The "text and tag" program formated the "tagged"

---

7 John W. Ellsworth, "Computerized Content Analysis of the 1968 Presidential Campaign: A Research Proposal," Southern Illinois University, 1968. (Mimeographed.)

output so that "retrievals" and "tag tallies" could be run
on the "tagged" data. The "text and tag" program also
printed out the text and tags assigned by the words to the
sentences. "Tag tallies" were then run on the data. The
"tag tally" program computes both raw and index scores on
the "text and tag" data. Since raw scores were considered
within the framework of this research design to be rela-
tively unimportant, two types of index scores were com-
puted on the data. First, "sentence tag tallies" were com-
puted. The "sentence tag tally" index score is based on
the ratio of the number of sentences in the text assigned
by the tags to the total number of sentences in the docu-
ment. Next, "word tag tallies" were run and index scores
were computed. The "word tag tally" index score is based
on the ratio of the number of words in the text assigned
by the tags to the total number of words in the document.
In order to check the accuracy of the assignment of tag to
text, retrievals were run on the data. Tags which corres-
ponded to the category of economic "position" issue dis-
cussion and those corresponding to "style" issue discussion
were input to the computer in retrieval specification
format and the sentences assigned to these tags were
printed out, then manually checked to determine if their
manifest content did in fact constitute the types of issue
discussion under consideration. In all instances the
retrieved sentences had face validity.

The next phase of the analysis entailed the computation of Kendall's Tau on the index scores. Here word and sentence tag tallies were treated as two observations on the same speech. The null hypothesis of no correlation (H_0: $\tau = 0$) between the ranks assigned to the speeches by the word and sentence tag tallies was tested against the alternate hypothesis that word and sentence tag tallies were positively correlated (H_1: $\tau > 0$). It was found that for both economic "position" issue and "style" issue discussion, the word and sentence "tag tallies" assigned virtually the same rank to the documents (t = 0.93). Since there was no significant difference between the ranks assigned to the speeches by either the word or sentence tag tallies, coupled with the fact that there is no compelling theoretical justification for choosing one index over the other, this author chose to use the percentage frequencies from the sentence tag tallies.[8]

The final phase of the analysis involved the computation of Kendall's Tau on the data. The computations were done by hand, and checked by a second person who recomputed each Tau.

---

[8] Preliminary results compiled by Professor J.W. Ellsworth at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, indicate that persons hearing the nomination acceptance speeches from the 1968 campaign, decoded the speeches on the basis of sentence units rather than word units, with sentence based pattern of decoding being especially marked when the message unit communicated information of a substantive nature.

THE DICTIONARY

The Ellsworth Political Dictionary utilized in this study was built through an inductive process by which campaign documents were first examined in an effort to ascertain the manifest content of the statements contained in the speeches. Three independent judges of manifest content were used in order to develop initial categories which were then applied, using visual inspection and subjective judgment, to the presidential nomination acceptance speeches of Kennedy, Nixon, Johnson and Goldwater. A Key-Word-In-Context was then run on the data, and the preliminary classification scheme was checked for validity and consistency. On the basis of the data generated by the Key-Word-In-Context operation, additional tags were developed. At present the Dictionary contains fifty tags.

The Dictionary can be conveniently divided into four classes of tags: first-order, second-order, substantive and stylistic. First-order tags include words which do not, when taken by themselves, indicate the manifest content of a message, but which, when combined with second-order tags, do indicate the manifest content of the message and thereby allow the unit to be classified. In general, the presence of a first-order tag without the appropriate second-order tag indicates that the message unit is too abstract to be classified. Second-order tags are assigned to those words which indicate that the speaker

has made a passing allusion to something substantive without making a clear statement concerning it. Substantive tags differ from first and second-order tags in that these tags indicate that a clear and significant message has been sent, appealing either to party identification, special interest groups, or to a feeling of nationalism. Substantive tags are often combined with other tags in statements categorized as policy or ideology or reality-assessment, but their occurrence without the presence of other tags is enough to indicate that a substantive reference has been made. Style tags, within the framework of the Ellsworth Political Dictionary, measure the emotional intensity of the language employed by the campaigner along a negative-positive continuum.

For the purposes of this study, "position" issues were operationally defined by two substantive tags:

Economic group (direct references to economic groups---
    e.g., business, employer, farmer, investment, labor,
    miner, needy, slums, unemployment, wages, etc.).

Fiscal (words indicating a discussion of fiscal policies or
    economic conditions---e.g., appropriation, dollar,
    grant, investment, jobs, money, pay, price, taxes,
    etc.),

"Style" issues were retrieved using a unique permutation of the following first and second-order tags:

Ascend (words which indicate that general aspirations and
    goals are being discussed---e.g., achieve, aim,
    dream, goal, purpose, quest, reach, strive, want,
    etc.).

Ideal-value (general positive values discussion in a state-
    ment---e.g., achievement, beauty, creative, genius,

happiness, justice, mankind, order, peace, service, etc.).

Religious (words indicating religious values or having religious connotations---e.g., bless, divine, god, hell, lord, prayer, redeem, sanctity, scripture, etc.).

Moral (words which have clear moral connotation, but not religious---e.g., compassion, decency, fair, honesty, integrity, responsibility, toleration, etc.).

Ideology (words which indicate a clear ideological connotation---e.g., collectivism, communism, conservative, despotism, dictator, liberal, paternalism, tyranny, etc.).

Equality (words referring to value questions concerning human equality---e.g., equal, equality.).[9]

Experience with these tags resulting from the content analysis of some sixty-five documents with replications, indicates that these tags and the categories which they reference are both stable and consistent. Validity checks, based on replication and visual inspection of retrievals, indicate that the tags produce results with face validity, i.e., the manifest content of the message indicates the message has been correctly categorized. Replication has also established the reliability of both the dictionary and the methodology, i.e., repeated measurements with the same dictionary on a given sample of data yield similar results.

---

[9] Ellsworth, "Computerized Content Analysis of the 1968 Presidential Campaign," pp. 13,20.

THE TEST STATISTIC

The statistical test employed in the analysis of the data utilized in this study is Kendall's Tau. The choice of Tau from among the standard classical and distribution-free tests for correlation between two variables was dictated in part by the research design, and in part by the limitations of the General Inquirer methodology.

As the section on research design pointed out, two basic types of analysis are contemplated: first a time series analysis to detect and measure trends in issue saliency in the presidential nomination acceptance speeches and certain concrete economic indicators. In both cases, index scores are utilized. It is the opinion of this author that these scores do not constitute an interval scale mapping of issue saliency from speech to speech; that is, the index scores are not characterized by a common and constant unit of measurement which assigns a real number to all pairs of scores in the ordered set.[10] Rather, the index score simply assigns a rank to all objects in the set, thus resulting in measurements at the ordinal scale. Therefore, while the index scores may be appropriate for the purposes of graphing the data, they are not appropriate for statis-

---

[10] For a discussion of the problems of measurement in the social sciences see Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956), pp. 1-34.

tical analysis and will be replaced by their corresponding ranks.

With these considerations in mind, a test statistic which satisfies the following criteria was deemed desirable:

1) The test should be distribution-free. A distribution-free statistical test does not force the investigator to make elaborate assumptions about the distribution of population magnitudes, because such magnitudes are not used in the test. Instead, ranks, ordinal position, or some other attribute of the original observation provides the information used in the test.[11]

2) The test should be derived from simple combinatorial formulae, so that both the investigator and the reader are able intelligently to evaluate the logic and the appropriateness of the test's application to the data, the assumptions the test makes, and the sensitivity of the test to assumption violation.

3) The test should be highly sensitive to type I errors, e.g., rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true.[12]

---

[11] James V. Bradley, Distribution-Free Statistical Tests, (Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio: Wright Air Development Division Technical Report 60-661, 1960), p. 3.

[12] Maurice G. Kendall and Alan Stuart, The Advanced Theory of Statistics, Vol. III: Design and Analysis, and Time-Series, (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1966), p. 351.

4) The test should be applicable to problems in which the X and Y variables are continuously distributed or exist in the form of natural ranks, e.g., the problems of time-series analysis and ordinal scale analysis of association.

Kendall's Tau satisfies these criteria.

KENDALL'S RANK ORDER CORRELATION TEST

Rationale: Suppose that an X and a Y measurement have been taken on each of N units; suppose further that the distribution of X's and Y's is such that no ties can occur, i.e., X and Y are continuously distributed. If the X and Y measurements are replaced by their ranks and rearranged so that the X ranks appear in natural order from left to right, then the sequence of Y ranks will be random if X and Y are uncorrelated. On the other hand, if X and Y are linearly correlated, then the number of inversions (number of Y ranks not in natural order) will tend to be large or small.[13] If the number of inversions in the Y ranks is sufficiently large then X and Y are negatively correlated. The converse is also true; if the number of inversions among the Y's is sufficiently small, then X and Y are positively correlated. Therefore, the number of inversions among Y when X is ranked in natural order can be

---

13 Bradley, <u>Distribution-Free Statistical Tests</u>, p., 167.

used to test the null hypothesis that X and Y are uncor-
related linearly against the alternative that X and Y are
correlated linearly.

