
Student Work

5-1-1979

A Quantitative Description of Direction in Newspaper Advertising for Cable Television Franchise Elections

Donald G. Wright
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork>
Please take our feedback survey at: https://unomaha.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cchtFmpDyGfBLE

Recommended Citation

Wright, Donald G., "A Quantitative Description of Direction in Newspaper Advertising for Cable Television Franchise Elections" (1979). *Student Work*. 1753.
<https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/1753>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UNO. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Work by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UNO. For more information, please contact unodigitalcommons@unomaha.edu.

A QUANTITATIVE DESCRIPTION OF DIRECTION
IN NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING FOR CABLE
TELEVISION FRANCHISE ELECTIONS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Communication
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
University of Nebraska at Omaha

By
Donald G. Wright
May, 1979

UMI Number: EP73493

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI EP73493

Published by ProQuest LLC (2015). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of
Nebraska at Omaha.

Thesis Committee	Donald G. Wright	Communication
Name		Department

John D. Jernike

Edward A. Kolasa

Political Science

Robert R. Rall

Chairman

June 21, 1979

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My appreciation is extended to the members of the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska at Omaha, for their patience with a slow, but educable student and their critical guidance for this project.

Of special note is the assistance offered by Professor Robert Reilly, whose humor often helped guide me past discouragement.

I am also indebted to Dr. Robert Carlson who, although not a member of my committee, gave freely of his limited time to point to possible solutions to the problems in front of me and then lending a hand in compiling the research data. His understanding and objective questions helped me more than I can express.

Also, Norma Woods and her patience and understanding were beyond value in keeping me pointed toward a goal.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Council Bluffs.....	3
Mass Media.....	4
Definition of Terms.....	6
Assumptions.....	8
Survey of Literature.....	14
Importance to Study.....	19
Use of Newspapers.....	22
Newspaper Advertising.....	24
II. RESEARCH PROBLEMS.....	30
Negative Advertising.....	30
General Procedure.....	34
Treatment of Data.....	36
Imbalance Research Questions..	38
Application of Q-Technique.....	39
III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	44
1973 Cable Franchise Election...	44
1972 Debate.....	45
1972 Debate.....	46
City Council Balks.....	49
One Year Later.....	51
Double Negative Voting.....	56
1978 Cable Franchise Elections..	59
Interim Television Developments.....	59
Vote Results.....	61
The Selection Process.....	62
Debate on Firms Begins.....	65
Infighting by Firms.....	68
The Franchise Question.....	70
Public Forum.....	70
The Filbert Factor.....	71
Analysis of Voting.....	75
The June 27 Election.....	77
Vote Analysis.....	79
The July 22 Election.....	81
Vote Analysis.....	85

The July 25 Election.....	86
Vote Analysis.....	89
IV. RESULTS.....	92
Imbalance in Advertising.....	94
Overall Coefficient for	
All Elections.....	95
Coefficients for	
May 16th Election.....	96
Coefficients for	
June 27th Election.....	102
Coefficients for	
July 11th Election.....	108
Coefficients for	
July 25th Election.....	110
Q Sorts of Advertising	
Statements.....	113
Selection of Statements.....	115
Data from Q Sorts.....	117
Discussion.....	126
APPENDICES.....	137
REFERENCES.....	150

LIST OF TABLES

1	Column Inches of Advertising Purchased.....	93
2	Comparison of Imbalance for all Elections.....	96
3	Comparison of Imbalance for May 16.....	97
4	Comparison of Imbalance for American Cablevision for May 16th Election.....	100
5	Comparison of Imbalance for Cablecom-General for May 16th Election.....	101
6	Comparison of Overall Imbalance In June 27th Election.....	102
7	Comparison of Imbalance for Cablecom-General in June 27th Election.....	105
8	Comparison of Imbalance for American Heritage Cable Television in June 27th Election.....	106
9	Comparison of Imbalance for Citizens for Quality Cable Television in June 27th Election.....	107
10	Comparison of Imbalance for CMI, Inc., in July 11th Election.....	108
11	Comparison of Imbalance for American Heritage Cable Television in July 11th Election.....	110
12	Comparison of Overall Imbalance in July 25th Election.....	111
13	Comparison of Imbalance for American Heritage Cable Television in July 25th Election.....	112

14	Comparison of Imbalance for Citizens for Truth in Cable Television for July 25th Election.....	113
15	Correlation Coefficients for Voters and Experts in the First and Second Q Sorts of Advertising Statements.....	119
16	Correlation Coefficients for Voters and Experts on Positive Statements in the First and Second Q Sorts of Advertising Statements.....	119
17	Correlation Coefficients for voters and Experts on Negative Statements in the First and Second Q Sorts of Advertising Statements.....	120
18	Values of t and Two-tailed Probabilities of Overall Statements in First and Second Q Sorts, and in Statement Subcategories.....	121
19	Comparison of Voters' and Experts' Selection of Extreme Positive and Negative Statements by Subcategories in the First Q Sort.....	130
20	Comparison of Extreme Positive and Negative Statements by Subcategories for Voters and Experts in the Second Q Sort.....	131

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Council Bluffs, Iowa, is scheduled to have the first customers connected to a cable television system by the fall of 1979.¹ Nearly 75 percent of the ballots cast in a July 25, 1978 cable television franchise election favored issuance of a 25-year, non-exclusive contract for cable television service to American Heritage Cablevision Inc.

The approval of the firm came after the defeat of two firms who sought franchises in the city in 1973 and the defeat of three firms in separate elections in 1978.

There were many issues discussed during the 70-day campaign by the various firms in 1978, including the process used by the City Council to select firms for the ballots, possible conflict of interest between firm representatives and members of the council, whether the mayor's select citizens' committee on cable television had used the proper criteria for selecting the firms, program quality including the possibility of pornography, the possible exclusion of about 3,000 residents of the city

¹"First Cable TV Hookups Expected in Fall of '79," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 15 August 1978, p. 1.

due to the various firms' minimum density requirements before service could be initiated, cost comparisons for initial service hookups and subsequent increases in basic service charges, the firms' past record of "dumping" unprofitable franchises in other cities, the purported experience of firms that had only been in existence a few weeks prior to the elections, and the number of elections to be held.

But, in the analysis of why three of the firms lost their elections, public and private officials expressed the opinion that the advertising campaigns by the firms did more than any other single factor to dissuade voters from approving earlier firms.

Generally, the comments on the advertisements were that they were negative, false and deceptive. Company officials admitted in private interviews that they were forced to change their advertising strategy from "positive" to "negative" in order to counteract the attacks from competing firms and their front groups.

But advertising is but one of the factors that went into the decision-making process by voters in the four franchise elections. An examination of all factors is beyond the scope of this study; therefore, it will concentrate on a quantitative and qualitative study of the ads prepared by the competing firms and how a sample of voters responded to those ads. It is my belief that this study can lead to insights about the overall adoption

process in the community as inferred through the mass media.

Council Bluffs

Council Bluffs is a city of about 60,000 persons located in Iowa and across the Missouri River from Omaha, Nebraska, a city of about 500,000 persons.

Homes and businesses in Council Bluffs are generally located on the relatively flat flood plain of the river and along the main street through the city called Broadway. The city has recently completed a downtown urban renewal project, replacing a 20-acre area of dilapidated businesses, some of which dated back to the turn of the century. The Midlands Mall shopping center is located at the foot of the tall, loess soil bluffs that overlook the river valley from a height of about 300 feet in some places.

The city is roughly divided politically and socially by the bluffs: Those in the hilly, eastern sections of the city live in what is called the "East End;" those closer to the Missouri River, the "West End."

The city's economy is made up largely of salaried workers in the blue collar and white collar classes, with a small contingent of businessmen and executives. Business in the community is based on agriculture and related

services, but has a developing light manufacturing area.²

Mass Media

Council Bluffs is served by one local daily newspaper, the Council Bluffs Nonpareil, which has an average daily circulation to the city's estimated 20,200 homes of 15,558 copies. The Omaha World-Herald, published in Omaha, Nebraska, has a daily circulation in Council Bluffs' city zone of 6,560 copies.³

In addition, the city can receive 12 radio stations--both AM and FM, three commercial television stations and the Iowa and Nebraska educational television channels.

The loess soil bluffs which lend the city part of its name, also hamper television reception, particularly in the hilly East End. Homes located atop the bluffs often report receiving excellent pictures, locally, and some distant stations such as Lincoln, Nebraska, 50 miles to the southwest, and Sioux City, Iowa, 90 miles to the north.

One of the first television signals to be seen in Council Bluffs was at the Waycar Tavern, a workingman's bar then at 15 North Main Street. On July 13, 1949,

²Leonard Gregory, "Project Improve--Council Bluffs, 1973-74," unpublished manuscript, Council Bluffs Independent School District, pp. 200-332.

³Publishers' Report to the Audit Bureau of Circulation, September 30, 1978, Council Bluffs Nonpareil.

The Nonpareil was tipped that the city was about to join the electronic age and dispatched a reporter to chronicle the event. With an accompanying picture of patrons quietly sipping beer in front of a small-screened television receiver, the reporter wrote this account:

Faces of national and international figures and scenes of out of the way places flashed across the 16-inch screen with no hitch. Then suddenly a herringbone pattern of jagged lines bloomed across the screen. "That's some doctor's office nearby using a diathermy machine," said Technician Bernard Hansen, who is handling installation. "It's a natural for taverns," pointed out Leo Damm, proprietor. His installation is first in either Council Bluffs or Omaha, he believes. There will be no such thing as scotch and soda, or reserved, sections in Leo's tavern. Visibility is as good at the entrance of the place as it is smackdab in front of the machine, located to the rear of the bar.⁴

In November of 1949, Northwestern Bell Telephone Company, along with Southwestern Bell and American Bell Telephone Company, was busy digging up Woodbury Avenue near Highway 375 to install a coaxial cable that would bring in telephone lines and possibly television signals from Kansas City. The television cable system never materialized, however.⁵

Another early attempt to serve television customers in Council Bluffs came in 1957 when Telemovies, Inc., of Iowa, filed articles of incorporation and

⁴"As in East, Television Makes Public Bow in Pubs," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 13 July 1949, p. 3.

⁵"Co-Axial Conduit Line Is Set Up," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 17 November 1949, p. 15.

announced it would hook cables to unused channels on home television receivers and, for a fee, show two movies a month. The firm apparently folded without showing one movie, because the firm was never heard from again.⁶

Definition of Terms

Cable television. Community Antenna Television, better known as CATV, cable television or cablevision, is a system that uses a centrally located antenna, a satellite receiving dish or microwave tower relay system--or all three--to import distant television signals to a community. Subscribing homes and businesses are then connected to the main cable station, known as the head end, via a coaxial cable which pipes in the amplified signals to television receivers.⁷

Cable franchise. A cable television franchise is an agreement between the cable television firm and a local governmental body. It sets out the responsibilities of both parties and includes restrictions on fees charged to subscribers, the procedures for increasing fees, taxes paid to the city, duration of service, the quality of equipment used and the signals delivered to subscribers. It may also contain restrictions imposed by the

⁶"Telemovies Firm Is Incorporated," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 22 March 1957, p. 22.

⁷Ralph Lee Smith, "The Wired Nation," The Nation, 18 May 1970, pp. 582-604.

Federal Communications Commission and the state government.

Franchise election. A franchise election is a special referendum at which residents cast ballots for or against the cable television firm seeking the franchise. In Iowa, by law, the franchise granted must be non-exclusive. This means that it is theoretically possible for more than one cable firm to operate in the city, thus eliminating the possibility of a monopoly situation. In practice, however, the City Council or appropriate governmental agency may chose between successful firms. Iowa law also limits the length of the franchise to 25 years. To be approved, a firm must receive favorable ballots from at least half the voters in the election.

Advertisements. For the purpose of this study, an advertisement shall be statements, illustrations and pictures inserted into the pages of the Council Bluffs Nonpareil by cable television firms, organizations funded by those firms or by citizens of the community who purchased space in the newspaper in order to express their views on the cable television issues. Letters to the editor, news articles and editorials will not be considered other than as they amplify or attack the advertisements. Radio and television advertising were used in the elections but were not studied.

Assumptions

(1) It is assumed that the advertising in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil may have reached a majority of the residents of the city since the newspaper circulates to about 77 percent of the city's homes.

(2) It is assumed that the advertising for the cable franchise elections may have had some effect on the voting patterns of residents.

(3) It is assumed that the newspaper advertisements in The Nonpareil are one factor among many public issues that were identified in the four franchise elections. Other issues included:

(a) Subscriber fees. Each of the firms in the election process submitted formal proposals to the City Council outlining suggested subscriber rates per month and initial hookup fees. As presented in their proposals, the fees were:

<u>FIRM</u>	<u>MONTHLY FEE</u>	<u>INCREASE</u>	<u>HOOKUP</u>
American Cablevision	\$6.50	Up to city	\$15
Cablecom-General	5.95	Up to city	15
Council Bluffs Cablevision	7.50	Up to city	15
American Heritage	5.95	Up to city	15

(b) Programming. Each of the firms had similar proposals for programs offered. Each would provide 12 regular channels for the proposed monthly fee to

subscribers, plus a movie and entertainment channel at an extra fee equalling the monthly fee. American Cablevision, Cablecom-General and American Heritage each offered Home Box Office, a syndicated package of new movies and entertainment, while Council Bluffs Cablevision offered its own movie and entertainment channel. Council Bluffs Cablevision contended that the city's selection process overlooked the differences in programming; that its firm would be the only one offering G and PG rated movies while the other firms would offer many movies that were R rated, thus raising the issue of pornography over the special entertainment channel. All of the firms proposed separate channel capacity for schools and civic affairs.

(c) Franchises in operation. During the campaigns for the four elections, the number of franchises each firm was operating were discussed. American Cablevision claimed 99 franchises operating in 32 states. Heritage Communications of Des Moines, which later merged with American Television and Communications to form American Heritage Cablevision, claimed 11 franchises operating in Iowa. After the ATC-Heritage merger, however, American Heritage then claimed to have 109 franchises operating with a combined subscribership of 750,000 people.

Cablecom-General claimed to have 39 franchises with 200,000 subscribers, but American Heritage advertising claimed that Cablecom had "dumped" over 50 percent of its franchises in the past 10 years. Council Bluffs

Cablevision, CMI's local firm, claimed 8 franchises operating with 38,000 subscribers.