The maximum possible score for the Y's, if they are
all in natural order (no inversions) or all in inverted
order, would be N things taken two at a time or:

$$\binom{N}{2} = \frac{N!}{2!(N-2)!}$$

So that if the X's are ranked from 1 to N, and the Y's are
also ranked, and arranged in increasing order of X **rank**,
and if A is the number of times a Y rank is followed by a
larger Y rank, and B is the number of times a Y rank is
followed by a smaller Y rank, and if $S = A - B$, then it
follows that Kendall's Tau is:

$$\tau = \frac{\frac{S}{N!}}{2!(N-2)!} = \frac{S}{N\frac{1}{2}(N-1)}$$

Kendall's Tau has two properties: Tau satisfies the
inequality $-1 \leq \tau \leq 1$; and Tau will be equal to plus 1
or minus 1, if and only if:

$$\pm S = \binom{N}{2}$$

The Null Hypothesis: Kendall's Tau tests the null
hypothesis that X and Y are uncorrelated against the alter-
nate hypothesis that X and Y are correlated. Within the

framework of this research, the alternate hypothesis will always be a one-tailed test, i.e., the researcher will specify in advance whether Tau will be negative or positive.

Assumptions: Tau is based on the assumption that the scores have been drawn independently and at random from a population in which each variable, X and Y, is continuously distributed or exists in the form of untied ranks.[14]

Significance Test: If a random sample of observations have been drawn from a continuously distributed population, the significance of τ can be tested. For samples where $N \leq 10$, Kendall has tabled the probability associated with the occurrence under H_0 of any value as large as S.[15] For sample sizes of $N \leq 8$, the sampling distribution of τ is practically indistinguishable from the normal distribution.[16] Therefore, when N is larger than 8, τ may be considered normally distributed. The change from S to τ here is justified in as much as τ is a function of S.

Mean = $\mu_\tau = 0$, and the Standard Deviation of

$$\tau = \sigma_\tau = \sqrt{\frac{2(2N + 5)}{9N(N - 1)}}$$

14 Ibid., p. 168.

15 See Morris G. Kendall, Rank Correlation Methods, 3rd ed. (New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1952).

16 Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics, p. 221.

so that the probability of the occurrence of a τ as
extreme as the observed τ is:

$$Z = \frac{\tau - \mu_\tau}{\varsigma_\tau} = \frac{\tau - 0}{\sqrt{\dfrac{2(2N + 5)}{9N(N - 1)}}}$$

The significance of Z (one-tailed test) under H_0 can be
read from a standard Z score table.

Power-Efficiency: Kendall's Tau used on data to
which Pearson's r are properly applicable, has an effic-
iency of 91%. That is, τ is approximately as sensitive a
test of association in two variable normal distribution
(bivariate normal) with a sample of 100 observations as is
Pearson's r with a sample of 91 observations.[17]

Before turning to the analysis of the data, one
extremely important point must be clarified. Since random
sampling was not used in selecting the speeches analyzed in
the study, no inference can be made from the data to the
population of nomination acceptance speeches, or, for that
matter, to the population of campaign speeches for the
years under consideration. Therefore, the nomination
acceptance speeches from the 1928-1968 campaigns will be
considered as the whole population; this being the case,
the 's computed on the data will be viewed as the actual
measure of association between the variables under consid-

---

[17] Bradley, Distribution-Free Statistical Tests, p. 176.

eration. In other words, Tau within the framework of this
study is not to be interpreted as an estimate of the degree
of association between the X and Y variables, but, rather,
as the measure of association between X and Y.

As a consequence, the τ's computed on the data will
not be tested for significance; instead, the author will
simply state that the computed Tau indicates that the
variables are associated. Thus, the statistic Tau will be
used descriptively and hueristically in this study. The
reader should not, however, infer from this discussion,
that the violation of the random sampling assumption, a
violation which is almost unavoidable in time-series anal-
ysis, invalidates either the computation or use of Tau on
the data. Kendall and Stuart, in their volume on time-
series analysis, strongly suggest the use of Tau as both
a measure of linear trend and correlation in time-series
analysis.[18]

---

[18] Kendall and Stuart, The Advanced Theory of Statistics,
III, 357-360.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The analysis of the data under consideration in this
study is divided into three parts, with each division cor-
responding to one of the main research hypotheses under
investigation. Part one investigates secular trends in
Democratic and Republican issue discussion. For both the
Democrats and the Republicans, the null hypothesis of no
trend in "position" issue discussion is tested against the
alternate hypothesis that a negative trend is present in
"position" issue discussion for the two parties. Part one
will also focus on the similarities between Democratic and
Republican "position" issue discussion. To test for simi-
larities, Tau was computed on Democratic and Republican
index scores. Here the index score for the Democratic nom-
inee, and the index score for the Republican nominee are
treated as two observations on the same year, and the null
hypothesis of no correlation between Democratic and Repub-
lican "position" issue discussion is tested against the
alternate hypothesis of a positive linear correlation
between Democratic and Republican "position" issue dis-
cussion.

In part two, trends in "style" issue discussion are
investigated; the null hypothesis of no trend in "style"
issue discussion is tested against the alternate hypothesis

of a positive linear trend. Part two will also focus on
similarities between Republican and Democratic "style"
issue discussion; and the null hypothesis of no linear cor-
relation between Democratic and Republican "style" issue
discussion is tested against the alternate hypothesis of a
positive linear correlation. In addition, part two will
investigate the hypothesized existence of a polar tension
between "position" issue and "style" issue discussion. In
this case, the null hypothesis of no association between
the two variables is tested against the alternate hypothe-
sis that the two variables are negatively correlated, i.e.,
as "position" issues decrease in importance, there is a
concomitant increase in the importance of "style" issues.

Part three focuses on the extent to which the nomin-
ation acceptance speeches mirror objectively determinable
economic conditions in the United States. In this section,
the null hypothesis of no correlation between index scores
of "position" issue discussion and each of the four eco-
nomic indicators is tested against the alternate hypothesis
that the variables are correlated. When index scores of
"position" issue discussion are paired with the unemploy-
ment index, the alternate hypothesis predicts that Tau is
positive; when the index scores are paired with the whole-
sale price index for all commodities, the wholesale price
index for farm products and the consumer price index, the
alternate hypothesis predicts that the correlation is nega-

tive.

The basic data used in this chapter are index scores
for "position" issue and "style" issue discussion. These
scores were computed during the sentence tag tally phase
of the data analysis. The index scores and the ranks
assigned to them appear in Table 3-1.

PART I

In this section, time is the X variable, and the
index score is the Y variable. In both cases, the scores
for the X and Y variables have been replaced by ranks.
The null hypothesis of no trend (H_0: $\tau = 0$) is being
tested against the alternate hypothesis of a negative lin-
ear trend (H_1: $\tau < 0$) in the data; i.e., through time the
saliency of "position" issues has decreased.

In order to reject the null hypothesis, the Tau's
computed on the data must be negative and must differ sig-
nificantly from a Tau of 0, since a Tau not significantly
different from 0 would indicate that the Y's are randomly
distributed when the X's are ranked in natural order.

As Figures 3-1 and 3-2 indicate, the computed Tau
for Democratic "position" issue discussion and time is
-.63, and for Republican "position" issue discussion and
time, Tau is -.54. In both cases, the Tau's are signifi-
cantly different from a Tau of 0. Therefore the null
hypothesis is rejected and the alternate accepted, leading

TABLE 3-1

INDEX SCORES FOR "POSITION" AND "STYLE" ISSUE DISCUSSION

YEAR	REPUBLICAN	ECONOMIC POSITION ISSUE % AND RANKS	STYLE ISSUE % AND RANKS	DEMOCRAT	ECONOMIC POSITION ISSUE % AND RANKS	STYLE ISSUE % AND RANKS
28	Hoover	37.7 (10)	29.9 (2)	Smith	35.0 (10)	23.3 (1)
32	Hoover	31.8 (9)	29.0 (1)	Roosevelt	39.7 (11)	26.2 (3)
36	Landon	38.6 (11)	31.1 (3)	Roosevelt	25.0 (8)	45.2 (8)
40	Wilkie	20.8 (8)	37.3 (4)	Roosevelt	11.8 (6)	42.5 (5)
44	Dewey	9.5 (6)	40.5 (6)	Roosevelt	13.6 (7)	43.9 (7)
48	Dewey	3.8 (2)	55.9 (10)	Truman	31.7 (9)	25.4 (2)
52	Eisenhower	2.2 (1)	48.9 (8)	Stevenson	2.6 (1)	51.4 (11)
56	Eisenhower	20.0 (7)	42.8 (7)	Stevenson	8.3 (5)	45.8 (9)
60	Nixon	6.5 (4)	50.0 (9)	Kennedy	5.3 (3)	33.9 (4)
64	Goldwater	4.4 (3)	71.1 (11)	Johnson	5.7 (4)	48.3 (10)
68	Nixon	7.5 (5)	40.1 (5)	Humphrey	4.2 (2)	42.9 (6)
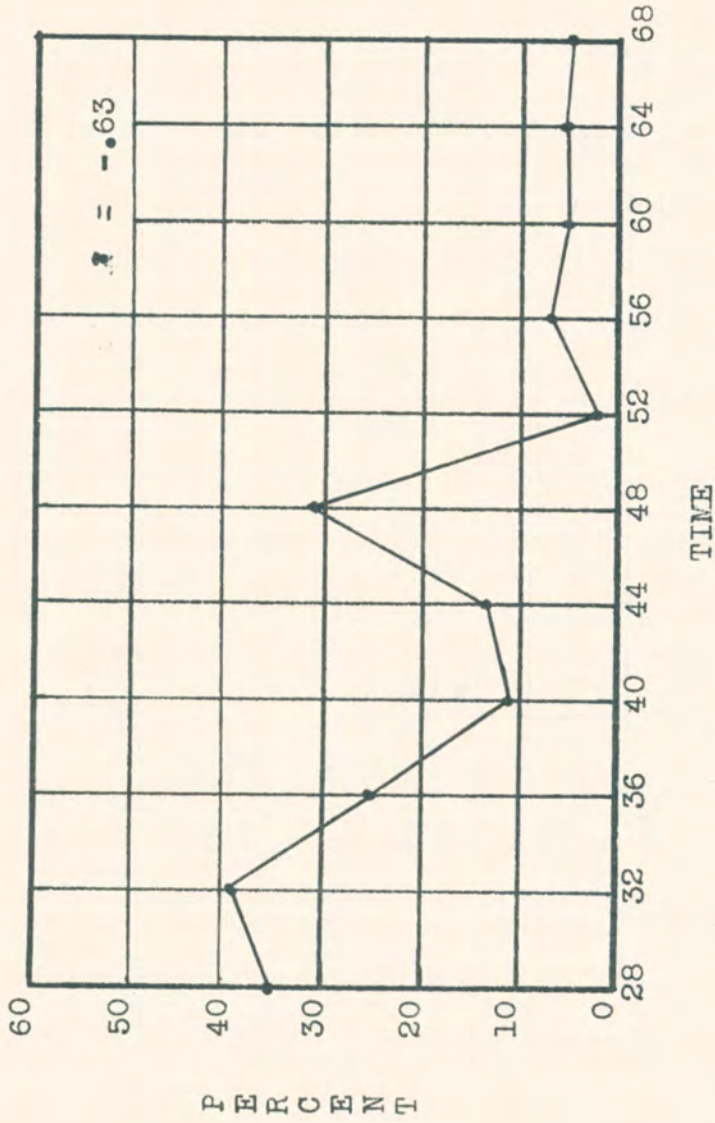
Percentage frequencies of concern with economic
"position" issues in the Democratic presidential
nomination acceptance speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-1

TIME

τ = -.54

Percentage frequencies of concern with economic
"position" issues in the Republican presidential
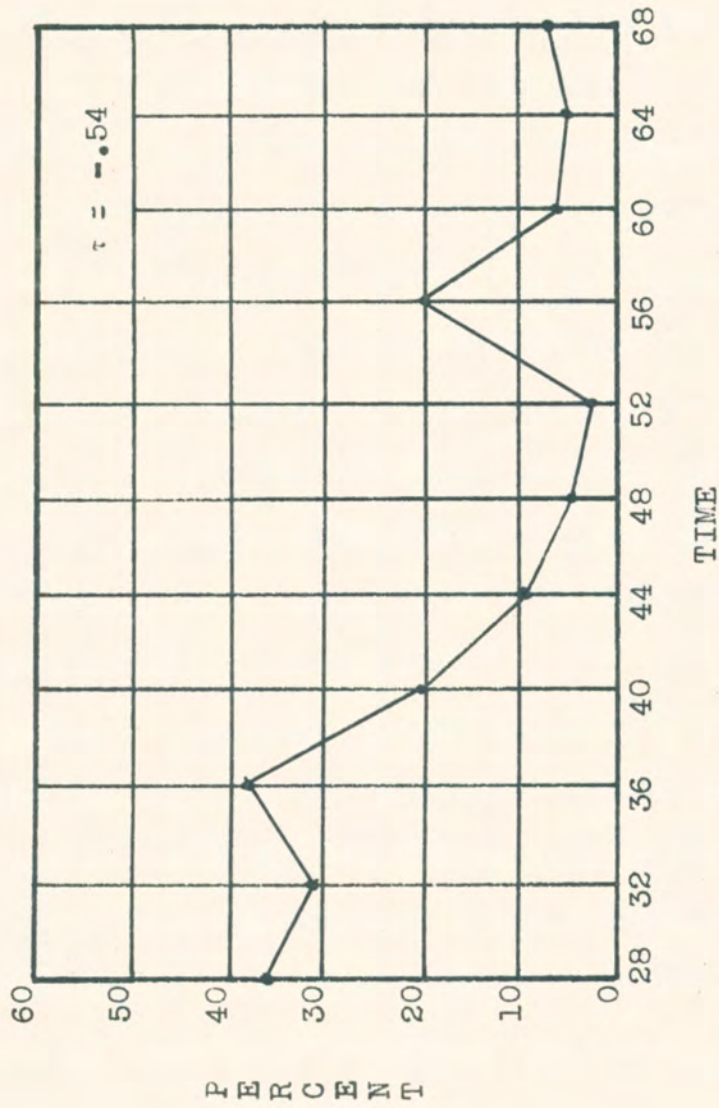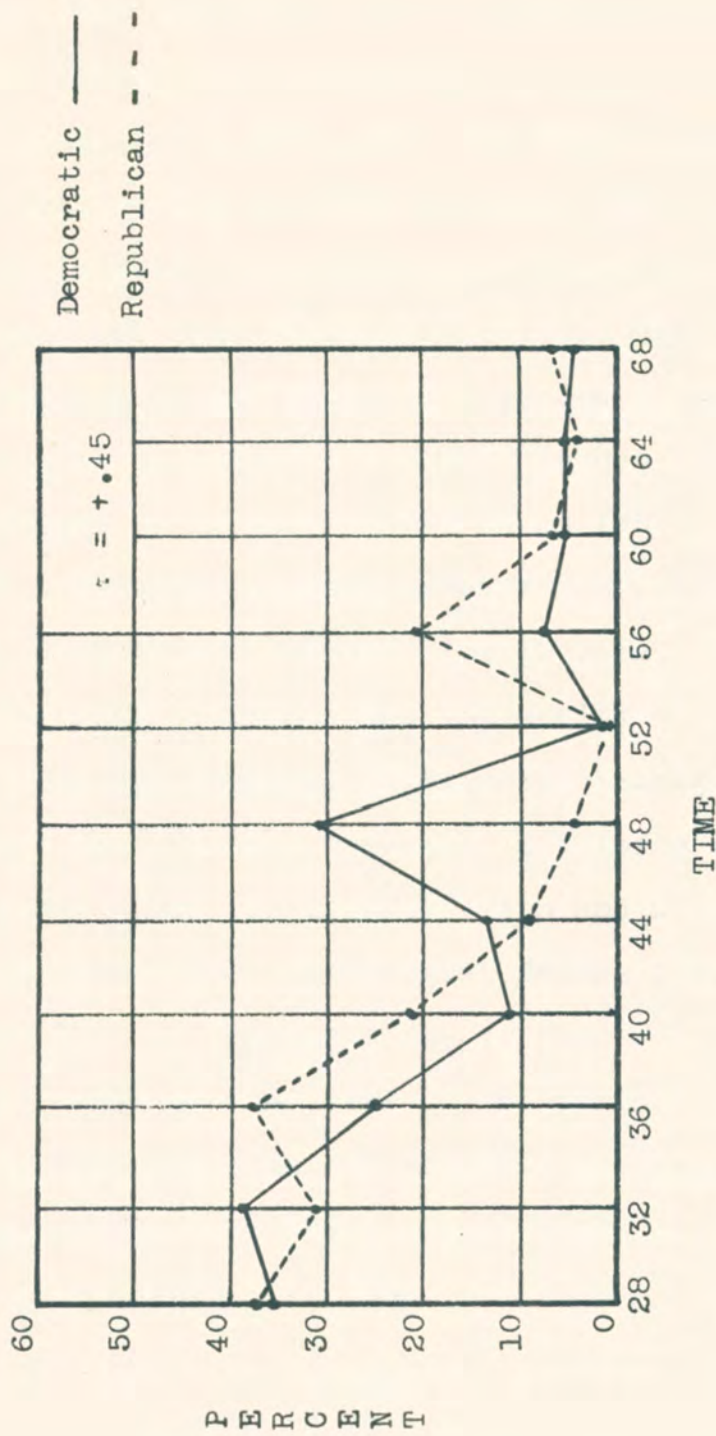nomination acceptance speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-2