(d) Personalities. Charges were made during the May 16th election campaign that American Cablevision's local representative, Don Filbert, was somehow linked with Mayor Ronald Cleveland. Filbert, it was charged and Filbert admitted, was in charge of Cleveland's election for the City Council. Since Cleveland favored American Cablevision as the firm that should provide service in the city, some citizens and other council members objected to Filbert's involvement. Filbert had also represented ATC's bid for a franchise in 1973.

In the final three elections, Omaha personality Lee Terry was hired by American Heritage and was featured in numerous advertisements in The Nonpareil and on local television promoting his firm. His intrusion into the Council Bluffs franchise battle angered some firm representatives, but there are fewer recorded comments about Terry than are found about Filbert. Filbert, after the defeat of American Cablevision in the May 16th election, disassociated himself from the firm and dropped out of the public eye.⁸

Mayor Cleveland, however, was visible and vocal all during the four elections. Cablecom-General's

⁸"TV vote for 3 but not at same time," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 25 April 1978, p. 3.

advertising during the first election urged residents to vote against the City Council, Mayor Cleveland and Filbert in voting against American Cablevision.⁹

While other persons were mentioned in connection with the elections, it was evident that Filbert, Cleveland and Terry were in the forefront of public statements.

(e) Selection process. Statements were made during the elections that voters rejected the first three cable television firms as a protest to the City Council's method of selecting the firms to be placed on ballots.¹⁰ Generally, the selection process involved review of the formal proposals presented by the television companies. These reviews were carried out by a Citizens Advisory Committee on Cable Television using criteria outlined by the Federal Communications Commission.

Each of the firms was rated according to its financial ability to perform, present and future debt and past performance in other communities. Programming, the committee said, was so similar among the firms, that it was not considered.

After the review, the committee recommended American Cablevision as its top selection, although there was one dissenting vote. When it came time for the City

⁹Cablecom-General advertisement in Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 14 May 1978, p. 14A.

¹⁰"TV vote for 3 but not at same time," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 25 April 1978, p. 3.

Council to make its selection of a top firm, it was charged that American Cablevision's parent company, ATC, had applied pressure to the citizen's committee.¹¹ It was also charged that the Mayor's Study Committee on Cable Television had violated the state's open meetings law by not allowing firm representatives into its deliberations.¹²

Only one article mentioned the citizens committee's recommendations as to its top firms, although several of the firms made mention of the findings in their advertisements. The ratings were:

American Cablevision, 95.4 out of 100 possible points; Cablecom-General, 90.7; Cable TV Construction Ltd., 80.4 (the firm later decided not to seek a franchise); CMI, 78.4; and Heritage Communications, Inc., 72.9. Not studied by the committee was American Heritage, the firm that finally won the franchise, although its component parts--ATC and Heritage Communication--had both been rated by the committee.¹³

After the defeat of American Cablevision on May 16, one ATC representative was of the opinion that the defeat was due to people upset with the "City Council, the

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³"American Cablevision recommended to council," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 1 April 1978, p. 1.

process and a lot were upset with state law. Many didn't think the council had a right to make a choice and said, 'We won't give them any choice.'" A representative for Council Bluffs Cablevision, CMI's firm, agreed, saying, "I feel it wasn't a vote against cable television; perhaps more a vote against the way the companies were selected."¹⁴

(f) Last chance. American Heritage's advertising campaigns in the last three elections, followed a theme urging voters to hold back on their approval until July 25. Closer to the election, American Heritage claimed the July 25th election would be residents' "last chance" to get cable television.

CMI and Cablecom-General both issued statements to the press that this claim was false and misleading; that both firms had plans to continue seeking a franchise in the city. Also, news stories appeared that Storer Cable TV of Sarasota, Florida, had approached city officials about the possibility of holding a franchise election.¹⁵

Terry, of American Heritage, believed the people knew there was a possibility of another election, but that the voters wanted to get the selection process over

¹⁴"Voters dump cable firm at polls," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 17 May 1978, p. 1.

¹⁵"First vote Tuesday on cable TV?" Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 July 1978, p. 1.

with,¹⁶ and voted overwhelmingly for his firm. Election Commissioner Douglas Primmer agreed with that assessment of voter sentiment.¹⁷

(4) It is assumed that data drawn from the advertisements in the four cable franchise elections cannot be generalized to the outcomes of the elections because of the myriad of other factors involved, i.e., that a negative campaign by one firm had a direct effect on the defeat of another firm, although it is realized that the information and connotative impact of the ads may have played a role in the final decision-making process of voters.

Had the data implied that the advertising campaigns of the firms played a larger role in the voting, the latter assumption could be discarded.

In the following section, the relationships of the newspaper, its content and voter decisions will be explored to give a clearer idea of the complex process into which the advertising campaigns thrust their messages.

Survey of Literature

Prior to World War II, the media of mass

¹⁶"Council 'will OK' TV firm," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 26 July 1978, p. 1.

¹⁷"Fast Cable TV Action Likely," Omaha World-Herald, 26 July 1978, p. 10.

communication were thought to have direct effects on their intended audiences. If an editorial in a newspaper supported a particular candidate, it was thought that the candidate would very likely be swept into office. This concept was based on the assumption that society was a "mass" of individual subjects with little more in common than the fact that they received the same message via the media at about the same time.¹⁸

The two-step flow hypothesis emanating from the study of voter decision-making in the 1940 presidential campaign by Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet¹⁹ stated: "Ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population."

Opinion leaders were found to be similar to the people they influenced, but the major difference was that opinion leaders were better versed on current topics by their extensive use of the mass media. Later research by Katz²⁰ and Katz and Lazarsfeld²¹ developed the idea of the

¹⁸Wilbur Schramm, ed., The Science of Human Communication, (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1963), p. 95.

¹⁹Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson and Hazel Gaudet. The People's Choice, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948).

²⁰Elihu Katz, "The Two-Step Flow of Communication: An Up-To-Date Report on an Hypothesis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 21 (1957): 61-78.

²¹Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence, (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955).

opinion leaders operating through interpersonal relationships that formed a network of relationships.

Thus, it became apparent that information about an innovation spreads through a society via various combinations of mass media and interpersonal networks. The time factor involved in this diffusion process was explored by Coleman, Katz and Menzel.²² They found that opinion leaders were more likely to be exposed to mass media information about an innovation and were also more likely to be innovators: that they were innovating as a result of the first-step of getting information from mass media, before taking the second-step of influencing others about adopting the innovation.

Also important in these studies was the finding that the original two-step flow of information about an innovation might actually be a multistep flow--with information coming from the mass media through relays of opinion leaders who communicate with each other and then with their followers. Not treated by the studies, however, was the influence these opinion leaders wielded when engaged in their interpersonal networks.

Deutschmann and Danielson²³ found interpersonal

²²James Coleman, Elihu Katz and Herbert Menzel, "The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Physicians," Sociometry 20 (1957): 253-70.

²³Paul Deutschmann and Wayne Danielson, "Diffusion of Knowledge of the Major News Story," Journalism Quarterly, 37 (1960): 345-55.

relays of information regarding major news events, but discounted their impact on persuasion and influence of followers. Generally, they found that more important news will diffuse more quickly through society than will news that is less important.

Greenberg²⁴ expanded on this idea and found that most interpersonal networks were used primarily for reinforcing existing opinions rather than for creation or conversion of attitudes. Further, he found that communication about the event was initiated more often by the less-informed than by the more-informed, and that most successful influence attempts consisted of reinforcements, not conversions to new opinions about the event being discussed.

Information that was felt to have personal relevance and considerable emotional impact, according to Adams and Mullen,²⁵ was more likely to be transmitted through the populace affected by the news if it was conveyed by word of mouth. They found that the persons involved with the information had heard the news, had attempted to verify it, had told others of the news and

²⁴Bradley S. Greenberg, "Dimensions of Informal Communication," in Lloyd R. Bostian, "The Two-Step Flow Theory: Cross-Cultural Implications," Journalism Quarterly, 1 (1970): 109-117.

²⁵John B. Adams and James J. Mullen, "Diffusion of the News of a Foreign Event: A Nationwide Study," Journalism Quarterly, 46 (1969): 545-57.

had received information from others concerning the announcement.

This information sharing was confirmed by Troidahl and Van Dam²⁶ who identified both Opinion Givers and Opinion Askers, but also that three-fourths of the conversations they studied involved both giving and asking of opinions. They also identified persons who they termed to be inactives, separated from the followers and non-leaders. They defined the inactives as the non-sharers of information--people who had not shared the topic with anyone.

More recently, researchers have turned their attention to the agenda-setting function of the media: That the media cannot tell people what to think, but can tell them what they will think about, thus setting up the agenda of topics people might talk about with opinion leaders or with followers.²⁷ Bauer²⁸ has found that people select messages from the media according to whom they intend to relay that information and Katz²⁹

²⁶Verling C. Troidahl and Robert Van Dam, "Face-to-Face Communication about Major Topics in the News," Public Opinion Quarterly, 19 (1965): 626-34.

²⁷Jack M. McLeod, Lee B. Becker and James E. Byrnes, "Another Look at the Agenda-Setting Function of the Press," Communication Research, 1 (1974): 131-66.

²⁸Raymond Bauer, "The Communicator and the Audience," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2 (1958): 67-68.

²⁹Elihu Katz, "The Two Step Flow of Communication: An Up-to-Date Report on an Hypothesis," Public Opinion Quarterly, 21 (1957): 61-78.

noted that the selective process is well-defined: That people can effectively block out unwanted messages that go against their favorite prejudices.

If, then, as the research indicates, the impact of messages of persuasion in the mass media are not that effective unless reinforced by face-to-face communication, why is the study of advertising impact on a special community election important?

Importance to Study

While the mass media are not the primary reason that people make the decisions they do, the messages in the media are often sought out by people who are attempting to resolve conflicts in their lives. Coleman, Katz and Menzel³⁰ found that the adoption of an innovation can be enhanced through the use of many media sources, but the final decision on the innovation tends to depend on face-to-face contacts.

If advertising is considered in the same perspective as news articles or radio and television broadcasts--as disseminators of information--then it seems plausible to assume that advertising may be one factor that starts people talking about the innovation.

Often, the mass media deliver the first news on an

³⁰James S. Coleman, Elihu Katz and Herbert Menzel, "The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Physicians," Sociometry, 20 (1975): 253-70.

innovation in the community and continue to follow the developments of that innovation. Thus, subscribers and readers of a hometown newspaper may be better informed about the innovation than would people who do not read the newspaper.

This, of course, is not to assume that a newspaper's reader would make a different decision about the innovation than would a non-reader, only that the newspaper reader would be better informed.

Also, this study cannot assume that people used the newspaper advertisements concerning the 1978 cable television franchises as their sole source of information.

But, given the foregoing research in how people use the mass media, we must assume that newspaper advertisements had some influence in how people ultimately voted in the four elections. As the research seems to indicate, it is possible that the messages contained in the advertisements, and enhanced by the complicated community verbal network, ultimately resulted in decisions being made on whether or not to vote for a particular cable firm. Also entering the picture are personal belief systems; that people tend to hold onto their beliefs regardless of the volume of messages they receive to the contrary.

Of interpersonal communication, personal belief systems and mass media messages, the latter seems to be the only one which can be studied with any degree of

validity because those messages were generally distributed, are recorded and, thus, can be measured.

The author is well aware of the limitations of such an undertaking. The uncertainty in predicting the effects of mass media messages on the audience is underscored by Darnell and Brockriede³¹ who consider all communications as uncertain because of the choices people make, and for their penchant for interpreting the behavior of others and themselves in terms of the choices they attribute to others.

But, advertising as an information source becomes important to this study because it consistently saturated the community with information, persuasive appeals and other messages that only the readers themselves could define.

Thus, it seems viable to study the messages presented by the cable television firms about themselves and their competitors since it was found by Beal, Rogers and Bohlen³² that people who are attempting to resolve problems in their lives usually get their ideas on how to solve those problems from the mass media. X

³¹Donald K. Darnell and Wayne Brockriede, Persons Communicating, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1976), pp. 23-28.

³²George M. Beal, Everett M. Rogers and Joe M. Bohlen, "Validity of the Concept of Stages in the Adoption Process," Rural Sociology 22 (1958): 166-168.

Use of Newspapers

The rationale for this study is that advertisements appearing in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil concerning the 1978 cable television franchise elections may have been one source of information for voters in the elections.

The rationale seems valid since studies by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau³³ have shown 78 percent of adults over age 18, the voting age in Iowa, who read a newspaper at least daily has remained constant over the past 10 years. Also, four out of five newspaper readers said they paid attention to advertising as well as news stories, whether they intended to buy something or not, according to Hepner.³⁴

That newspaper readers are better informed seems to be indicated by the finding that newspaper readership tends to rise in proportion to levels of education--from 77 percent of high school educated persons, to 83 percent with college degrees. Sixty-nine percent of those with incomes of \$5,000 to \$7,499 read a newspaper, while those with incomes over \$10,000 comprise 84 percent of newspaper readers. On an average day, 66 percent of the people

³³Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Basic Facts About Newspapers, (New York: Newspaper Advertising Bureau, 1975), p. 18.

³⁴Harry W. Hepner, Advertising: Creative Communication With Consumers, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964), p. 258.

surveyed between the ages of 18 and 24 read a newspaper while 85 percent of those 50 to 64 years old read a newspaper.³⁵

Since the adoption of cable television requires a desire for the service and the ability to pay for that service, then newspaper readers would seem to fit into a model of potential cable television customers. First, newspaper readers tend to have higher incomes; second, newspaper readers tend to be better informed about the subject being discussed and therefore could be assumed to be better equipped to vote in a special election concerning cable television.

This is not to assume that persons with no knowledge of the cable television issues would not vote in the special election. A check with Pottawattamie County election officials finds there are no studies detailing the demographics of voters in a special election versus those in a general election.

Douglas Lovitt, assistant director of voter registration for the State of Iowa, said in an interview that persons in special elections across the state tended to be persons over 30 years old, were owners of property, tended to be a much smaller group than voters in a general election, demonstrated more motivation to vote in the

³⁵Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Basic Facts About Newspapers, p. 17.

special election and generally seemed to be better informed about the issues involved in the special election.³⁶

Newspaper Advertising

Crawford contends that the reader of a newspaper advertisement is seeking information about whether to buy or not to buy a product or service.³⁷ He contends that the newspaper reader is more likely to be ready to buy the product or service than the audience of any other advertising medium.

If this is true, then the ability to persuade people to act in a certain way--be it the purchase of a product or service, or voting for some issue or candidate--seems to depend on the persuasiveness of the message in the advertisement and the willingness of the reader to be persuaded.