us to conclude that there has been a strong decrease in the discussion of "position" issues in both Democratic and Republican nomination acceptance speeches since 1928. Moreover, a visual inspection of the data for the period 1936-1944 indicates that the importance of "position" issues for both parties decreased sharply when the concrete socio-economic conditions which called them forth were mitigated. The data also show that the residual concern with "position" issues displayed by parties during the forties had disappeared in 1952. In fact, there is only one major aberration in the 1952-1968 period. Eisenhower, in his 1956 nomination acceptance speech, felt compelled to discuss at length the economic problems of the American farmer. This extended discussion of farm problems resulted in an abnormally high index score for this speech, given the general trend of the period.

Turning to the question of similarities between Democratic and Republican "position" issue discussion, a visual inspection of Figure 3-3 reveals a striking degree of similarity between Democratic and Republican trends in the discussion of "position" issues. To actually test for the degree of association between the trends, Tau was computed on the ranks assigned to the Democratic and Republican nomination acceptance speeches. The null hypothesis of no correlation between the variables (H_0: $\tau = 0$) was tested against the alternate hypothesis that Democratic

Democratic ————
Republican — — —

τ = +.45

Similarities between Democratic and the Republican
concern with economic "position" issues in the
presidential nomination acceptance speeches from
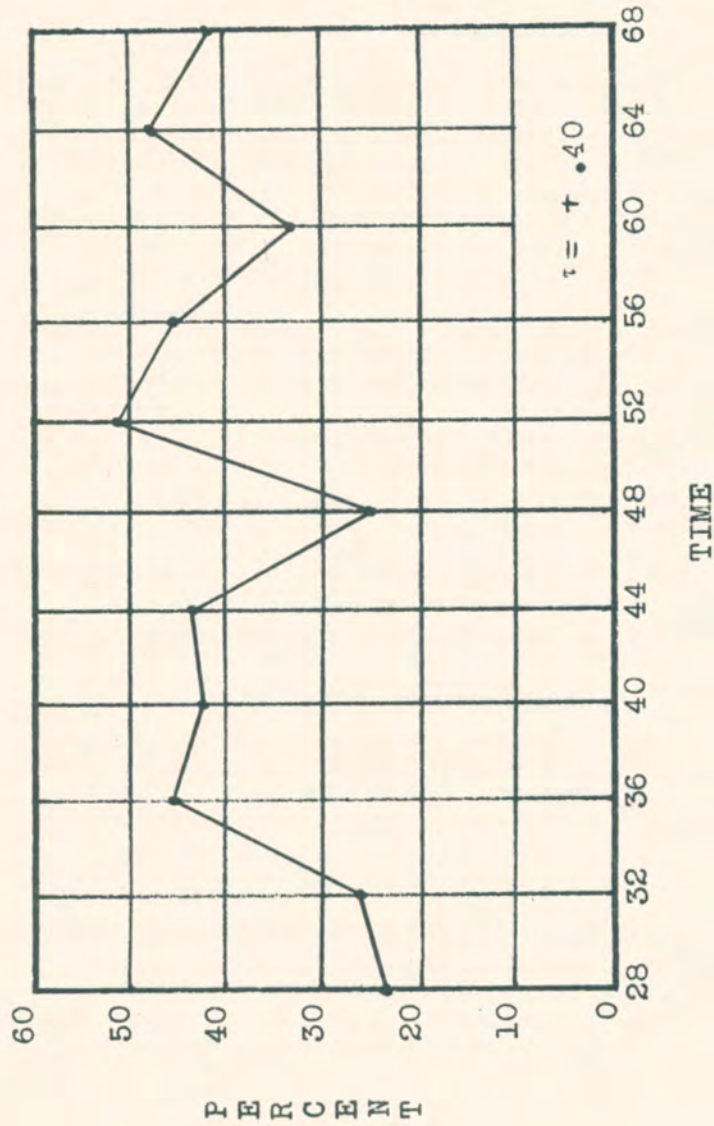1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-3

and Republican "position" issues are positively correlated.
Accepting the alternate hypothesis (H_1: $\tau > 0$) in this
case would indicate that there are shared trends in the
parties' discussion of these issues. The Tau computed on
this data is +.45, indicating that there are shared trends
in the parties' discussion of "position" issues. In other
words, Democratic and Republican nominees have tended to
be equally concerned with economic issues over time, with
the agreement being more marked since 1952. Moreover, if
the 1956 Eisenhower nomination acceptance speech is
ignored, then these findings closely parallel those of the
Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan, as
set forth in The American Voter. The Michigan group found
that there was a marked decrease in voter concern with eco-
nomic issues after the 1952 election and a fading from
memory of the crisis of the Great Depression. Therefore,
these two sets of findings, one at the level of voter con-
cern, the other at the level of the nomination acceptance
speeches, indicate that the economic problems posed by the
Great Depression lost their cogency for both the nominees
and the electorate after 1952.

PART II

In this section, time is again the X variable, and
the index score is the Y variable. And here, as in Part I
of this chapter, the scores for the X and Y variables

have been replaced by ranks. The test for a trend in
"style" issue discussion reduces to a test of the null
hypothesis of no trend (H_0: $\tau = 0$) against the alternate
hypothesis of a positive linear trend (H_1: $\tau > 0$) in the
data. The expectation under the alternate hypothesis is
that through time the saliency, and hence the discussion,
of "style" issues has increased. In order to reject the
null hypothesis and accept the alternate, the Tau computed
on the data must be positive, and must differ significantly
from a Tau of 0. Turning to Figure 3-4 we see that for
Democratic "style" issue discussion and time, Tau is +.40.
Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alter-
nate hypothesis accepted. But, while the computed Tau on
the data in Figure 3-4 indicates the presence of a signi-
ficant positive trend in Democratic "style" issue discus-
sion, the trend is not as strong as that found for Repub-
lican "style" issue discussion. As Figure 3-5 shows, Tau,
for Republican "style" issues and time is +.56, indicating
that Republican nominees in general have tended toward
increased "style" issue discussion through time, a pattern
not as clearly present in the data based on the Democratic
nomination acceptance speeches. Moreover, as a visual
inspection of Figures 3-4 and 3-5 reveals, the curves based
on "style" issue discussion are not characterized by the
regularities found in those based on "position" issue dis-
cussion. In general, there is strong campaign to campaign

TIME

Percentage frequencies of concern with "style" issues
in Democratic presidential nomination acceptance
speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-4

47
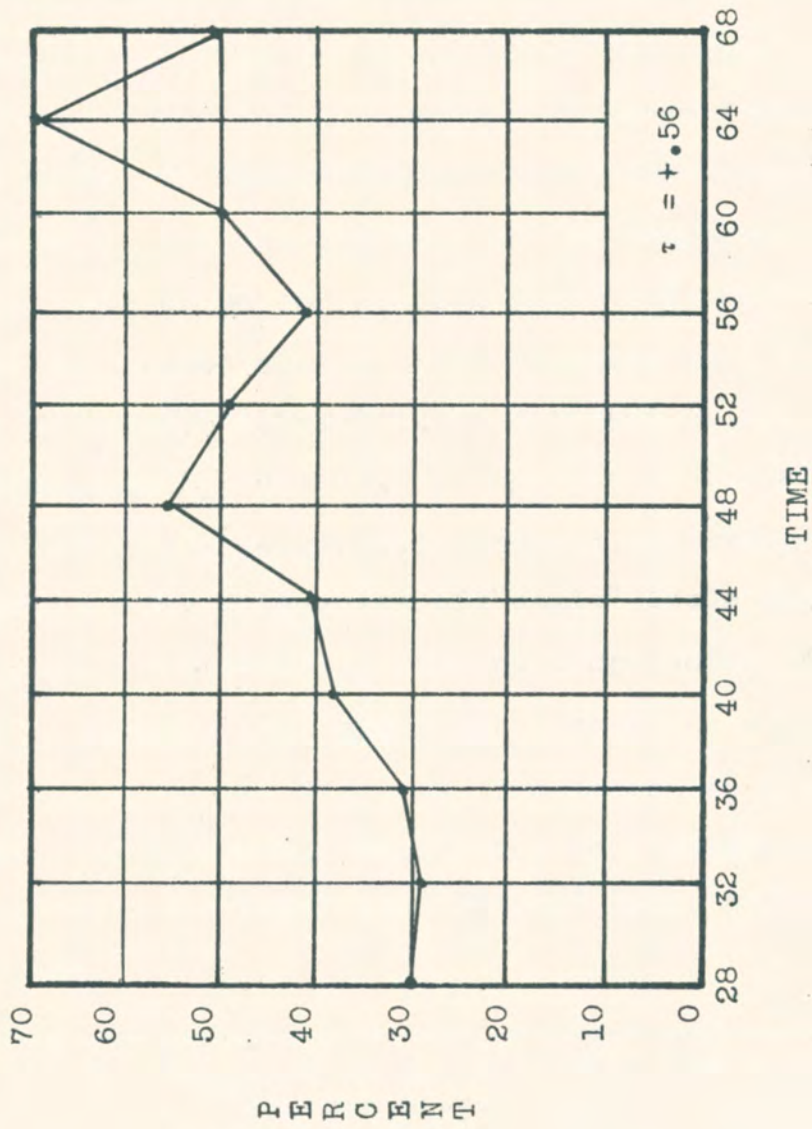
Percentage frequencies of concern with "style" issues
in Republican presidential nomination acceptance
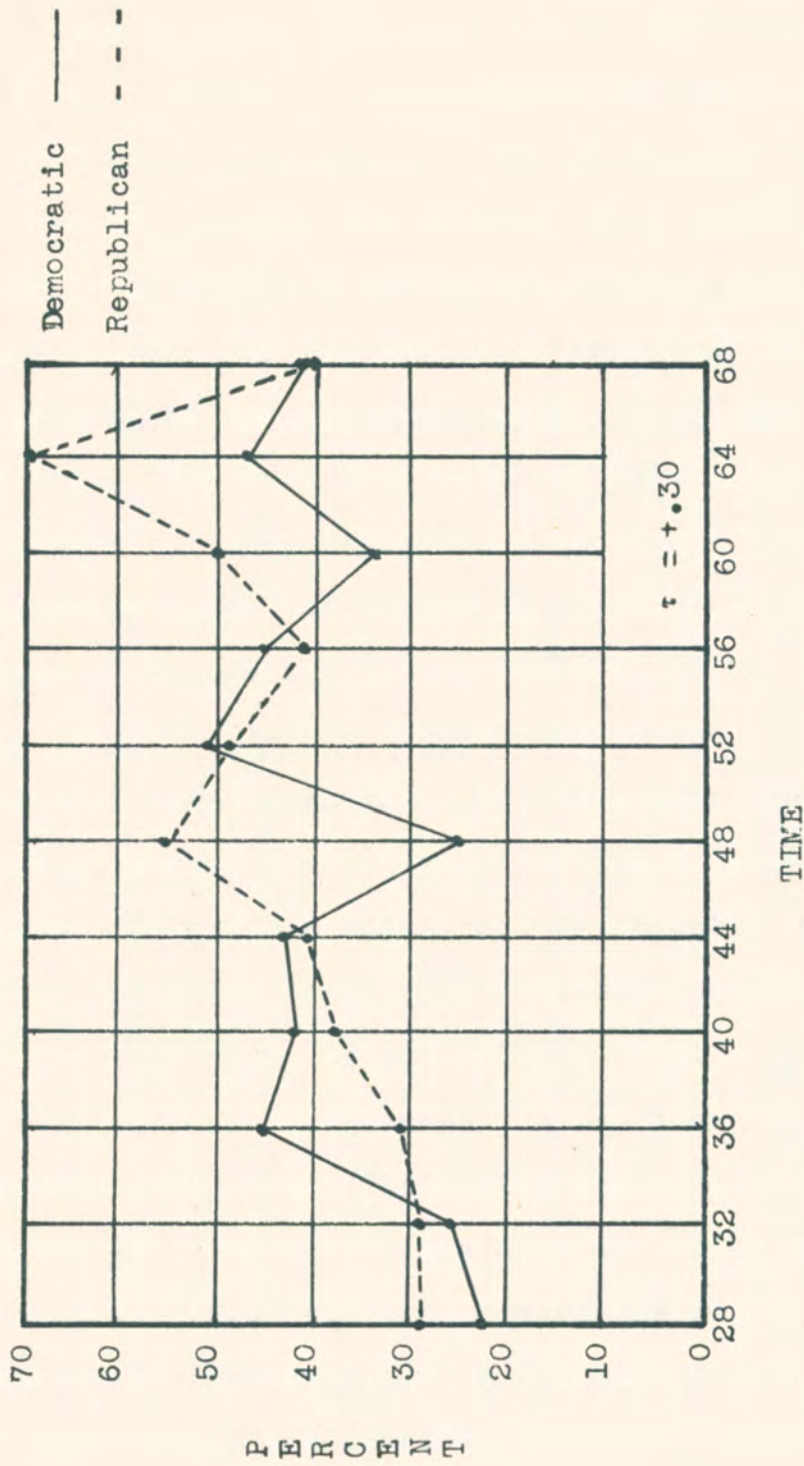speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-5

variation present in "style" issue discussion for nominees
of both parties, which seems to indicate that the saliency
of "style" issue discussion is in part a function of the
candidate's rhetorical style.

In order to focus on the differences or similarities
between Republican and Democratic "style" issue discussion
through time, Tau was computed on the ranks assigned to
Democratic and Republican "style" issue index scores, with
the ranks for Democratic and Republican nominees being
treated as two observations in the same year. The null
hypothesis of no correlation ($H_0: \tau = 0$) between the varia-
bles was tested against the alternate that the Democratic
and Republican "style" issue discussions are positively
correlated ($H_1: \tau > 0$). Acceptance of the alternate hypo-
thesis in this case would indicate that there are shared
trends on the discussion of "style" issue through time.
As Figure 3-6 reveals, the Tau computed on the data is
+.30. For the data under consideration, a Tau of +.30 is
not significantly different from zero, so the null hypo-
thesis is accepted. Therefore, we find that the trends in
Democratic and Republican "style" issue discussion are not
similar.[1]

---

[1] The Tau computed on the data does not measure the magni-
tude of the difference between central tendencies in Demo-
cratic and Republican "style" issue discussion. Rather,
Tau simply indicates that the variables are uncorrelated,
which means that as Democratic "style" issue discussion
increased or decreased in a particular year there was no
corresponding and concomitant increase in Republican
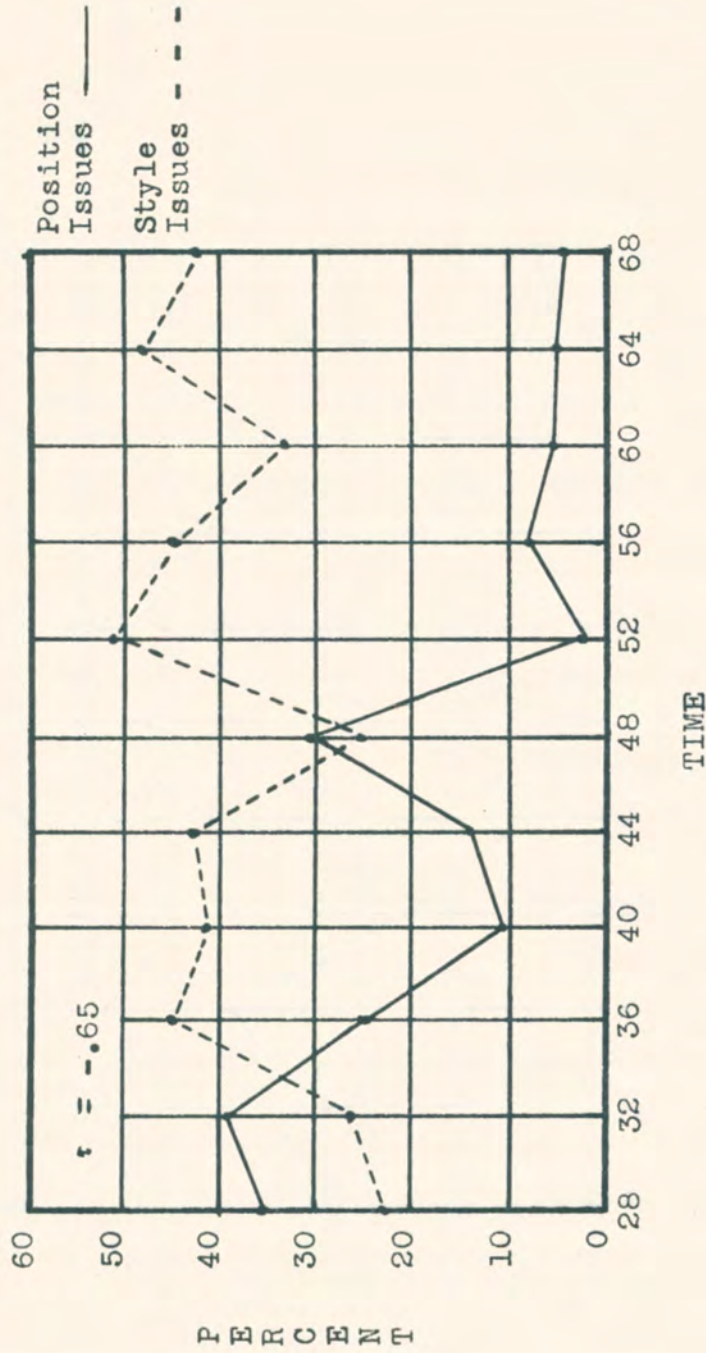"style" issue discussion for that year.