The problem, then, becomes one of identifying the messages contained in those advertisements and somehow quantifying the degree with which voters or potential voters identify with them.

Douring³⁸ contends that to be effective, a

³⁶Douglas Lovitt, telephone interview from Des Moines, Iowa, 14 March 1979.

³⁷John W. Crawford, Advertising, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1966), pp. 263-264.

³⁸Karin Douring, Frontiers of Communication, (Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1975), p. 13.

political candidate's messages to the public must be based on common ground with which the voters can identify and, thus, may be motivated to act.

Lavidge and Steiner³⁹ conceive of advertising as a force which must "move people up a series of steps" if purchase of a produce or acceptance of an ideal is the goal. They liken the three functions of advertising with the classic psychological model which divides behavior into three components or dimensions.

At the first step in the advertising "ladder" is awareness and knowledge. Persons in this stage are unaware of the existence of the product or service and become aware through information contained the advertising. They liken this step to the cognitive component in the psychological model--the "rational" states.

Second is liking and preference for the product or service. By this stage, they say, persons have learned something of the thing being offered and tend to believe they like the product or service, whether they have ever used it or not. This stage is likened to the affective component of the psychological model. It is here that people apply emotional values to external stimuli.

The third step in their advertising model involves

³⁹Robert J. Lavidge and Gary A. Steiner "A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness," in Arnold M. Barban and C. H. Sandage, (eds.), Readings in Advertising and Promotion Strategy (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1968), pp. 233-238.

conviction and purchases--that the person is convinced the product or service is the best there is and takes action to acquire what has been advertised. This, they say, is likened to the conative or motivational component--"striving" states, or relating to the tendency to treat objects as positive or negative goals.

Jones⁴⁰ takes a different perspective, however, and rejects the linear models of advertising persuasion that move from awareness to comprehension and then to conviction and action on the part of the potential customer. He believes these models tend to ignore the fact that people are not that rational in their decision-making and that they, themselves, bring certain attitudes to the advertisements.

Kernan and McNeal⁴¹ caution that persons trying to measure the effectiveness of advertising appeals must weigh all the interwoven aspects that may go into the making of a decision on a product or service, or else abandon the project. Like the political candidate, the advertisement of a product or service must "speak the language of the consumer." Kernan and McNeal point out that advertising cannot be considered as if it were in a vacuum. They say:

⁴⁰Robert W. Jones, The Business of Advertising, (London: Longman Group Ltd., 1974), pp. 88-91.

⁴¹Jerome B. Kernan and James V. McNeal, "The Closest Thing to Measuring Advertising Effectiveness," Business Horizons 15 (1964): pp. 73-80.

In spite of all the how-to-measure-advertising-effectiveness articles and books, the ugly fact remains that it cannot be done. . . (because) the advertisements function in an environment comprising many uncontrollable and incalculable factors that may influence sales.⁴²

This view is echoed by Newell⁴³ who argues that the language of advertisements must be one of persuasion, not coercion. He says:

Social critics sometimes attribute to advertising a power that simply does not exist. . . In a kind of two step process it first encourages the prospect to buy the product as a general proposition. . . Secondly, although it doesn't seem secondary to the man who is paying for it, the advertising attempts to persuade the homeowner that one particular make of power lawn mower is unequivocally the best.⁴⁴

But, despite these valid arguments against attempting a quantitative description of the effectiveness of advertising, the evidence that advertising does seem to work is all around us.

Merchants cast billions of dollar votes into the advertising election each year because they know that at least some of their messages will be heeded by the buying public. The truth is self-evident that much of that advertising either goes unheeded or fails to motivate persons to act on the product or service being offered.

⁴²Ibid., p. 246.

⁴³Thomas M. Newell, "The Declining Market for Pigs in Pokes," in Robert M. Kaplan (ed.), The Marketing Concept in Action, (Chicago: American Marketing Association, 1964), pp. 243-254.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 244.

In a complicated issue such as the cable television franchise elections under study, the firms depended mainly on newspaper advertising to promote themselves, defend themselves from attacks by other firms, explain about cable television and implant the desire for their particular brand of the product in the voters' minds. Thus, it seems appropriate for this study to attempt to measure the advertising effectiveness of the various firm's campaigns by tapping the one source that may have the ultimate answer--the inner thoughts and feelings of the voters themselves.

In Chapter II, we shall discuss two methods employed to get at individual responses to the messages delivered by the cable firms through their newspaper advertising. Indeed, their choice to spend the majority of their advertising dollars on newspaper ads seems a good one considering that the newspaper affords the greatest opportunity for a sustained advertising campaign in which a myriad of complex issues must be presented. Newspapers offer the space in which those issues can be aired at any length the advertiser deems necessary.

This, however, can lead to a condition of confusion in voters--too much conflicting information might mean that more ballots might be cast in the negative simply because people did not know how to vote.

The first part of the methodology for this study makes use of a simple test of the public criticisms heaped

against the cable firms' advertising campaigns--they were mostly negative and this, in turn, made people reject three of the firms.

The second part of the methodology uses Q-technique to test the voters' degree of identification with advertising messages presented in the four elections.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH PROBLEMS

The research problems are to:

(1) Determine the degree to which cable television advertising in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil tends to be either "positive" or "negative," as defined for this study, and;

(2) Determine the degree to which a sample of persons identify with the specific messages presented by the cable firms through their advertisements.

Negative Advertising

A survey of the news articles in The Nonpareil and in the Omaha World-Herald during the four 1978 elections found these remarks about the cable television firms' advertising:

(1) Bob Boepple, marketing director for American Cablevision's parent firm, American Television and Communications Corporation, blamed his company's defeat on public confusion and a personality feud voters carried with them to the polls. He said he was forced to end his firm's "positive" advertising campaign in order to fight

what he called "unfair" criticism from opponents.⁴⁵

(2) Raymond Pogge, a Council Bluffs attorney representing CMI Cable Television of Birmingham, Alabama, said the defeat of both American Cablevision and Cablecom-General, of Englewood, Colorado, were due to "criticizing and condemning each other and failing to tell what cable television is and how it can better Council Bluffs."⁴⁶ He later threatened to file a law suit against American Heritage Cablevision for what he called "deceptive advertising".⁴⁷

(3) After the defeat of CMI, Pogge said:

I believe a great number of people in Council Bluffs want cable television and will vote for it if not confused about various companies. We used only positive ads. We did not criticize American Heritage or any other company. I'm sorry American Heritage did not conduct themselves like that.⁴⁸

(4) Alan McDonald, president of CMI, added:

...whatever campaign I run, there will be no false or misleading advertising about anyone else. That last campaign conducted by American Heritage against us was the dirtiest campaign I've ever seen. . .and I was horrified by it.⁴⁹

⁴⁵"Voters reject Cable Firm," Omaha World-Herald, 17 May 1978, p. 3.

⁴⁶"Voters shun 2nd TV firm," Council Bluffs Nonpareil 28 June 1978, p. 1.

⁴⁷"TV firm considers suit against cable opponents," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 8 July 1978, p. 1.

⁴⁸"Bluffs Defeat Is Third Out On Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 12 July 1978, pp. 1 + 4.

⁴⁹"Last vote Tuesday on cable TV?" Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 July 1978, p. 1.

(5) Scott Hughes, Council Bluffs attorney representing American Heritage, dismissed the negative advertising campaign charges made against his firm and said he did not feel threatened by the prospect of other firms conducting a similar campaign against his company. He said:

For one thing, any negative campaign will fall on deaf ears because those firms will have no favorable alternative to bring before the city--they've already been turned down once. We feel our advertising campaign was very effective and the voters have made a very intelligent choice in deciding to vote against the other firms and wait for American Heritage.⁵⁰

(6) City Councilman Walter Pyper, after the voters had approved American Heritage in the final election, said the victory was a rejection of the previous advertising campaigns:

I guess voters were pretty selective. . . I've been convinced all along that people wanted cable TV. They were just turned off by the negative advertising.⁵¹

Other statements by public officials or persons affiliated with the cable television firms which were defeated made similar remarks about "negative" ads.

These statements, a sampling of some found in news articles, seem to indicate that the primary focus for public criticism of the four cable television firms was a

⁵⁰"Bluffs Defeat Is Third Out On Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 12 July 1978, pp. 1 + 4.

⁵¹"Council 'will OK' TV firm," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 26 July 1978, p. 1.

determination that their advertising campaigns were generally negative with the implication that this, in itself, brought defeat to three of the firms.

One of the purposes of this study is to see if the advertisements were, as stated, primarily negative in content. To measure that direction in the advertisements in The Nonpareil, this study has used Janis and Fadner's Coefficient of Imbalance.⁵²

The purpose of their general formulae is to present "an overall estimate of the degree of imbalance (in the analysis of content); i.e., the extent to which favorable, unfavorable or neutral treatment is accorded to the topic under analysis."⁵³

As to the impact of the specific messages delivered by the advertisements of the four firms--whether more people would identify with statements from one firm as opposed to statements from other firms--this study has used a method of determining individual preferences for specific media messages as developed by Stephenson.⁵⁴

His Q-technique of obtaining a sample of

⁵²Irvin L. Janis and Raymond Fadner, "The Coefficient of Imbalance," in Harold D. Lasswell, Nathan Leites & Associates, (eds.), Language of Politics, (South Norwalk, Conn.: George W. Stewart, Publishers, Inc., 1949), pp. 153-169.

⁵³Ibid., p. 155.

⁵⁴William Stephenson, The Study of Behavior: Q-Technique and Its Methodology, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

statements concerning a topic and having persons sort those statements according to either a forced frequency or an unforced, random frequency is germane to this study for two reasons:

(1) The Q-sorting technique offers an objective method by which the observer can measure the degree to which persons identify with or don't identify with samples of statements under study.

(2) As Stephenson states:

One's yearnings, wishes, ruminations, reflections, wantings, inclinations, fancies, dreams, remembrances, and a thousand other 'inner' forms of behavior are crucially important; and we believe that most of these matters can now be brought into testable propositional form (through Q-methodology and Q-technique).⁵⁵

General Procedure

Copies of the Council Bluffs Nonpareil were collected and surveyed between January 10 and July 26, 1978, the period when advertisements and articles concerning the cable television franchise elections appeared. Each advertisement was measured and catalogued according to date, page location and firm.

Each phrase, sentence or sentence compound in the 170 advertisements was then judged as to whether it was positive for the firm purchasing the advertisement, negative to competing firms, neutral or non-relevant by using

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 100.

the following definitions:

(1) Favorable. Statements, slogans or phrases about the cable television firm made by that firm and which supported its position or image. Included were statements, slogans or phrases about the firm's qualifications, quality of past and future service, size of the firm, number of operating franchises and endorsements.

(2) Unfavorable. Statements, slogans or phrases made by a cable television firm about one or more of the other, competing firms. Statements were judged to be unfavorable if they appeared to be critical of the other firms' size, ability to perform, past record of service, personalities involved with those firms, criticisms about the governmental selection process or the quality of city government involvement in the elections, or rebuttal to other firms' claims and charges about the firm.

(3) Neutral. Statements, slogans or phrases that were judged to be informational in nature about cable television generally, the election procedure (such as a list of polling places), or other factual material that was free of promotion for the firm.

(4) Non-relevant. Statements, slogans or phrases by the firms that were judged to be free of conative messages for the firms or against the other firms such as the signatures of firm representatives, headlines labeling the subject of an accompanying advertising text, pictures and illustrations.

Counts were then made of the positive, negative, neutral and non-relevant statements in each firm's advertising, using these general definitions.

Statements made by each firm about itself and about the other firms were then divided into separate groups to facilitate two Q-sorts as will be described in the next section.

Treatment of Data

The first general research problem is to determine the degree to which cable television advertising in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil tended to be either "positive" or "negative" as defined for this study.

Janis and Fadner's formulae were designed to produce a coefficient which will always be positive if the overall favorable treatment of content units exceeds the treatment of unfavorable content units; will be negative if the opposite is true; will be zero if there is no relevant content or if the favorable and unfavorable remarks are equally balanced.

The resulting positive Coefficient of Imbalance is a measure of the treatment of positive content units in relation to the message's other content sub-groups. The formula for the positive Coefficient of Imbalance is:

$$C_f = \frac{f^2 - fu}{rt} \quad \text{where } f > u$$

f is the total amount of favorable content

u is the total amount of unfavorable content

r is the total amount of relevant content (the sum of favorable, unfavorable and neutral content)

t is the total of all content including non-relevant.

Since the relative strength of positive versus negative statements can only be valid if measured by each person's reaction to those statements, no attempt was made in this study to place a weighting factor on the positive and negative statements. As shall be seen in the discussion of Q-technique, however, application of Q-sorts for weighting purposes seems to have potential for further research.

If unfavorable units exceed favorable units in the analysis of the advertisements, this formula is used:

$$C_u = \frac{fu - u^2}{rt} \quad \text{where } f < u$$

The resulting negative coefficient is a measure of the treatment of negative content in relation to the other content sub-groups in the message.

Pool, Lasswell and Lerner⁵⁶ used Janis and Fadner's coefficient formulae in their study of change in political symbols among specialized print media. The

⁵⁶Ithiel deSola Pool, The Prestige Press: A Comparative Study of Political Symbols, (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1970), pp. 33-39.

authors noted that the coefficients were helpful in instances where the average measure of imbalance was needed.

Thus, the coefficients will be used in the study as broad indicators of a firm's advertising direction--either positive or negative--and will make no inferences about what the coefficients might imply about the firms' success or failure at the polls.

Imbalance Research Questions

To answer the first general research problem, analysis of the coefficients can be used to answer these research questions:

(1) Was the overall content of all advertisements in the four elections negative or positive, as defined?

(2) Was the advertising by one company more positive than the other companies?

(3) Was the advertising by one company more negative than the other companies?

(4) Did a company's positive or negative coefficient change in relation to whether the company was promoting itself or opposing a competing company?

Computations of the coefficients were done by hand since there is no program available in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to handle the coefficients.

Application of Q-Technique

The second research problem is to determine the degree to which a sample of persons identify with the specific messages presented by the cable television firms through their advertising.

This segment of the study is important because three of the cable firms were defeated by voters while a fourth firm won overwhelming support in the final election. The basic assumption of this study is that the advertising by those firms was, first, an information source for voters, and, second, a possible source among many for their ultimate decision on whether to vote "yes" or "no" for a particular firm.

The classic study by Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee⁵⁷ found that the more informed citizens are more intense in their opinions and more certain which way they will vote, but the direction of their preference cannot be predicted from their measured level of knowledge about the election topic.

There is also evidence, says Greenberg,⁵⁸ that "the more one learns, the greater the magnitude of the

⁵⁷Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee, Voting, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

⁵⁸Bradley S. Greenberg, "On Relating Attitude Change and Information Gain," Journal of Communication 14 (1964): 157-171.

attitude change will be--in either direction." Klapper⁵⁹ bases much of his argument that the media are relatively ineffective in information campaigns on "predispositions," and the principles that those who change their attitudes as a result of new information were already predisposed to change.

Douglas, Westley and Chaffee⁶⁰ found that a positive information campaign on mental retardation in a community resulted in a positive correlation between information gain and attitude change, but that it was limited to topics "on which informed persons are unlikely to differ--such as retardation."

What these studies suggest is that even individuals with more information at their disposal about a given topic will vote their convictions, whatever they may be. For this reason, application of Q-technique to the question of advertising effectiveness seems germane.

As Brooks⁶¹ points out:

Although the Q sort as envisioned by Stephenson was intended to serve as a tool within

⁵⁹Joseph T. Klapper, "The Social Effects of Mass Communication," in Wilbur Schramm, (ed.), The Science of Human Communication, (New York: Basic Books, 1963), p. 70.

⁶⁰Dorothy F. Douglas, Bruce H. Westley and Steven H. Chaffee, "An Information Campaign That Changed Community Attitudes," Journalism Quarterly 3(1970): 479 + 492.

⁶¹William D. Brooks, "Q-sort Technique," in Philip Emmert and William E. Brooks, (eds.), Methods of Research in Communication (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970), p. 166.

the broader framework of his Q methodology, it has proved compatible with numerous research problems in the behavioral sciences. What makes the Q sort most advantageous in behavioral description is that the individual provides his own frame of reference. The Q sort is an objective, organized method for studying many aspects of man's internal and external behavior.

Using the statements recorded for the previous segment of the study on imbalance, 134 of the statements were selected at random to represent the campaigns of the four firms.

Analysis of the total number of column inches of advertising in the four elections showed that there was a more concentrated effort by three of the firms to defeat the first cable company up for election. That election also had more news stories generated by the Nonpareil and Omaha World-Herald than the other three elections. Therefore, the first election and its advertising statements were considered to be the subject for one of the Q sorts. Statements from the other three elections were then considered to constitute the second Q sort because one firm opposed the other two companies and ultimately won in the final election.

A panel of six experts selected from the Communication Department of the University of Nebraska at Omaha and six Council Bluffs voters were asked to manipulate the Q sort cards, placing them in seven piles. The seventh pile was designated for those statements which the panel felt would definitely help voters vote positively for a

firm while the first pile was designated for those statements which the expert panel believe would help voters cast ballot against the firm in question.

Statements that were confusing, or were judged to have no effect either positively or negatively for the firm were designated for the fourth pile. Other statements were distributed between the extremes.

Since, in effect, the expert panel was judging the effectiveness of the advertising statements on Council Bluffs voters, a comparison of the mean scores for the expert panel versus a panel of actual voters suggests four research hypotheses:

(1) The first hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the means of the voter and expert panel judgments on statements made by Council Bluffs Cable Television about itself. The null hypothesis is:

$$(\mu_1 = \mu_2)$$

(2) The second hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the means of the voter and expert panel judgments on statements made by firms attempting to defeat Council Bluffs Cablevision. The null hypothesis is:

$$(\mu_1 = \mu_2)$$

(3) The third hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the means of the voter and

expert panel judgments on statements made by American Heritage Cable Television about itself. The null hypothesis is:

$$\mu_1 = \mu_2$$

(4) The fourth hypothesis is that there will be a significant difference between the means of the voter and expert panel judgments on statements made by firms attempting to defeat American Heritage or promote themselves. The null hypothesis is:

$$\mu_1 = \mu_2$$

To interpret the data, the expert's scores and the voter's scores were converted to z scores which were then compared using a t test. The data were incorporated into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to facilitate handling.

If there is no significant difference between the judgements of voters and the expert panel, we could then infer that the advertising statements had their expected impact on the voters.

Thus, "positive" statements by the firms about themselves would be perceived as positive by both the voters and the expert panel; "negative" statements by the firms about the other firms would be judged as negative by voter and expert alike, with no significant difference.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1973 Cable Franchise Election

On July 25, 1973, Council Bluffs voters rejected two cable television firms seeking a franchise to operate in the city. Debate over the firms involved, the personalities connected with the firms, the City Council's reluctance to grant a franchise vote, and the selection process used by the council to narrow the choice of companies spanned nearly two years.

In order to understand the complexity of the Council Bluffs elections, it is necessary to review the chronological order of events as they were reported in The Nonpareil and Omaha World-Herald, remembering our assumption for this study that these two newspapers probably carried the bulk of information about the elections to the public.

In fact, the outcome of the 1973 election must be considered as a factor in the outcome of the 1978 election since the 1973 election was constantly cited in press accounts and by public officials as a good example of a bad way to run an election. With about a dozen firms now interested in an Omaha franchise, Assistant City Attorney

Timothy Kenny, noting the 1978 elections, said: "We will avoid the Council Bluffs debacle."⁶³

1971 Debate

The first mention that a cable television firm was interested in seeking a franchise in Council Bluffs was on January 23, 1971, when Cox Broadcasting Corporation of Atlanta, Georgia, approached the Council Bluffs Industrial Foundation "to explain what cable television is and what it could do for Council Bluffs."⁶⁴

By November, applications for the franchise had been received from Council Bluffs Cablevision, Inc.; TeleCable Corporation of Norfolk, Virginia; Cypress Communications Corporation of Los Angeles, California; Tele-Communications Inc., of Denver, Colorado; Century Cable Communications of LaJolla, California; LVO Cable Inc., of Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Viacom Communications of New York, New York.⁶⁵

Noting that the citizens would have to decide which firm would serve the city, Mayor Ben Hoden remarked

⁶³"Support for Cable TV Indicated in Poll," Omaha World-Herald, 19 October 1978, p. 12.

⁶⁴"Cable TV Firm Looks Over C.B.," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 January 1971, p. 1.

⁶⁵"Second Cable Firm Requests TV Franchise," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 17 August 1971, p. 1; "Cable Television Companies Vying For Franchises Here," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 24 October 1971, p. 3; "City Takes 2 Cable Television Requests," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 16 November 1971, p. 3.

that the FCC was about to issue new guidelines for the regulation of cable television and said, "I think we would be premature to consider the issue before the FCC guidelines are established."⁶⁶

1972 Debate

On January 25, 1972, Mayor Hoden named a study group on cable television comprised of councilmembers Kenneth Jensen, Donald Franksen and Dorothy Strohbehn. At the same time, the city's Legal Department began drafting a proposed cable television ordinance which set a maximum connection fee to subscribers of \$10, and a monthly service fee not to exceed \$5.95 for two years after a successful franchise vote.⁶⁷

While the Council Bluffs debate on cable was just starting, Omaha's consideration of the service was well along by this time. The previous June, representatives of the Nebraska Broadcasters Association had spoken against cable television, particularly Omaha's attempt to allow the council to pick the cable firm rather than having a public vote. The broadcasters' concern now spilled over into Iowa.

The day after the FCC announced its cable televi-

⁶⁶"Mayor Says Public Should Decide Cable TV Selection," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 20 November 1971, p. 1.

⁶⁷"Discussion Set For Cable TV Proposals," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 25 January 1972, p. 3.

sion guidelines,⁶⁸ the Metropolitan Broadcasters Committee announced its opposition to regulations outlined in the proposed Council Bluffs cable television ordinance. Specifically, they requested:

(1) Language which would restrict cable firms from charging on a per-program basis. This, the MBC said, was their main concern. If per-program charges were allowed, "cable television subscribers might be offered, for pay, many of the programs and events they now see without charge on free television." (2) A requirement that cable television firms offer service to all residents of the city, and not just to the affluent. (3) A requirement that educational uses of cable channels be increased. (4) Restrictions on revenue gained from advertising on cable channels. (5) Guarantees that the cable firms would offer mobile and local studio facilities for the public's use (a requirement in the FCC guidelines). (6) A standard for rates charged for cable television services. (7) Limits on the transference or sale of the cable franchise once it is granted. (8) Reduction in the length of time for the franchise. The MBC's argument was that broadcasters can only hold a license for three years, while cable firms can hold a

⁶⁸"FCC Issues Rules For Cable TV," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 3 February 1972, p. 3.

franchise for up to 25 years.⁶⁹

Fogarty, executive vice president of the Nebraska Broadcaster's Association, called cable television firms "pirates" who "borrow from the air" programs developed by commercial broadcasters. Cable firms he said, do not operate under the Fairness Doctrine of the FCC, have little or no "track record" in covering local events and that cable television dilutes or fragments the audience thereby weakening the impact of the broadcasters' advertising.⁷⁰

Disputing those claims was C. W. Emerine, chairman of the local cable television firm, Council Bluffs Cablevision. Emerine noted that the Sloan Commission had recently completed an in-depth study of cable television's effects on broadcasting markets and found the damage to be negligible.⁷¹

The entry of the Omaha and Nebraska broadcasters into the Council Bluffs cable issue seemed to anger more people than it persuaded. At the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce's weekly legislative breakfast, at which civic leaders discuss state and local issues, these remarks were recorded, although their originators were not identified:

⁶⁹"Broadcasters Ask Cable TV Law Changes," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 4 February 1972, p. 1.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹"Bluffs Jaycees Hear Pros of Cable Television Idea," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 26 February 1972, p. 3.

The power structure in Omaha can keep cable TV out of that city, and they don't want it in the bedroom either, because too many Omaha residents visit Council Bluffs and (they may) find out they want it.⁷²

City Council Balks

While the citizens of the city read about the debate over cable television, the City Council and the various cable firms began to wrangle over which firm, if any, should be placed on a ballot for public vote as required by Iowa law.

The council's study committee had begun the task of comparing facts about the firms, but by April 2 had not come up with a clear cut recommendation. The council seemed to be concerned that other, more pressing, matters must take precedence over the cable television issue.

It had now been 16 months since talk of granting a cable franchise had begun and the council had not yet set an election date nor narrowed the field of competing firms. In the interim, Councilman Hoden had been replaced as mayor by Joseph B. Katelman who said he didn't believe the council had enough information to make a decision. He proposed the council's study committee travel to cities served by the firms to further check on the quality of their service, thus delaying the selection process even more. Hoden agreed with the proposal, adding: "We have so

⁷²"Cable TV Cons Told C.B. Jaycees," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 9 March 1972, p. 3.

many important items coming up--the budget and urban renewal--that if a decision on cable television waits too long, it will get pushed way back."⁷³

That there was some infighting among the council over the advisability of postponing the cable issue was indicated by the sudden resignation of one member of the council's study committee on cable television. Councilman Jensen, after citing business reasons for his resignation on April 4, also noted there were "hard feelings," but refused to elaborate. Hoden was put on the committee in place of Jensen.⁷⁴

By April 19 it appeared the council did not intend to do anything with the cable issue until it had cleared up the city's mass transit situation and until the members guided a public vote on funds for downtown redevelopment. Franksen then announced that the study committee had voted to postpone any decision on cable television for an "indefinite period," and said committee members felt there had been "too much pressure put on them by cable television firms," along with too much "haste" in the selection process. He did not elaborate on what he meant

⁷³"Cable TV Decision Unlikely on Monday," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 2 April 1972, p. 1.

⁷⁴"Cable Television Committee Loses Member, Gains Another," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 4 April 1972, p. 1.

by "pressure" from the cable firms.⁷⁵ The issue was shelved.

One Year Later

On April 4, 1973, Franksen announced he was reactivating the cable television study committee "now that the transit system is under public ownership and 70.3 percent of the voters have authorized. . .completion of our urban renewal project." He said the committee now had the time to study the cable issue fully.⁷⁶ But it appeared that in the one year wait, certain councilmembers had made up their minds about which firm they were going to support.

Regardless of Mayor Franksen's call for study time, on April 17--just 13 days after the study committee had been resurrected--Hoden moved that Council Bluffs Cablevision be the council's selection, and that firm's name be placed on a ballot for public referendum. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Cleveland. Franksen and Strohbehn were against the move. With the absence of Katelman, the council was tied 2-2.

Don Filbert, a local advertising executive who had handled many councilmembers' elections over the years,

⁷⁵"Council Tables TV Question 6 Months," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 19 April 1972, p. 1.

⁷⁶"Plans for Cable TV Will Be Dusted Off," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 4 April 1973, p. 1.

accused the council of "vacillating," and said there was "no further reason to wait. . .let the voters decide." Filbert, along with Emarine and Robert Heithoff, a local attorney, were the founders of Council Bluffs Cablevision in affiliation with American Telecommunications Corporation of Englewood, Colorado.

"We think we're getting a fast shuffle and we have lost time and money we have invested in this," said Filbert. Franksen then accused Filbert of "pulling a power play" and said he wasn't prepared to make a decision at that meeting. Kenneth Sacks, an attorney representing Athena Communciations, another contender for the franchise, also criticized the council for its inaction. "We presented a proposal to the council and we feel our firm should be given some consideration," he said.⁷⁷ Despite the sharp words, the vote remained 2-2.

On May 3, John Pogge, a real estate salesman and former mayor, was named to head a 26-member panel of local business and civic leaders which supported Council Bluffs Cablevision. The committee then began circulating petitions among voters in a move to force the council off dead center. Pogge noted that the Metropolitan Broadcasters Committee had not expressed opposition this year to the cable television proposal in Council Bluffs and further

⁷⁷"Cable TV is Stalled 2-2," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 17 April 1973, p. 1.

disputed Katelman's contention that the whole cable issue should be delayed again to give the councilmembers time to study the FCC's 1972 cable guidelines. They'll be changing those rules for 50 years," said Pogge. "That's not a valid excuse for holding up the election."⁷⁸

The petition drive gathered 1,182 signatures, a sufficient percentage of voters to force the council to set a cable franchise election within a reasonable time and to include Council Bluffs Cablevision on the ballot. City Attorney Hugh Finerty explained, however, that the council would not be restricted to listing only that firm on the ballots.⁷⁹

A development that helped spur the council into action was a vote by the Commerce Committee of the Iowa House of Representatives. Noting the growing number of cable television franchise elections pending in the state, the committee voted that no city should grant a cable franchise until the Iowa Legislature had time to study possible regulations of the cable television industry.