Similarities between the Democratic and the Republican
concern with "style" issues in the presidential
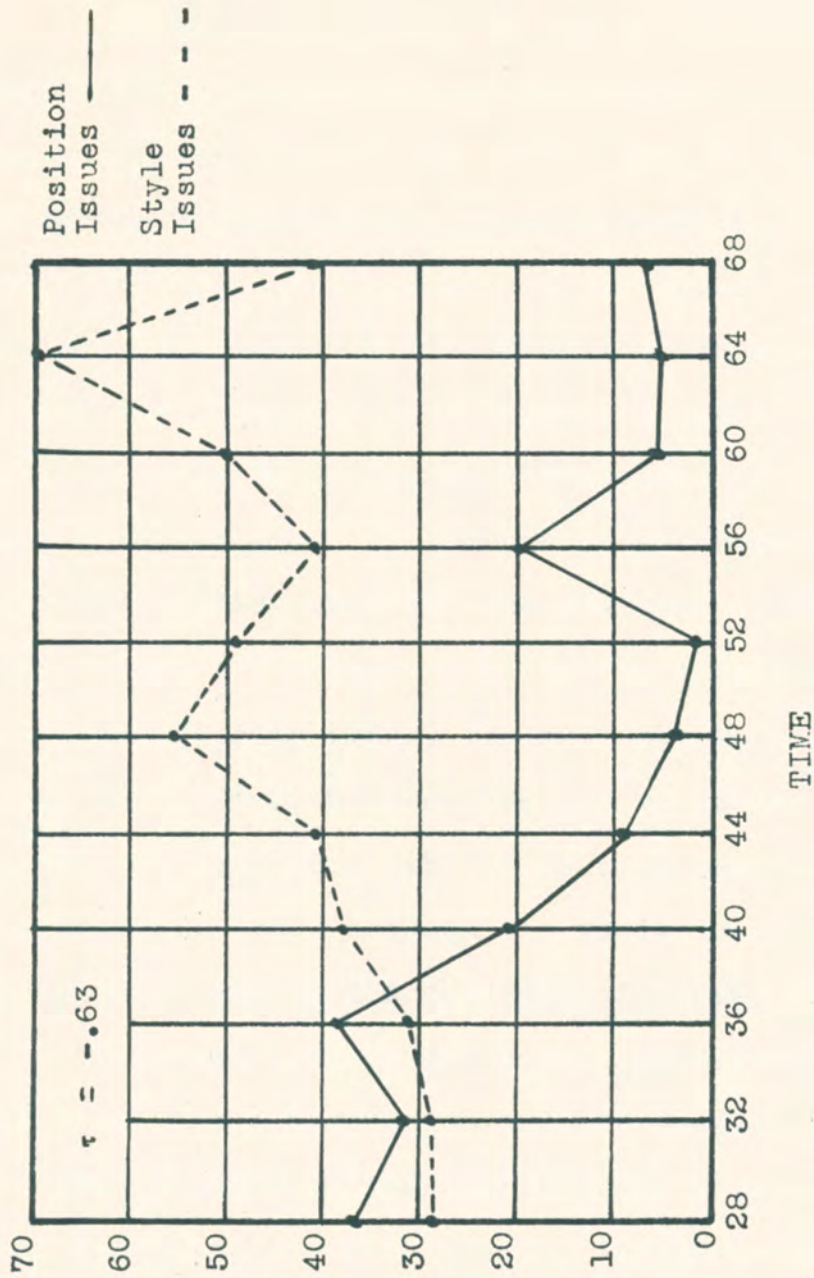nomination acceptence speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-6

Turning to the question of the hypothesized existence of a polar tension between "position" issue discussion and "style" issue discussion, a visual inspection of Figures 3-7 and 3-8 reveals the presence of a strong inverse relationship between the two types of issue discussion. In order to test for the degree to which the two issue discussion types are inversely related, Tau was computed on the data. For both Democrats and Republicans, the null hypothesis of no correlation (H_0: $\tau = 0$) between issue discussion types was tested against the alternate hypothesis of a negative linear correlation between the variables (H_1: $\tau < 0$). The acceptance of the alternate hypothesis in both cases would indicate that there is a polar tension between the two types of issue discussion. As Figures 3-7 and 3-8 indicate, the computed Tau for Democratic "position" and "style" issue discussion is -.65; and for Republican "position" and "style" issue discussion, Tau is -.63. In both cases the Tau's are significantly different from zero, justifying the rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, the data do indicate that there is a strong polar tension between the two types of issue discussion. Moreover, these findings closely agree with the hypothesis of Lazarsfeld, Berelson and McPhee, who suggested in Voting, that there was a polar tension between "position" and "style" issue discussion.

51

Percentage frequencies of Democratic concern with
"position" and "style" issues in the presidential
nomination acceptance speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-7

Percentage frequencies of Republican concern with
"position" and "style" issues in the presidential
nomination acceptance speeches from 1928 to 1968

FIGURE 3-8

PART III

This section focuses on the extent to which the nomination acceptance speeches mirror objectively determinable economic conditions in the United States. In order to test the degree of association between Democratic and Republican "position" issue discussion and the unemployment index, the null hypothesis of no correlation (H_0: $\tau = 0$) between the two variables was tested against the alternate hypothesis of a positive linear correlation (H_1: $\tau > 0$) between the two variables. For Democratic and Republican "position" issue discussion and the all commodities wholesale price index, the wholesale price for farm products, and the consumer price index, the null hypothesis of no correlation (H_0: $\tau = 0$) between the two variables was tested against the alternate hypothesis of a negative linear correlation (H_1: $\tau < 0$) between the variables. The results of the computations on the data are displayed in Table 3-2.

Turning first to the correlation between Democratic "position" issue discussion and the unemployment index, we find that changes in the unemploynent rate are not correlated significantly with changes in Democratic "position" issue discussion. On the other hand, as Table 3-2 indicates, we do find a significant correlation between changes in Republican "position" issue discussion and changes in the unemployment rate. On the surface it would appear that these findings indicate that the Democratic party is less

TABLE 3-2

CORRELATION BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN "POSITION" ISSUE DISCUSSION AND FOUR ECONOMIC INDICES

	UNEMPLOYMENT	ALL COMMODITIES WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX	FARM PRODUCTS WHOLESALE INDEX	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
DEMOCRATIC "POSITION" ISSUE DISCUSSION	+.30	-.60	-.56	-.63
REPUBLICAN "POSITION" ISSUE DISCUSSION	+.45	-.41	-.60	-.45

responsive to changes in the labor sector of the economy
than is the Republican party. A visual inspection of the
data based on Democratic "position" issue discussion in
Figure 3-3 reveals that this is not necessarily the case.
As Figure 3-3 indicates, Roosevelt's 1936 and 1940 nomin-
ation acceptance speeches contained fewer references to
"position" issue discussion than the speeches of Landon and
Wilkie. Roosevelt's rapid shift away from "position" issue
discussion in 1936 and 1940, coupled with the fact that the
1944 Roosevelt nomination acceptance speech contained more
references to "position" issues than did his 1940 speech,
resulted in more inversions in the Democratic data during
a period of relatively high unemployment. As a result, the
Tau for the Democratic "position" issue discussion and the
unemployment rate simply reflects Roosevelt's somewhat
erratic discussion of economic issues in his nomination
acceptance speeches.