Senator James Griffin of Council Bluffs, however, stated that the committee vote appeared to be in conflict with the state's Home Rule provision and said he would fight such a bill if it ever appeared before the

⁷⁸"Cable TV Advocate Sees Foot-Dragging," Omaha World-Herald, 3 May 1973, p. 12.

⁷⁹"TV Petitions Are Circulated," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 27 April 1973, p. 1.

Senate. It did not, but it prompted Mayor Franksen to urge the council into prompt action, saying a study of cable television must begin "immediately."⁸⁰

The council, however, was still not ready to move on the cable issue. At the May 7 meeting, the council accepted the petitions and filed them with the city clerk, a necessary step before setting an election date. But no date was agreed upon. Councilman Cleveland's motion for an election date died for lack of a second. Councilman Katelman's motion that the petitions be only received and filed and no election be held, also died for lack of a second.

With Councilmembers Hoden and Strohbehn absent, it was up to Franksen to initiate some kind of tie-breaking action. Franksen, however, indicated he was displeased with the tactics of Council Bluffs Cablevision, in particular the statements printed in a full-page advertisement the day before in The Nonpareil. He said there would "be more fairness displayed in the conclusion of this issue than was in this item in The Nonpareil."⁸¹

An excerpt from the ad may indicate why the mayor was upset:

⁸⁰"Council To Study Cable TV Proposals," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 7 May 1973, p. 3.

⁸¹"Cable Television Franchise Election Petitions Filed," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 8 May 1973, p. 1.

Councilman Hoden and Cleveland, convinced for many months of the one choice that was honestly justified and long overdue, urged their fellow members to 'stop stalling' and place the name of Council Bluffs Cablevision on the ballot. Katelman was absent. Franksen and Strohbehn were against the issue. Yet, even after learning of this petition, 3 members of the council are still determined to circumvent the will of the people. Mayor Franksen. . .has indicated he will stall "as long as possible;" has said, as has Strohbehn, that a study should first be made of all interested firms.⁸²

That the ad soured more than just a few council members was indicated by the statement of a citizen, Andrew Kunik. Referring to the Council Bluffs Cablevision ad, he said he "couldn't stomach this," and suggested that another firm be placed on the ballot instead.⁸³ This was also the first indication that the public was getting tired of all the rhetoric over an issue which they must ultimately decide, a point that was repeated in the 1978 elections.

Another portent of things to come was also found in the May 7 council meeting when Attorney Sacks, representing Athena Communications and its local affiliate, Council Bluffs Communications, announced that Athena and Heritage Communications of Des Moines, Iowa, had agreed to merge into a new Council Bluffs company, Athena/Hawkeye

⁸²Advertisement in Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 7 May 1973, p. 5.

⁸³"Cable Television Franchise Election Petitions Filed," p. 1.

Cablevision of Council Bluffs, Inc.⁸⁴

(In the 1978 elections, Heritage merged with American Television and Communications Corp. to form the firm that was ultimately successful in winning the Bluffs franchise.)

Jim Cownie, a Heritage representative, said the issue is confusing the public and was "disappointed by the petitions filed because it takes power out of the hands of the council."⁸⁵ James M. Hoak, president of Heritage, apparently in an attempt to buy time for this firm, said the council should be given time to evaluate all applicants to ensure that citizens will be served by the best company. He also doubted the legality of the petitions filed by his competitor:

In fact, under Federal Communications Commission rules, the City Council has the legal obligation to examine all applicants in a fair, public proceeding. For any company to compel action by the council shows contempt for the elected officials and it is probably in violation of FCC rules.⁸⁶

Double Negative Voting

By May 22 the council was finally ready to move forward on the cable issue. The decision was helped by the receipt of petitions with 3,030 signatures requesting

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶"Joint Firms To Seek Cable TV Franchise," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 10 May 1973, p. 8.

a public vote on a non-exclusive franchise for Athena/-Hawkeye Cablevision. Mayor Franksen, stressing that "fairness will be the uppermost thought in this campaign," said that because of the petitions from both firms, they both would be on the ballot and the voters would select which firm would receive the franchise.⁸⁷ The council then set July 31 for the election and called for formal bids from the two companies.

The form of the ballot itself was either a master stroke by those opposed to cable television or to the personalities involved with the firms, or a master blunder on the part of the cable firms who agreed to be on the same ballot.

Each ballot had appropriate check boxes so that, in effect, each voter had two votes. A voter could cast a positive vote for the firm he or she favored and, at the same time, cast a negative vote for the firm not favored. Supposedly, the firm receiving a simple 50 percent majority in the election would be the firm selected to operate a 25-year, non-exclusive franchise in the city.⁸⁸ As it turned out, both firms were defeated.

Council Bluffs Cablevision received 1,689 "yes" votes and 2,022 "no" votes, 4.5 percent short of the

⁸⁷"Cable Television Vote To Be Set This Week," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 22 May 1973, p. 3.

⁸⁸"July 31 Franchise Vote Actually 2 Elections in 1," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 25 July 1973, p. 5.

necessary 50 percent majority. Athena/Hawkeye Cablevision received 1,130 "yes" votes to 2,586 "no" votes, 19.6 percent short of majority.

Following the election, Councilman Katelman indicated the double defeat showed "the people were not willing to accept a 'snow job.' Both companies oversold themselves." Emarine, of Council Bluffs Cablevision, admitted that "somehow we failed to convey the tremendous educational and entertainment advantages which cable TV can provide."⁸⁹

While there appeared to be factors of personalities, council indecision and overselling by the firms involved in the defeat, a closer look at the ballot structure itself shows that a mere 913 people were ultimately responsible for defeating both companies. As Filbert later remarked, the 913 persons who voted against both firms "wouldn't vote for the resurrection of Jesus Christ."⁹⁰

This is how the double negative ballot worked against both firms:

Voter A casts a "yes" for Council Bluffs Cablevision and a "no" for Athena/Hawkeye.

⁸⁹"Cable TV Firms Dumped at Polls," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 1 August 1973, p. 1.

⁹⁰Don Filbert, Interview in Council Bluffs, Iowa, 16 March 1978.

Voter B casts a "yes" for Athena/Hawkeye and a "no" for Council Bluffs Cablevision. The score is now even with each firm having a "yes" vote and a "no" vote.

Voter C, who doesn't like either firm, or does not like the concept of cable television, or for some combination of reasons, casts "no" votes for both firms. The cumulative score is now one "yes" vote for each firm and two "no" votes.

Filbert noted that if the 913 double-negative voters could somehow be removed from the vote totals, his firm would have been successful with 60.3 percent favorable votes out of all votes cast.⁹¹

As an epitaph, Councilman Cleveland remarked that the election did not represent the true feelings of the Council Bluffs voters. He said the nature of the ballots gave negative voters "too much voting power." The City Council then agreed that cable television was "dead" for at least a year.⁹²

1978 Cable Franchise Elections

Interim Television Developments

Prior to the resurrection of the Council Bluffs cable television question in 1978, there were two develop-

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²"Cable Television Is Dead For At Least One Year," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 3 August 1973, p. 3.

ments concerning television service to the city that seem to be significant.

(1) The Iowa Legislature funded construction of a translator station link for Council Bluffs with the Iowa Public Broadcasting Network (IPBN) and for the first time expanded television service to the city from Des Moines. The signals from the station near Red Oak, Iowa, however, still could not reach the majority of Council Bluffs residents owing to the city's geographic characteristics. Therefore, a second translator station had to be positioned on a high bluff and positioned so signals would be beamed down into the city's valleys. A survey by graduate students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, however, showed that many residents still shy away from the channel due to poor reception.⁹³

(2) Still in the future, but soon to be accomplished, will be a boost in the transmitting power for Omaha's educational channel, KYNE. A new transmitter will increase the station's signal output from 33.9 kilowatts to 1,000 kilowatts to improve reception in the station's 26-mile reception area. The equipment is expected to be installed by September of 1979, according to Station Manager Donald Peterson.⁹⁴ The UNO survey also showed

⁹³Dr. Mary Williamson, unpublished class research project, University of Nebraska at Omaha, December, 1978.

⁹⁴"Channel 26 To Up Power," Omaha World-Herald, 14 November 1978, p. 6.

that metropolitan area viewers have trouble receiving KYNE.⁹⁵

With Council Bluffs residents now accustomed to receiving IPBN programming, and with the prospect of more viewers to KYNE's programs, the need for additional channels via cable television seemed less vital than in the 1971-1973 period. Both Council Bluffs Cablevision and Athena/Hawkeye had stressed in their advertising campaigns and in public hearings on their bids that educational channels would be integral part of their systems.

With that selling point now taken care of, any new campaign must find a new service to sell. "Home Box Office," a channel devoted to recent movies, sporting events and other entertainment seemed to be the focus of much of the campaigning, although all firms in the 1978 elections stressed that the local school system would receive channels for their exclusive use.

Vote Results

In the spring and summer of 1978, the Council Bluffs City Council scheduled four separate cable television franchise elections, one each for the four firms seeking the franchise. As in 1973, the winning firm needed a 50 percent majority of favorable votes.

American Cablevision, a local company owned by

⁹⁵Unpublished class research project.

American Television and Communications Corporation of Englewood, Colorado, received 38.9 percent favorable votes in the first election on May 16. Iowa Cablecom-General, owned by Cablecom-General Corporation, also of Englewood, and a subsidiary of General Tire Company, received 44 percent favorable votes in the second election on June 27. Council Bluffs Cable Television, owned by CMI Inc. of Birmingham, Alabama, was favored by 42 percent of the voters on July 11.

The successful firm--American Heritage Cablevision Inc.--was a hybrid resulting from the merger of American Television and Communications Corp. and Heritage Communications of Des Moines, Iowa. Heritage and ATC were rivals in the 1973 franchise elections and both lost. Now, after joining forces, they received 74.6 percent favorable vote on July 25.

The Selection Process

Since the 1973 elections, cable television had not been discussed publicly until January 10, 1978. At that time, Filbert, again representing ATC through its local firm, American Cablevision of Council Bluffs, Inc., presented his firm's proposal for City Council consideration.

Also filing a proposal was CMI Cablevision of Birmingham, Alabama. In charge of the City Council at this time was Councilman Cleveland who, individually, had supported Filbert's firm in 1973. Filbert also handled

Cleveland's re-election campaign to the council but said that had nothing to do with Cleveland's support. He noted that he had also handled the elections of Councilmembers Strohbahn and Hoden, and Strohbahn had opposed his firm in 1973.⁹⁶

Noting that the 1973 election ballot was weighted too much in favor of negative voters, Cleveland vowed that the 1978 cable television election would be fair. He then established a Mayor's Study Committee on Cable Television comprised of Councilmembers Hough and Walter Pyper with himself as chairman. The appointments received full council approval. Also similar to 1973, Filbert submitted petitions bearing 1,978 signatures and calling for a franchise election. His firm would also submit a model franchise ordinance. The previous franchise ordinance, drafted in 1971, had never been adopted and had expired.⁹⁷

Unlike the 1973 debate, however, Nebraska and Iowa broadcasters preferred to remain silent on cable television. Owen Saddler, station manager for KMTV, said he would not oppose cable television. Jim Smith, general manager of WOWT, said that even though he felt people did not really know what cable television was all about, he

⁹⁶Don Filbert, Interview in Council Bluffs, Iowa, 16 March 1978.

⁹⁷"Cable TV on Line in Bluffs 2nd Time," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 10 January 1978, p. 1.

also would not oppose it.⁹⁸

In order to assure fairness in the selection process, Mayor Cleveland also appointed an independent Citizens Advisory Committee on Cable Television and named George Rossum, a banker, George Cenovich, a certified public accountant, Robert Leuck, a labor leader, Vernon Conzemius, a druggist, and the Rev. Albert Davidsaver, a Catholic monsignor. The appointments angered Councilmember Strohbehn because she said she believed there should have been a woman represented on the committee.⁹⁹

By the time the two study committees were prepared to survey the cable question, five firms had submitted proposals or notified the city of their intent to submit a proposal. There was some question among the councilmembers if all five firms should be considered since some of the proposals were received after an arbitrary deadline set by the council.

It was finally decided to throw all the firms into a common pot, have the Citizens Advisory Committee look at the proposals and make a recommendation of a top firm to the Mayor's Study Committee. The Mayor's Committee would then recommend a firm to the City Council.

On April 3, the Citizens' Committee voted 4-1 to

⁹⁸"TV stations unopposed to Bluffs cable proposal," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 12 January 1978, p. 3.

⁹⁹"Citizens to TV committee," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 3 February 1978, p. 3.

recommend that American Television and Communications Corp. (ATC) was its top selection from the five firms. Cablecom-General was the committee's second choice. On a scale of 100, the committee said ATC's firm received 95.4 on such factors as financial status, ability to perform, capital commitment, benefits to the city, costs to the consumer and number of other franchises operating.

Financial considerations made up 40 percent of the 100-point scale, the largest single factor in the committee's study list. There was a no provision for the committee to rate the quality of the firm's programming. Cenovich, chairman of the committee, stated that programming did not enter into the selection process since all the firms offered essentially the same type of services, a point which some of the other firms disputed.¹⁰⁰

Cablecom-General received a score of 90.7 on the committee's scale; Cable TV Construction Ltd. of Chanute, Kansas, received 80.4; CMI Cablevision, 78.4; and Heritage Communication of Des Moines, Iowa, 72.9.

Debate on Firms Begins

Less than a month away from the first cable franchise election, the City Council came under sharp

¹⁰⁰"Councils can pick TV firms," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, April 3, 1978, p. 3.

attack from several fronts. Beth McMains, a citizen, accused the council, and particularly Mayor Cleveland, of conflict of interest. She charged that the May 16 ballot would be a "railroad ballot" because ATC's local representative--Filbert--had worked on Cleveland's re-election campaign. Cleveland called that a "cheap shot" and a "cheap ploy." Philip Willson, a local attorney representing Cablecom-General, charged that the appointment of a citizens' committee to select a cable firm was an "improper delegation of authority" and that the committee had violated Iowa's open meeting statute.

Attorney Raymond Pogge, representing CMI's firm, said the council was "not listening to the people," and questioned the procedure used for selection of a cable firm. He charged that the committee's criteria was "heavily weighed to the big companies" and did not take the quality of programming into consideration. While the council did set election dates for the three companies, it did not recommend one of them for voter approval.¹⁰¹

Eight days prior to the first election, however, the council selected American Cablevision, ATC's local firm, citing the citizens' committee's finding that the firm had the highest rating among the five firms surveyed. The vote, however, was not unanimous. Councilmember Strohbehn said she favored the committee's second

¹⁰¹"TV vote for 3 but not at same time," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 25 April 1978, p. 1.

choice, Cablecom-General, a position later supported by Leuck.

The other firms, although guaranteed a separate election by the council, attempted to sway the councilmembers from endorsing ATC. They raised the question of whether the potential cable television viewers in the city would like the R-rated movies that would be shown on ATC's Home Box Office channel.

Pogge called for an investigation of the "truth about the programming. The Home Box Office (HBO) shows uncut R-rated movies. Our firm is the only one of the five that does not subscribe to HBO. It is our policy."¹⁰²

Councilmember Strohbehn, strengthening her attack on the council's endorsement of ATC, said Cablecom-General would pay more city property taxes over a 10-year period and that it offered less expensive initial service than did ATC--\$5.95 per month versus ATC's \$6.50.¹⁰³

The meeting also saw the first attack of one firm by a representative of one of the competing firms--a practice that became commonplace in the advertising campaign for the firms and which some officials felt led to the downfall of three of the four firms.

¹⁰²"Cable TV now up to Voters," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 9 May 1978, p. 1.

¹⁰³"Cable Fate Up to Voters," Omaha World-Herald, 9 May 1978, p. 1.

Paul Alden, marketing director for Cablecom-General, criticized ATC for its backlog of unfinished cable projects and said his firm would offer cable service in more homes than would ATC.

Mayor Cleveland, however, disputed Alden's claims and accused Cablecom-General of "dumping" 33 franchises and not completing a cable system since 1964. Alden said the statements were untrue, but could not give the number of franchises his firm had disposed of. He said his firm has completed systems within the last five years and "we are still constructing." Mrs. Strohbehn's motion to place Cablecom-General on the May 16 ballot along with ATC died for lack of a second.¹⁰⁴

Infighting by Firms

Four days before the election, both the Omaha World-Herald and The Nonpareil carried stories that voters in Norfolk, Neb., had rejected a cable franchise for Cable TV Construction Ltd. of Newton, Kan. The firm had been one of those originally interested in the Bluffs franchise but did not submit a formal proposal.¹⁰⁵ The three firms seeking the Bluffs franchise were engaged in an advertising battle in The Nonpareil and the issues raised began to seep into the news columns.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵"Norfolk Voters Turn Off Switch on Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 12 May 1978, p. 6.

ATC was put into a position of first selling itself to voters and, closer to the election, defending itself from accusations from the other two firms who would later be voted on. Cablecom-General concentrated its attack on one statement in ATC's proposal which, Cablecom said, would mean 3,000 homes in Council Bluffs would not receive cable service if ATC's firm was approved. The charge was based on ATC's estimate of home density and the feasibility of serving areas where density was very low. Cenovich, chairman of the Citizen's Advisory Committee on Cable Television, was finally prompted to answer Cablecom-General's charges.

He said it was obvious that if there were only one or two homes on a particular street, it would not pay the company to string expensive cable to those homes, while neighborhoods where many homes were located close together would be profitable. In a letter to the editor of The Nonpareil he said:

Iowa Cablecom-General Corp. stated, 'Minimum density requirements for initial construction is 50 homes per mile.' American Cablevision of Council Bluffs (ATC) responded, 'American Cablevision proposes to build the entire city of Council Bluffs.' From the two responses, it should be very evident that the (Cablecom-General ads) statement, '3,000 homes could lose cable access' is a distortion of the facts.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶"Cenovich on cable TV issue," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 14 May 1978, p. 4A.

The Franchise Question

Difficult to assess is the relationship between the voting citizens and their perception of the selection and franchising process. According to Iowa law, the City Council could only offer a "non-exclusive" franchise to a firm or firms. An Iowa attorney general's opinion stated that any city council was restricted from granting an exclusive franchise, in effect, a monopoly to operate in that city. The opinion stated, however, that if more than one cable television firm were successful in public referendums, the city had the option of selecting the firm it felt was best qualified to serve the public.

That was the situation in Waterloo, Iowa, where two firms were approved by voters and the Waterloo City Council voted to grant the franchise to the firm which had the largest majority vote. The losing firm immediately challenged the council's decision in Black Hawk County District Court.¹⁰⁷

Public Forum

In an attempt to unsnarl the confusion over the cable election, a number of civic clubs rented a hall and held an open forum to discuss the issues. Mrs. McMains, who had earlier criticized Mayor Cleveland's involvement

¹⁰⁷"Voters to polls Tuesday," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 14 May 1978, p. 1.

with ATC's promoter, Filbert, spearheaded the formation of the forum.

But, what was intended to be a purely informational session turned into a shouting match with the various representatives of the firms reiterating their accusations against the other firms. Their behavior so angered the editors of The Nonpareil that an editorial the day before the election said:

This panel chose to spend two and one-half hours reciting a litany of faults. Every wart, pimple, shortcoming, failure and hazard, past, present and future, was detailed. The effect came close to being a blanket indictment against cable TV. . .the City Council was censured both for its conduct and for the ordinance it has drawn. . .there is reason to suggest that Council Bluffs is not ready for cable TV.¹⁰⁸

The Filbert Factor

Local advertising executive Filbert was a factor in the first election that cannot be overlooked. He was the founder and chief advocate for ATC's firm in the 1973 cable franchise election, a fact that angered at least two of the members of the City Council then.

He had handled the campaigns for Councilmembers Cleveland and Strohbehn. He had been involved in fighting the city's attempt to annex homes outside the southern limits of the city and, for a time, was paid a retainer by an Omaha firm which was trying to build a shopping center

¹⁰⁸"Forum 'facts' argue for no to cable television," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 15 May 1978, p. 4.

in the city in opposition to the city's plans to use federal funds to rebuild the downtown area into a shopping mall. In 1972, the council had laid aside the cable television issue in order to concentrate on getting voter approval of urban renewal funds and to solve the city's mass transit problems.

At that time, Filbert agreed to drop his affiliation with the Omaha firm and, for a fee, support urban renewal and its developer, Midlands Corporation. After urban renewal had passed the public referendum and the cable franchise question was resurrected in 1973, Filbert was again pushing for his cable firm, a move that angered Mayor Franksen and Councilmember Strohbehn.¹⁰⁹

Cablecom-General, apparently sensing a weak spot in ATC's campaign for the first 1978 cable election, focused much of its attack on Filbert and his alleged involvement with Cleveland. Advertisements such as this appeared regularly throughout the first election campaign:

Why Don Filbert's American Cablevision deserves a No (x) vote on May 16: The company you'll vote on. . .will offer you broader, more extensive programming. And it will cost you less. . .¹¹⁰

Few of the ads contained any facts to back up the charges. It was a good example of what Laurie Leonard,

¹⁰⁹Don Filbert, interview in Council Bluffs, Iowa, 16 March 1978.

¹¹⁰Advertisement in Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 15 May 1978, p. 7A.

manager of American Heritage Cablevision's Council Bluffs' office until she resigned February 22, 1979, called "stab-in-the-back ads." She said American Heritage, toward the end of the first election and all during the next two elections, used the ad technique and felt they were justified because the other firms had used them to attack her firm.¹¹¹

An example of the vitriolic ads against ATC's firm is this one:

"Is a 'NO' vote on May 16 a vote against cable TV?" Not at all. A "NO" vote on May 16 only registers the fact that you want a choice. And that American Cablevision, the firm on this first ballot, is not your choice. . . You don't want Don Filbert, part owner of American Cablevision, influencing local programming. If American Cablevision wins over 50% of the vote in the May 16 election, you have no choice! Because even though the voters approve granting the other firms a franchise also, the decision would then go right back to the City Council. And the Mayor and his hand-picked committee don't want you to have a choice. The Mayor is obligated to Don Filbert. He want's Filbert's company. . . So once the franchise is awarded, you live with the Mayor's choice until the year 2003. . . Vote no against Filbert, the Mayor and American Cablevision.¹¹²

Cablecom-General also exploited the two dissenting votes against American Cablevision--by Leuck, a member of the citizen's study committee appointed by Mayor Cleveland, and by Councilmember Strohbehn.

¹¹¹Laurie Leonard, interview in Council Bluffs, Iowa, general manager of American Heritage Cablevision, 8 February 1979.

¹¹²Advertisement in Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 14 May 1978, p. 14A.

In an ad paid for by Iowa Cablecom-General, Strohbehn and Leuck urged voters to reject American Cablevision. Strohbehn urged the voters to pick Cablecom because her research showed it had lower monthly subscriber rates, better financial condition, more capital investment in the community and unique programming. Leuck complained in the ad that his committee had not been given enough study time and said:

The real effectiveness of the Committee was hampered by the continual intervention of Mayor Cleveland both during the 50-hour presentation meeting and during out final selection meeting.¹¹³

On the day of the election, The Nonpareil carried a letter to the editor from Norman Filbert Jr., scolding the persons who had been attacking his brother:

(B)oth Cablecom and Council Bluffs Cablevision have consistently resorted to villifying Don Filbert personally. "Don Filbert," they say, "owns Mayor Ronald Cleveland" because he handled his election campaign. It's true my brother--as a public relations man--worked with the Cleveland campaign. During the past 30 years, Don has labored on behalf of numerous city officials and community projects, including the election of Councilperson Dorothy Strohbehn. And to the best of my knowledge, he certainly doesn't "own" her.¹¹⁴

Ms. Leonard, in a later interview, admitted that the affiliation of American Television and Communications

¹¹³Advertisement in Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 15 May 1978, p. 5.

¹¹⁴"Norm Filbert defends brother," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 16 May 1978, p. 4.

Corp. with Filbert had hurt the company's chances of a victory. She said it had been the company's strategy to have a local personality promote the firm, but that Filbert--after two defeats for ATC--appeared to be the wrong choice.

After the May 16 defeat, ATC joined Heritage Communications of Des Moines to form American Heritage Cablevision and hired a metropolitan area personality, Lee Terry, to lead its campaign drive; a move she said was successful when combined with a system of poll watching. Telephone interviews by the ATC staff had found a sufficient number of voters who favored American Heritage so that, if they all voted, the firm was assured of a victory.

Ms. Leonard said persons were stationed at each polling place in the city and recorded each person as he or she voted. These names were then phoned back to the main ATC office and compared to the master list of persons who had said they favored the firm. Telephone calls were then made repeatedly to those persons who had not yet voted.¹¹⁵

Analysis of Voting

The day after the voters rejected American Cablevision, Paul Alden, director of marketing for

¹¹⁵Laurie Leonard, interview in Council Bluffs, Iowa, 8 February 1979.

Cablecom-General, said he didn't expect an extensive advertising campaign against his firm, even though Cablecom had carried out an aggressive ad campaign to defeat American Cablevision. He said a survey by his firm showed that voters may have been displeased more with the way the City Council chose the firms for the elections than with the relative merits of the firms themselves.

I don't see why (American Cablevision) would do it (advertise against Cablecom-General) other than to be prohibitive. The council is prohibited by law from awarding a franchise to a non-successful referendee.¹¹⁶

He also offered this analysis of why voters rejected American Cablevision:

We spoke to a number of people and they told us they felt the vote was a reaction to the way the council handled it, the obvious favoritism of (Mayor Ronald) Cleveland to American Cablevision and the reaction against Don Filbert's involvement.¹¹⁷

Bob Boepple, marketing director for American Cablevision's parent company, American Television and Communications Corporation, blamed the defeat on public confusion and a personality feud that voters carried with them to the polls. He said he was forced to end his firm's positive advertising campaign to sell the merits of cable television as an entertainment medium in order to fight what he called "unfair" criticism from

¹¹⁶"Cable TV vote pleases Cablecom," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 18 May 1978, p. 3.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

opponents. He said:

It's unfortunate that the election degenerated into a shrill shouting match. Poor Mr. Filbert has been subjected to some rotten, vicious attacks. I'm not a native of Council Bluffs, but it's unfortunate¹¹⁸ that personalities got involved in the election.

The June 27 Election

Following the defeat of American Cablevision, it was Iowa Cablecom-General's turn at the polls on June 27. The election, however, drew only 2,897 of the city's 25,914 registered voters, considerably below the 5,305 voters who turned out for the May 16th election. Iowa Cablecom received 44 percent favorable vote, or 1,275 votes for to 1,622 against.

Notable during this election was the scarcity of news accounts about the election in both The Nonpareil and Omaha World-Herald. A short article on May 23 noted that the City Council has passed to third reading the ordinance which would govern any cable franchise. Mayor Cleveland, apparently stung by the defeat of American Cablevision, warned that the other firms had stated that they would not string cable to areas where home densities are low, an issue that was picked up by American Heritage Cablevision and its front group, "Citizens for Quality Cable Television," in advertisements during the June 27 election

¹¹⁸"Voters reject Cable Firm," Omaha World-Herald, 17 May 1978, p. 3.

campaign.¹¹⁹

Both newspapers carried stories on the Sunday preceding the election and stories checking on voter turnout the day of the election. With the exception of one or two letters to the editor, however, the bulk of the second cable franchise election information came from newspaper advertisements.

Cablecom, which had urged voters to reject American Cablevision because of Mayor Cleveland, the City Council and Filbert's involvement, now changed its strategy to one of information about cable television as a service and its qualities as a cable television company.

Offsetting those advertisements were strong criticisms leveled at Cablecom by Citizens for Quality Cable Television, by American Heritage, and, to a lesser extent, by CMI, Inc. Cablecom-General now found itself having to promote itself and defend itself at the same time. CMI, meanwhile, urged voters to vote against Cablecom in order to approve its firm in the next election on July 11. We can assume that voters, at this point, were, indeed, confused.

Also notable during this campaign was the introduction of Terry into American Heritage's advertisements. A survey of the advertisements from this election

¹¹⁹"Cable law moves along," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 May 1978, p. 3.

seem to show this strategy:

(1) Terry would extoll the virtues of American Heritage, comparing charges, performance and other factors while urging the voters to vote against Cablecom-General.

(2) American Heritage's front group, Citizens for Quality Cable Television, would hit Cablecom-General hard using affective connotations about "dumped" franchises, increased costs, leaving some residents out just because they were not in a high home density area. The ads were illustrated by a cartoon figure of a man tearing his hair over Cablecom's high rates, lamenting the lost franchises of Cablecom or demonstrating that Cablecom-General "dumps" viewers homes in the trash can.