Turning to correlations between Democratic and Repub-
lican "position" issue discussion and the all commodities
wholesale price index, farm products wholesale index, and
the consumer price index, displayed in columns 2, 3 and 4
of Table 3-2, we find that in each case the null hypothesis
of no correlation between the variables can be rejected and
the alternate hypothesis of negative correlations accepted.
However, the interpretation of the results presents some
rather unusual problems.

Actually, two different interpretations of the negative association between Democratic and Republican "position" issue discussion and the economic indicators are possible. The first interpretation would be based on the fact that a sharp drop in these indicators signal a major economic disturbance which in turn should result in an increased discussion of "position" issues. This interpretation leads to the obvious conclusion that the parties are responsive to changes in these indicators. The second interpretation is somewhat more esoteric, but equally logical. Referring to Table 3-3, we see that when a time-series analysis identical to that run on the "position" and "style" issue discussions in parts one and two of this chapter, is run on the three economic indicators under consideration here, the computed Tau's are all strongly positive. Referring back to part one of this chapter we see that the time-series analysis of Democratic and Republican "position" issue discussion indicated a strong negative trend in the data. Therefore, when indices of "position" issue discussion are combined with the economic indicators there is only one possible statistical outcome, i.e., the correlations are all strongly negative. This interpretation of the data leads to two different conclusions.

The first conclusion is that the negative correlations are spurious. The second conclusion is that the parties are unresponsive to steady increases in these economic

TABLE 3-3

RESULTS OF A TIME-SERIES ANALYSIS ON THREE ECONOMIC INDICES

	ALL COMMODITIES WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX	FARM PRODUCTS WHOLESALE INDEX	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX
TIME	+.81	+.49	+.89

indicators. In a sense, both interpretations are partly
correct. During the Depression years, these indices did
drop, and the drop was accompanied by a concomitant
increase in "position" issue discussion in the nomination
acceptance speeches of both parties. Therefore, we might
conclude that the parties are sensitive to changes in these
sectors of the economy. But, on the other hand, during
the majority of years under consideration in this analysis,
the indices continued to rise steadily while "position"
issue discussion steadily decreased, thereby justifying the
conclusion that either the correlations are spurious or
the parties are unresponsive to changes in these sectors of
the economy as long as the indicators show only an incre-
mental upward shift from year to year. Since there is no
way to solve this conundrum, given the data at hand, no
inference will be made about the utility of the indices in
explaining the antecedents of change in Democratic and
Republican "position" issue discussion through time; nor
will any conclusions be drawn from the data.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

On the basis of the analysis reported in the previous chapter, three major conclusions emerge.

First, the analysis of trends in "position" issue discussion indicates a decline in the saliency of "position" issues for nominees of both parties over time, with this decline becoming most marked in the 1952-1968 period.

Second, the analysis indicates that the overall decline in "position" issue discussion has been accompanied by a concomitant increase in "style" issue discussion. Thus, we find that the data support the hypothesized existence of a polar tension between the two types of issue discussion.

Third, the analysis of indices of "position" issue discussion and four economic indicators shows that only one economic indicator, the unemployment rate, is correlated with "position" issue discussion. And, as we have seen, this relationship is only significant when the unemployment rate is paired with Republican "position" issue discussion.

Consequently, while we have succeeded in identifying and measuring trends in "position" and "style" issue discussion in the speeches, we have not succeeded in linking the trends in the data to objectively determinable eco-

nomic conditions. In short, this study fails to identify
at the empirical level the antecedents of change in "posi-
tion" and "style" issue discussion over time. Moreover,
the paucity of the results obtained when economic indica-
tors are paired with indices of "position" issue discus-
sion, leaves the unavoidable impression that the processes
which underlie the trends present in the data are much too
complex to be viewed within the limited framework of an
economic stimulus→candidate response paradigm.

Going beyond the limitation of this stimulus→
response paradigm incorporated in this study, an alternate
explanation, based on the Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet
two-step flow of political communication, suggests
itself.[1] Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet, in their anal-
ysis of the formation, changes and development of public
opinion during the 1940 election campaign, found that the
majority of people interviewed in the survey acquired much
of their political information and many of their ideas
through personal contact with opinion leaders in their
groups. In turn they found that the opinion leaders
exposed themselves more than the other members of the
community to the mass media. This led the authors to con-
clude that a two-step flow of communication was involved

---

[1] Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet,
The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in
a Presidential Campaign (2nd ed.; New York: Columbia
University Press, 1948), p. xxiii.

in the dissemination of the political information during
the campaign. Within the framework of the two-step flow
of information, the opinion leaders were viewed as media-
tors between the mass media and the other people in their
groups. In general, the authors found that the opinion
leaders tended to be not only better educated but more
active, articulate and interested in the important issues
of the campaign than the other individuals studied. More-
over, the opinion leaders of Lazarsfeld's, Berelson's and
Gaudet's study bear a striking resemblance to political
influentials surveyed in the study conducted by Herbert
McClosky. McClosky based his study of consensus and ide-
ology in American politics on two separate samples; the
first sample of over 3,000 political actives or leaders
was drawn from the delegates and alternates who attended
the Democratic and Republican conventions of 1956; the
second, a representative national sample of approximately
1,500 adults in the general population was drawn by the
American Institute of Public Opinion (Gallup Poll). In
general, McClosky found that the political influentials:

> ...are distinguished from the mass of the elec-
> torate by their above-average education and
> economic status, their greater political inter-
> est and awareness, and their more immediate
> access to the command posts of community deci-
> sion. Many of them participate not only in
> politics but in other public activities as
> well. This affords them, among other bene-
> fits, a more sophisticated understanding of how
> the society is run and a more intimate assoc-
> iation with other men and women who are alert
> to political ideas and values. Political con-

cepts and abstractions, alien to the vocabu-
lary of many voters, are, for the elite, famil-
iar items of everyday discourse.[2]

Given the sophistication of this section of the Amer-
ican electorate, a presidential nominee could quite logi-
cally address himself at length and in detail to the prob-
lems which the nation and the party faced during a coming
campaign. Moreover, since the nominee could expect the
audience to act as a mediator between himself and the elec-
torate, he would not feel compelled to "vulgarize" his
discussion of the issues. But what happens when the situ-
ation is changed? In particular, what happens to the con-
tent of the nomination acceptance speeches when TV is
introduced to the convention situation. Obviously, the
same opinion leaders are members of the audience. But,
more importantly, the majority of the American electorate,
through the medium of television, are also members of his
immediate audience. The consequences which flow from the
radical change in audience composition occasioned by the
presence of the television medium are twofold.

First, the two-step flow of communication from opin-
ion leaders to the general electorate is short circuited.
No longer can the candidate rely on the opinion leaders to

---

2 Herbert McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American
Politics," in Political Opinion and Electoral Behavior:
Essays and Studies, ed. by Edward C. Dreyer and Walter A.
Rosenbaum (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company,
Inc., 1966), p. 256.

mediate between himself and the general electorate; he must do so himself. Second, the candidate is no longer addressing himself to an audience which is capable of making the sophisticated distinctions which are characteristics of the opinion leaders. As a consequence, the content of the speeches shifts from a discussion of specific issues to an appeal that is more widespread and universal. In short, the discussion shifts from "position" to "style" issue discussion.

While the empirical validation of this interpretation of the trends present in "position" and "style" issue discussion must await further research, a tentative validation based on the data in this study is possible. In 1952, the first year in which television coverage was extended to all sessions of the Democratic and Republican national conventions, an estimated audience of 4,000,000 homes was watching when Eisenhower presented his nomination acceptance speech, and an audience of 6,000,000 was watching when Stevenson presented his speech.[3] We would expect the two-step process of information transmission to be short circuited and consequently predict that the nominees would be more concerned with "style" issues. As we have seen, this is exactly the case; the "position" and "style" issue index scores for the Eisenhower speeches are 2.2 and 48.9

---

[3] Charles A.H. Thomson, Television and Presidential Politics (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1956), p. 44.

respectively; for Stevenson, a "position" issue index score of 2.6 and a "style" issue index score of 51.4. In addition, the data for the period from 1952-1968, a period of increased television coverage, shows the same pattern, with one notable exception, the Eisenhower nomination acceptance speech of 1956. Therefore we find that the trends in "position" and "style" issue discussion measured in this study can be viewed as the product of change in the mass media's coverage of the campaign.

In the last analysis, while this study has only succeeded in tentatively identifying the antecedents of changes in "position" and "style" issue discussion, it has succeeded in measuring the trends in these two types of issue discussion. Thus, one of the major objectives which led to this research paper was realized. In addition, this paper has demonstrated the applicability of non-parametric statistical techniques to the problem of time-series analysis. Finally, and perhaps most important, this paper demonstrates the applicability of the General Inquirer content analysis system to the unique problems of textual analysis.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Arora, Satish K., and Lasswell, Harold D. Political Communication: The Public Language of Political Elites in India and the United States. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969.