Vote Analysis

Following Cablecom's defeat, company marketing director Alden had no comment for the press. Raymond Pogge, an attorney representing CMI's subsidiary, Council Bluffs Cable Television, said that the defeats of both American Cablevision and Cablecom-General were due to "criticizing and condemning each other and failing to tell what cable television is and how it can better Council Bluffs."¹²⁰

Paul Gross, Iowa regional manager for CMI, said his firm's advertising campaign in the next election would

¹²⁰"Voters shun 2nd TV firm," Council Bluffs Non-
pareil, 28 June 1978, p. 1.

concentrate on what his firm had to offer, and not on personalities or the weak points of American Heritage's firm. He said CMI had conducted "positive" advertising campaigns in seven other franchise attempts and "we've never lost one in Iowa."

That American Heritage's aggressive ad campaign was hurting the other firms is indicated by a statement from James Hoak, president of Heritage Communications Inc., one of the partners in American Heritage. Hoak said he had been accused by some people in the Courthouse the night of the June 27th election of false and misleading advertising.

The criticism, he said, centered around an ad which said American Heritage had installed 6,000 miles of cable in the last five years when, in fact, the firm had only been formed about four weeks previous. Hoak explained that the 6,000 miles is actually a combination of lines installed by both Heritage and American Television and Communications. Hoak added that he believed voters turned down Cablecom-General because they are "very selective. They analyzed the proposals. We are the only Iowa company. We're one of the largest companies in the country."¹²¹

¹²¹Ibid.

The July 11 Election

The woman had been having trouble with her clothes dryer when the phone rang. She ran to answer it. Someone named "Ralph" asked her how she was going to vote. "That's none of your business," she said, slamming the phone on its cradle. Irritated, she whipped her head away from the phone, crashing her nose against the door frame. Her nose still bears scars of that encounter. And, she swears, if she ever finds out who that "Ralph" was, she might give him a nose problem.¹²²

Although the woman's plight in the above account may not be typical, by the time of the third cable television franchise election on July 11, we can assume citizens were becoming tired of repeated surveys, bombardments of advertisements both in the mail and in their newspaper and the prospect that they would have to vote twice more before it was all over.

True to its word, CMI, Inc., launched a "positive" advertising campaign pushing its virtues and ignoring the continuing attacks by American Heritage and Citizens for Quality Cable Television. CMI's local representative, Pogge, however, was angered by American Heritage's tactics and threatened a law suit.

Pogge said the suit, if filed, would deal with "deceptive advertising" by American Heritage. His argument was with American Heritage's claim to having 109 cable systems with over 750,000 subscribers when the firm

¹²²"Scars remain from TV vote," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 5 July 1978, p. 2.

had only been in existence a few weeks. He also objected to the firms' advertising which charged that CMI was out of its element trying to build a system big enough to serve Council Bluffs.

Scott Hughes, treasurer for American Heritage, then agreed to add a disclaimer to all future advertising which said:

Statements about Council Bluffs Cable Television Corporation reflect the experience of its parent company, CMI, and its subsidiaries. Statements about American Heritage reflect the combined experience of its parent companies, American Television and Communications Corporation and Heritage¹²³ Communications Inc. and their subsidiaries.

But Pogge was not satisfied, saying the statement did not repair the damage already done CMI. "We're asking American Heritage to completely repudiate these advertisements, and they haven't."¹²⁴ Meanwhile, Pogge said his firm was conducting a campaign to "get out the vote" which involved hiring organizers to seek affirmative voters from each city precinct.

On July 9, the Sunday prior to the election, both The Nonpareil and Omaha World-Herald carried stories about the upcoming election and reflected on the past defeats of American Cablevision and Iowa Cablecom-General. The stories also pointed out that CMI's election would not be

¹²³"TV firm considers suit against cable opponents," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 8 July 1978, p. 1.

¹²⁴Ibid.

the last: That American Heritage would be voted on on July 25. Pogge took the opportunity to note that American Heritage would be offering R-rated movies on its Home Box Office channel while his firm, CMI, would show G or PG-rated movies.¹²⁵

July 10 found two stories offered Council Bluffs readers of The Nonpareil. First, it was going to be hot on election day, and that might keep attendance at the polls down. Second, there were no limits on how the city could spend the three percent franchise fee it would charge the company which was finally successful.

The question over the franchise fee surfaced when the Associated Press disclosed that Des Moines, Iowa, was apparently violating FCC rules by using franchise money earmarked for cable television regulation for other municipal services. The money was from Hawkeye Cablevision, Inc., a subsidiary of Heritage Communications Inc., of Des Moines, and amounted to about \$90,000 a year. It was noted that while the FCC allows cities to spend the first three percent of the franchise fee as it chooses, some cities have a five percent fee. The extra two percent, the FCC said, must pay for cable regulation expenses.¹²⁶

¹²⁵"Voters beckoned again," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 9 July 1978, p. 1; "Third Vote Tuesday On Bluffs Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 9 July 1978, p. 6B.

¹²⁶"No limit on cable fee use," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 10 July 1978, p. 3; "Voters meet, heat to greet," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 10 July 1978, p. 1.

On the day of the election, the verbal battle in the news columns continued between CMI and American Heritage over the latter's advertising campaign. Attorney Hughes, representing American Heritage, said his company would stand firm on statements in its ads that CMI had never before handled a project as big as Council Bluffs, despite a statement by CMI's local attorney, Pogge, that CMI had built a large system in Birmingham, Alabama. "We built the system in Birmingham," said Hughes, referring to American Television and Communications Corp.

Alan McDonald, president of McDonald, Inc., parent firm of CMI, Inc., then explained that his firm built a cable system in the suburbs of Birmingham, not in Birmingham proper. He added:

But at the time we merged with Telecommunications, in 1972, there were 8,000 subscribers. And the measure of a cable system is the miles of plant (cable). We had 300 miles there. Council Bluffs will have 265 to 280 (miles).¹²⁷

CMI, Inc., like the two firms that preceded it at the polls, was defeated by Bluffs voters, 1,617 to 1,174, 42 percent approval. Pogge, despite the defeat, still threatened to sue American Heritage. "I'm very upset about Lee Terry coming over to Council Bluffs," Pogge said. "I intend to put a stop to these false ads and to Lee Terry."

¹²⁷"Cable TV static still crackling," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 11 July 1978, p. 1.

In response, however, Terry said American Heritage conducted a fair campaign and predicted voters would approve his firm in the next election, because he believed the voters agree with the American Heritage ad slogan: "The best is yet to come," and that the July 25th election is their "last chance."¹²⁸

Vote Analysis

Other than Terry and Pogge, other election watchers were quiet on possible reasons why Council Bluffs voters rejected CMI, Inc.

Pogge said he believed the advertising by American Heritage influenced the voters to reject his firm.¹²⁹ Terry on the other hand, said the advertising convinced voters to save their positive votes for the July 25th election.¹³⁰ In a prepared statement following CMI's defeat, Pogge said:

I believe a great number of people in Council Bluffs want cable television and will vote for it if not confused about various companies. We used only positive ads. We did not criticize American Heritage or any other company. I'm sorry American Heritage did not conduct themselves like that.¹³¹

¹²⁸"Defeated TV Firm May Sue Over Lee Terry Ad," Omaha World-Herald, 12 July 1978, p. 6.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Bluffs Defeat Is Third Out On Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 12 July 1978, pp. 1 + 4.

Whether the public appreciated his remarks is not known, but there was at least one indication that some of the citizens looked on it as sour grapes. A letter to the editor of The Nonpareil stated:

As to cable TV, I am a disinterested party. But it appears when Mr. Pogge gets a little mud slung on him, he can't take it. Maybe he forgot the mudslinging he and his buddies gave (Councilmember) Dorothy Strohbehn, but she was still elected and is doing a good job.¹³²

The July 25 Election

While American Heritage's advertisements had been claiming the July 25 franchise vote on its firm would be the citizens' "last chance" to get cable television for the city, CMI had other ideas.

Paul Gross, regional manager for CMI, said his company had had "no intention of withdrawing from Council Bluffs." Added company president McDonald:

And whatever campaign I run, there will be no false or misleading advertising about anyone else. That last campaign conducted by American Heritage against us was the dirtiest campaign I've ever seen in Council Bluffs and I was horrified by it.¹³³

Hughes, of American Heritage, felt being the last in the election process was to his firm's advantage. He said:

¹³²"Mudslinging and cable TV," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 19 July 1978, p. 10.

¹³³"Last vote Tuesday on cable TV?" Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 July 1978, p. 1.

For one thing, any negative campaign will fall on deaf ears because those firms will have no favorable alternative to bring before the city--they've already been turned down once. We feel our advertising campaign was very effective and the voters have made a very intelligent choice in deciding to vote against the other firms and waiting for American Heritage.¹³⁴

In the interim, letters to the editor of The Nonpareil urged passage of American Heritage with statements like: "Council Bluffs is really missing out on a good deal by constantly voting down cable TV";¹³⁵ "I'm tired of all this hassle over cable TV, and I can't understand why people don't vote 'yes'";¹³⁶ and, "Time is running out. This is the last chance to get quality cable television. . .Don't stop cable TV for those that want it."¹³⁷

It was also revealed that at least two of the firms which had sought franchises in Council Bluffs were also interested in extending service to Omaha.

Michael McCrudden, vice president for American Television and Communications Corporation, said Omaha is a "very attractive market" for cable TV. Paul Alden, director of marketing and franchise development for

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵"Missing bet on cable TV," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 21 July 1978, p. 4.

¹³⁶"Vote 'yes' for 'new business,'" Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 21 July 1978, p. 4.

¹³⁷"'Last chance' for cable TV," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 23 July 1978, p. 4A.

Cablecom-General, said his firm has been talking to "a large number" of people to determine possible subscriber interest.

Other firms mentioned as looking at the Omaha market were Cox Cable Communications Inc. of Atlanta, Georgia; Community Tele-Communications Inc. of Denver, Colorado; and Storer Cable Television Company of Sarasota, Florida.¹³⁸ Alden's firm was the first to formally seek a franchise in Omaha on July 12¹³⁹ The interest by ATC is worthy of mention because of a statement made by Filbert during ATC's first election battle in Council Bluffs. At that time, Filbert said:

Council Bluffs Cablevision (ATC's local affiliate) is interested only in one franchise, here in Council Bluffs and has no interest in going into other communities for franchises as the other firms have done.¹⁴⁰

The usual pre-election stories in The Nonpareil and Omaha World-Herald outlined the ownership of American Heritage, some of the services offered and a recap of the past defeats of the other firms. Noting the low voter turnout in the last two cable elections, an editorial in The Nonpareil urged greater citizen participation in the selection process and said:

¹³⁸"Cable TV Interested In the Omaha Market," Omaha World-Herald, 30 June 1978, pp. 1 + 6.

¹³⁹"Omaha Gets Firm's Bid On Cable TV," Omaha World-Herald, 12 July 1978, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰"Cable Television Franchise Election Petitions Filed," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 8 May 1973, p. 1.

The pros and cons of the various cable television firms have been expounded by tongue and printed word for several weeks. Yet, most people seemingly could care less. We don't understand it: how 89 percent of the voting public will let 11 percent make their decisions. Whatever the reasons, voters have their last chance (at this particular time, anyway) to make their desires known.¹⁴¹

Whether the mild scolding had any effect on the voters the turnout was considerably more than during the two previous elections, but not as great as the first election on May 16. At one polling place, a poll worker noted that many people had remarked that they hoped the cable issue would be settled one way or another "soon."¹⁴²

A total of 4,756 voters turned out at the polls on July 25 and approved American Heritage 3,549 to 1,207, a 74.6 percent favorable vote.

Vote Analysis

The comments of the councilmembers might be an indication of the relief felt by Council Bluffs voters that the election process was finally over. The day after the election, Councilmember Strohbehn said: "Whatever the voters want, I think the council should do." Councilmember Hough said: "Why certainly I'll vote yes. Maybe

¹⁴¹"Majority should decide cable television issue," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, July 23, 1978, p. 4A.

¹⁴²"TV voters 'pack' polls," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, July 25, 1978, p. 1.

we'll get some people off our backs now that all these elections are over. They keep blaming the council for them."

Councilmember Pyper saw the election victory as a rejection of the previous advertising campaigns: "I guess voters are pretty selective. . .I've been convinced all along that people wanted cable TV. They were just turned off by the negative advertising." Commented Councilmember Scheer: "They were just sick and tired with all of it."¹⁴³

American Heritage attorney Chuck Hannan looked on the win by his firm as an attempt by the voters to be independent from Omaha and Nebraska. He said:

The people were looking for the ability to stretch the state of Iowa westward from Atlantic (Iowa). If you ask a lot of people around here who the governor is, they'll answer (Nebraska Governor J. James) Exon.¹⁴⁴

"Citizens for Truth in Cable Television," a group funded by Cablecom-General, had attempted to sidetrack voters from approving American Heritage in the final advertising campaign by repeatedly pointing out that this would not be the last cable television election; that other firms were still interested in seeking a

¹⁴³"Council 'will OK' TV firm," Council Bluffs Nonpareil, 26 July 1978, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

franchise. American Heritage personality Terry, however, discounted the effectiveness of the negative campaign. "They knew there might be another election. . .but they wanted to get it over," he said.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

During the four cable franchise elections, the firms seeking voter approval purchased a total of 11,560 3/4 inches of advertising in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil, the daily newspaper with the most circulation within the city.

American Television and Communications Corporation (ATC) of Englewood, Colorado, was involved in all four elections. It purchased advertisements under the name of its Council Bluffs firm, American Cablevision, and its front group known as "Citizens for Cable Television" in the May 16th election. In subsequent elections of June 27, July 11 and July 25, ATC purchases advertisements under its new local affiliate's name, American Heritage Cable Television, and a front group known as "Citizens for Quality Cable Television." ATC-sponsored advertisements, thus, constituted the largest block of advertising by any of the firms, a total of 7,729 inches.

Cablecom-General, also of Englewood, Colorado, was second in advertisements purchased with 2,886½. This includes 600 inches purchased under the name of its front group, "Citizens for Truth in Cable Television."

CMI, Inc., of Birmingham, Alabama, also purchased advertisements in all four elections but did not use any front groups to sponsor its messages. CMI purchased $927\frac{1}{4}$ inches of advertisements. The only other advertisement in the campaigns was an 18-column inch ad, purchased by State Representative Lavern Schroeder of McClelland, which argued against the City Council's decision to hold separate elections for the cable firms.

Table 1 shows the volume of advertising purchased by each firm, front group or individual in the four elections.