Berelson, Bernard R. "Content Analysis." Handbook of Social Psychology. Edited by G. Lindzey. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1954.

_____. Content Analysis in Communications Research. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1954.

_____; Lazarsfeld, Paul F.; and McPhee, William N. Voting. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954.

Blalock, Hubert N., Jr. Social Statistics. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960.

Campbell, Angus; Converse, Phillip E.; Miller, Warren E.; and Stokes, Donald E. The American Voter: An Abridgment. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964.

_____. Elections and the Political Order. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966.

Dixon, Wilfrid J., and Massey, Frank J., Jr. Introduction to Statistical Analysis. 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1969.

Dreyer, Edward C., and Rosenbaum, Walter A., ed. Political Opinion and Electoral Behavior: Essays and Studies. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1966.

Holsti, Ole R. Content Analysis For the Social Sciences and Humanities. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969.

Kendall, Maurice G. The Advanced Theory of Statistics. Vol. I: Distribution Theory. 2nd ed. New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1963.

_____. The Advanced Theory of Statistics. Vol. II:
Inference and Relationship. New York: Hafner Pub-
lishing Co., 1961.

_____. New Prospects in Economic Analysis. London:
University of London Athlone Press, 1960.

_____. Rank Correlation Methods. 3rd ed. New York:
Hafner Publishing Co., 1962.

_____., and Stuart, Alan. The Advanced Theory of Sta-
tistics. Vol. III: Design and Analysis and Time-
Series. New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1963.

Kelley, Stanley, Jr. Political Campaigning: Problems in
Creating an Informed Electorate. Washington, D.C.:
The Brookings Institution, 1960.

Lasswell, Harold D., and Abraham, Kaplan. Power and
Society. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950.

_____.; Leites, Nathan; and associates. The Language
of Politics: Studies in Quantitative Semantics.
Revised ed. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1948.

Lazarsfeld, Paul F.; Berelson, Bernard G.; and Gaudet,
Hazel. The People's Choice: How the Voter Makes Up
His Mind in a Presidential Campaign. 2nd ed. New
York: Columbia University Press, 1948.

Mann, Henry B. "Nonparametric Tests Against Trend."
Statistical Inference in Dynamic Economic Models.
Edited by T.C. Koopmans. New York: Wiley, 1950.

Meehl, Paul Everett. Clinical Versus Statistical Predic-
tion: A Theoretical Analysis and a Review of Evi-
dence. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press,
1954.

Pool, Ithiel de Sola., ed. Trends in Content Analysis.
Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1959.

Siegel, Sidney. Non-Parametric Statistics for the Behav-
ioral Sciences. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Pub-
lishing Company, Inc., 1956.

Smith, Marshall; Stone, Phillip J.; and Glenn, Evelyn N. "A Content Analysis of Twenty Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speeches." The General Inquirer: A Computer Approach to Content Analysis. Edited by Stone, Phillip J.; Dunphy, Dexter C.; Smith, Marshall S.; and Ogilvie, Daniel M.; with associates. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1966.

Stone, Phillip J., and Cambridge Computer Associates, Inc. Users Manual for the General Inquirer. Technical editor John Kirsch. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1968.

_____.; Dunphy, Dexter C.; Smith, Marshall S.; and Ogilvie, Daniel M.; with associates., ed. The General Inquirer: A Computer Approach to Content Analysis. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1966.

Thomson, Charles A.H. Television and Presidential Politics: The Experience in 1952 and the Problems Ahead. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1956.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Cartwright, Desmond S. "A Note Concerning Kendall's Tau." Psychological Bulletin, LIV, No. 5 (1957), 423-425.

Daniels, H.E. "The Relation Between Measures of Correlation in the Universe of Sample Permutations." Biometrika, XXXIII (August, 1944), 129-135.

David, S.T.; Kendall, M.G.; and Stuart, A. "Some questions of Distribution in the Theory of Rank Correlations." Biometrika, XXXVIII (June, 1951), 131-140.

Dunphy, Dexter C.; Stone, Phillip J.; and Smith, Marshall S. "The General Inquirer: Further Developments in a Computer System for Content Analysis of Verbal Data in the Social Sciences." Behavioral Science, X No. 4 (1965), 468-480.

Ellsworth, John W. "Rationality and Campaigning: A Content Analysis of the 1960 Presidential Campaign Debates." Western Political Quarterly, XVIII, No. 4 (1965), 794-802.

Hayworth, Donald. "An Analysis of Speeches in Presidential Campaigns from 1884-1920." Quarterly Journal of Speech, XVI, No. 1 (1930), 35-42.

Holsti, Ole R. "An Adaptation of the General Inquirer for the Systematic Analysis of Political Documents." *Behavioral Science*, IX, No. 4 (1964), 382-388.

Kendall, M.G. "A New Measure of Rank Correlation." *Biometrika*, XXX (June, 1938), 81-93.

_____. "Partial Rank Correlation." *Biometrika*, XXXII (April, 1942), 277-283.

_____. "Rank and Product-Moment Correlation." *Biometrika*, XXXVI (June, 1949), 177-193.

Mann, Henry B. "Nonparametric Tests Against Trend." *Econometrica*, XIII, No. 3 (1945), 245-259.

McDiarmid, J. "Presidential Inaugural Addresses: A Study of Verbal Symbols." *Public Opinion Quarterly*, I (July, 1937), 79-82.

Moran, P.A.P. "Rank Correlation and Product-Moment Correlation." *Biometrika*, XXXV (May, 1948), 203-206.

Prothro, James W. "Verbal Shifts in the American Presidency: A Content Analysis." *American Political Science Review*, L, No. 3 (1956), 726-739.

Rosander, A.C. "The Use of Inversions as a Test of Random Order." *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, XXXVII, No. 219 (1942), 352-358.

Savage, I.R. "Contribution to the Theory of Rank Order Statistics-the 'Trend' Case." *Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, XXVIII, No. 4 (1957), 968-977.

Stone, Phillip J.; Bales, Robert F.; Namenwirth, J. Zvi; and Ogilvie, Daniel M. "The General Inquirer: A Computer System for Content Analysis and Retrieval Based on the Sentence as the Unit of Information." *Behavioral Science*, VII, No. 6 (1962), 484-494.

Stuart, Alan. "Asymptotic Relative Efficiencies of Distribution-Free Tests of Randomness Against Normal Alternatives." *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, XLIX, No. 265 (1954), 147-157.

White, Howard B. "Commentary on Prothro's Content Analysis." *American Political Science Review*, L, No. 3 (1956), 740-750.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

The New York Times. July 17, 1964.

_____. August 27, 1964.

PROCEEDINGS

Official Proceedings of the Republican National Convention,
        1928-1960.

Official Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention,
        1928-1960.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Historical Statistics of the
        United States: Colonial Times to 1957. Washington,
        D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Historical Statistics of the
        United States: Colonial Times to Present; Continu-
        ation to 1962 and Revisions. Washington, D.C.:
        Government Printing Office, 1965.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. Statistical Abstracts of the
        United States: 1968. 89th ed. Washington, D.C.:
        Government Printing Office, 1968.

UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Ellsworth, John W. "Policy and Ideology in the Campaigns
        of 1960 and 1964: A Content Analysis." Southern
        Illinois University, 1967. (Mimeographed.)

_____. "Computerized Content Analysis of the 1968 Pre-
        sidential Campaign: A Research Proposal." Southern
        Illinois University, 1968. (Mimeographed.)

Namenwirth, J. Zvi. "Some Long and Short Term Trends in One American Political Value: A Computer Analysis of Concern With Wealth in 62 Party Platforms." The Analysis of Communication Content: Developments in Scientific Theories and Computer Techniques. Edited by Gerbner, George; Holsti, Ole R.; Kippendorff, K.; Paisley, W.J.; and Stone, Phillip J. New York: John Wiley and Sons, in press.

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University

Name   Francis M. Gaffney   Date of Birth   May 30, 1940

Local Address   375 North Taylor, St. Louis, Missouri

Home Address   375 North Taylor 3W
St. Louis, Missouri 63108

University Attended   University of Missouri at St. Louis

Years Attended   September, 1965 to August, 1967

Degree Earned   Bachelor of Arts

Major Field   Political Science

Special Honors   Woodrow Wilson Fellowship Nominee
1967

Bachelor of Arts Magna Cum Laude

Research Assistantship, Southern
Illinois University, 1968 to 1969

Scholarship, Washington University
School of Law, 1969 to 1973

Thesis Title   Economic Themes and Style Variables
in Presidential Nomination Accep-
tance Speeches: 1928-1968

Name of Adviser   John W. Ellsworth