TABLE 1
COLUMN INCHES OF ADVERTISING PURCHASED
BY NAME OF SPONSOR

Sponsor	May 16	June 27	July 11	July 25	Total
Am. Cable.*	$2,497\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	0	$2,497\frac{1}{2}$
CCTV*	$85\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	0	$85\frac{1}{2}$
Am. Her.*	0	$668\frac{1}{2}$	$1,162\frac{1}{2}$	2,745	4,576
CQCTV*	0	570	0	0	570
Cablecom**	1,493	$793\frac{1}{2}$	0	0	$2,286\frac{1}{2}$
CTCTV**	0	0	0	600	600
CMI, Inc.	88	84	$713\frac{1}{4}$	42	$927\frac{1}{4}$
Schroeder	18	0	0	0	18
TOTALS	4,182	2,116	$1,875\frac{3}{4}$	3,387	$11,560\frac{3}{4}$

* Denotes firms or groups sponsored by American Television and Communication.

** Denotes firms or groups sponsored by Cablecom-General.

Advertisements paid for by ATC constituted 66.86 percent of the total lineage in the four campaigns. Cablecom-General's advertising made up 24.96 percent of the total with CMI purchasing 8.02 percent and Schroeder's single advertisement representing .16 of one percent of the total.

Although no inference is made here that the volume of advertising had any direct relationship to the final outcome of the elections, it is interesting to note that as advertising lineage dropped off in the June 27 and July 11 elections, so did the number of people voting in those two elections:

<u>ELECTION</u>	<u>AD LINEAGE</u>	<u>NUMBER VOTING</u>
May 16	4,182	5,305
June 27	2,116	2,897
July 11	1,875 ³ / ₄	2,791
July 25	3,387	4,756

Imbalance in Advertising

The first general research problem is to determine the degree to which cable television advertising in the Council Bluffs Nonpareil tends to be either "positive" or "negative."

The research problem suggests four questions:

(1) Was the overall content of all advertisements in the elections negative or positive, as defined?

(2) Was one company more positive than the other

companies?

(3) Was one company more negative than the other companies?

(4) Did a company's positive or negative coefficient change in relation to whether the company was promoting itself or opposing a competing company?

Overall Coefficient for All Elections

Table 2 shows the relationship of statements made by the firms, their front groups or by individuals that were judged to be either favorable to the firm, unfavorable to the firm, neutral or non-relevant.

The Coefficient of Imbalance ranges from a -1 for content units judged totally negative, to +1 for content units judged totally positive. Advertisements that contained equal numbers of positive and negative statements, or which contained only neutral or non-relevant material would result in a coefficient of zero.

Thus, if the overall advertising campaigns by the firms was negative, as was judged by several of the public officials in Chapter II, the coefficients should tend to be negative. The coefficients, however, do not bear out these contentions.

The data would seem to indicate that, overall, positive advertising tended to balance out negative advertising. The resulting overall coefficient of imbalance for all statements made in the elections was a positive

.155, which tends to indicate the overall advertising message either balanced out between positive and negative statements or tended to be more on the positive side.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, NEUTRAL, AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS AND RESULTING COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)
FOR EACH CABLE FRANCHISE ELECTION

Election	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
May 16	781	585	554	457	+.034
June 27	458	213	80	141	+.168
July 11	123	99	88	58	+.026
July 25	571	107	95	95	+.395
TOTALS	1,757	708	685	3,150	+.155

Note that the +.395 coefficient for the July 25th election also coincided with the selection of American Heritage Cable Television by voters. Again, this is not to assume that the more positive advertising in the final campaign had any relationship to the actual outcome at the polls.

Coefficients for May 16th Election

The first of the four cable franchise elections was different from the other three elections because:

(1) More news articles were generated by the two daily newspapers over this election than in any of the other elections.

(2) More mention was made of personalities and of the defeat of cable television in 1973 than in any of the other elections.

(3) The election drew more voters to the polls.

(4) More firms were involved in advertising.

(5) The advertising statements presented had a higher number of both positive and negative units than any of the other elections.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR THE MAY 16th ELECTION AND
RESULTING COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Firms	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
Am. Cable*	395	34	353	168	+.192
CCTV*	22	2	16	8	+.229
Cablecom	358	540	179	274	-.074
CMI, Inc.	6	5	4	2	+.024
Schroeder	0	4	2	5	-.242
TOTALS	781	585	554	457	+.034

* American Cablevision and Citizens for Cable Television (CCTV) were both affiliates of American Television and Communication (ATC).

Table 3 shows that while the overall coefficient for the election tended to be neutral, Cablecom-General's advertising coefficients slid into the negative range. Also, American Cablevision's overall coefficient of +.192 reflects the large number of neutral statements

contained in its advertising--nearly equal to the positive statements it made about itself.

As a general rule, positive statements by all of the firms or groups involved in the elections promoted some aspect of the cable firms, while negative statements rebutted positive statements or made charges about the other firms' claims.

There were many examples where the same statement was made by all of the firms. ATC Cablecom-General and CMI all claimed their contribution to the city's income through the franchise tax would relieve the tax burden on property owners in the city. They all claimed that all homes in the city would be served, although ATC used a statement in Cablecom's proposal as rebuttal to the claim and contended that Cablecom-General would leave out above 3,400 homes. Cablecom-General had made similar charges about ATC in the May 16th election.

Other similarities in claims involved programming, investment in equipment, size of the Council Bluffs cable system, religious programming, and that their firm would offer "more sports," "more entertainment," "better programming," and "more movies."

In the first election, American Cablevision's campaign was more varied. Of its 42 advertisements in The Nonpareil, 24 were repeated ads. That is, one type of ad was repeated several times during the campaign. Cablecom-General, however, only used seven varieties of

advertisements among 43 ads. Schroeder and CMI, Inc., purchased one ad each and Citizens for Cable Television purchased two ads.

Table 4 shows each of American Cablevision's advertisements and the resulting coefficient for each ad.

In only one instance were negative statements dominant in an advertisement for the firm. Much of the copy in the firm's ads were devoted to explaining cable television, the election process or some other aspect of the industry. Little (34 statements) emphasis was placed on negative statements about other firms.

Table 5 shows Cablecom-General had four ads in which the positive statements outnumbered the negative. Neutral or informative statements (179 in all) were a small part of the firm's campaign.

CMI's lone ad in this campaign accounted for six positive statements, five negative statements, four neutral and two non-relevant remarks. Citizens for Cable Television had 22 positive remarks about American Cablevision, two negative remarks about competitors, 16 neutral statements and 8 non-relevant remarks.

TABLE 4

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR AMERICAN CABLEVISION IN THE MAY 16th ELECTION
AND COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	32	0	9	13	+.463
10	x	1	0	4	2	+.029
6	x	21	0	5	3	+.585
1	x	13	2	28	3	+.072
1	x	13	0	6	7	+.342
1	x	12	0	1	4	+.652
1	x	8	0	8	4	+.200
1	x	12	0	4	5	+.429
1	x	8	0	5	5	+.274
1	x	13	0	3	3	+.556
1	x	11	0	5	4	+.378
1	x	3	1	13	6	+.015
2	x	1	0	2	5	+.042
1	x	1	0	1	4	+.084
1	x	2	0	27	7	+.004
1	x	14	0	2	4	+.613
1	x	3	0	65	5	+.002
1	x	1	10	1	7	-.395
1	x	9	1	12	6	+.117
1	x	2	0	26	5	+.004
3	x	16	0	0	3	+.842
3	x	13	4	3	4	+.243
1	x	13	8	54	7	+.011
TOTALS		395	34	353	168	+.192

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR CABLECOM-GENERAL IN THE MAY 16th ELECTION
AND COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	49	54	15	65	-.035
4	x	10	9	3	7	+.016
4	x	2	1	0	2	-.134
4	x	1	20	0	2	-.787
3	x	11	10	2	5	+.017
4	x	10	7	2	3	+.072
23	x	8	12	6	6	-.058
TOTALS		358	540	179	274	-.074

Cablecom-General, whose election was next in line, tailored its advertisements to stir up resentment against Filbert, American Cablevision's local representative, and his involvement with Mayor Cleveland's election. Cablecom-General also implied that by rejecting American Cablevision, the people would be voting for "good government."

The coefficients for the firm's ads would indicate it conducted a "negative" campaign--that is, predominant in its advertisements were statements criticizing American Cablevision. The coefficients ranged from four ads with a -.787 coefficient, to four ads with a +.072 coefficient, which can be considered neutral.

Coefficients for June 27 Election

With American Cablevision defeated by a vote of 2,061 to 3,244, Cablecom-General turned its attention to its June 27 election. Early in the campaign, ATC announced it had dissolved American Cablevision and had merged with Heritage Communications of Des Moines, Iowa to form American Heritage Cable Television. By Iowa law, the City Council had no choice but to schedule a fourth cable franchise election with the entry of this new company.

Cablecom-General purchased the most advertising in the June 27 election--29 ads. American Heritage purchased 8 ads while its front group, "Citizens for Quality Cable Television," purchased 9. CMI, Inc., with an election set for July 11, purchased 6 ads.

Table 6 shows the comparisons of the various firms and front groups.

TABLE 6

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR ALL FIRMS IN THE JUNE 27th CABLE ELECTION
AND RESULTING COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Firm	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
Cablecom	317	2	54	104	+.561
Am. Her.*	53	68	17	16	-.048
CQCTV*	0	135	9	10	-.822
CMI, Inc.	88	8	0	11	+.685
TOTALS	458	213	80	141	+.168

* American Heritage and Citizens for Quality Cable Television were both funded by American Television and Communications.

It is apparent that Cablecom-General's advertising campaign switched dramatically between the May 16 and June 27 elections. Cablecom's overall Coefficient of Imbalance for the May 16th election, when it was attempting to defeat ATC's firm, was $-.074$. In its own election, Cablecom-General's advertisements had an overall coefficient of $+.561$.

The table also indicates a change in strategy for ATC-- from its $+.192$ coefficient in the May 16 election to $-.048$ in the June 27 campaign. Advertisements which carried American Heritage's name, however, tended to promote itself while criticizing Cablecom-General, so the overall coefficient tended to be neutral.

ATC's front group, however, pulled no punches.

With an accompanying drawing of a man in various postures of rage, disappointment and disgust, Citizens for Quality Cable Television criticized Cablecom-General's rate structure, number of homes it would serve, the number of franchises it had sold, its past construction performance, programming and other factors Cablecom was promoting in its advertising.

CQCTV's overall $-.822$ coefficient reflects these attacks. There was not one statement that could be judged as favorable for CQCTV's sponsor, American Heritage. But, there were 135 statements that were judged to be critical of Cablecom and 144 statements that were neutral and only 10 non-relevant statements.

CMI, Inc., also increased its positive statements, changing from an overall coefficient of $+.024$ in the May 16th campaign to $+.685$ in the June 27 campaign.

Table 7 compares Cablecom-General's statements for its election.

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY CABLECOM-GENERAL IN THE JUNE 27th ELECTION AND
RESULTING COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	4	0	0	1	+.800
1	x	14	0	0	2	+.875
2	x	16	1	1	11	+.460
1	x	7	0	3	3	+.377
1	x	3	0	21	2	+.013
1	x	9	0	1	2	+.675
2	x	10	0	1	3	+.649
2	x	17	0	1	2	+.803
1	x	29	0	4	15	+.531
5	x	6	0	1	3	+.514
2	x	7	0	0	3	+.700
5	x	5	0	0	3	+.625
1	x	6	0	0	3	+.800
1	x	49	0	0	2	+.961
1	x	14	0	7	21	+.406
1	x	7	0	1	2	+.613
1	x	21	0	6	2	+.563
TOTALS		317	2	54	104	+.561

Note that the range in the coefficients for this election was from a neutral +.013 to a very positive +.961. Cablecom-General's range in the previous election was -.787 to +.072. Thus, the firm's advertising messages changed from almost totally negative to almost totally positive according to whether the firm was attempting to defeat its competition or promote itself.

Coefficients for American Heritage Cable Television and its front group, CQCTV, are seen in Tables 8 and 9.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR AMERICAN HERITAGE CABLE TELEVISION IN THE
JUNE 27th ELECTION AND RESULTING
COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	8	4	1	2	+.164
1	x	3	7	3	2	-.144
1	x	0	7	3	3	-.377
1	x	8	6	0	2	+.071
1	x	2	7	4	2	-.180
1	x	10	17	2	2	-.132
1	x	12	4	1	1	+.314
1	x	10	16	3	2	-.107
TOTALS		53	68	17	16	-.048

While American Heritage advertisements had an overall negative coefficient, the magnitude of the statements tended to balance out toward the neutral. Its front group, however, showed a highly negative coefficient.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS FOR CITIZENS FOR QUALITY CABLE TELEVISION IN
THE JUNE 27th ELECTION AND RESULTING
COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	0	5	3	1	-.347
2	x	0	8	0	1	-.889
1	x	0	5	0	1	-.843
1	x	0	6	3	1	-.400
2	x	0	43	0	1	-.977
1	x	0	11	0	1	-.917
1	x	0	6	3	2	-.364
TOTALS		0	135	9	10	-.822

The data for American Heritage and its front group also suggest their advertising strategy.

American Heritage left the hard core negative statements to Citizens for Quality Cable Television. This, we would suggest, was done so that any possible voter backlash from the negative ads would fall on the shoulders of CQCTV and not on American Heritage.

This inference is further supported by the fact that CQCTV dissolved after the June 27th election. All subsequent advertisements by American Heritage bore the name of the firm.

During the June 27th election, CMI, Inc., continued its basically positive advertising campaign, offering the citizens a free medical channel, a separate

channel for use by the school system and free Christmas lights for the downtown business district. It purchased six ads in the June 27th election the coefficients of which ranged from $+0.354$ to $+0.786$, with an overall coefficient of $+0.685$.

Coefficients for the July 11 Election

CMI, Inc., surprisingly, only purchased four advertisements during its campaign for its July 11 election. In contrast, American Heritage purchased 17 ads which both promoted itself and criticized CMI as being too small and inexperienced to build a system for Council Bluffs. It also criticized CMI's proposal to serve only high density housing areas. This, American Heritage said, would leave 3,400 homes without service.

American Heritage's criticisms so angered Raymond Pogge, CMI's local representative, that he threatened to file a law suit for American Heritage's "false and deceptive advertising."

Of all the firms in the elections, CMI's advertising was the most consistently positive, according to the Coefficients of Imbalance. The firm's four advertisements in its July 11 campaign ranged from $+0.150$ to $+0.667$ with an overall coefficient of $+0.214$, as is shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY CMI, INC., IN THE JULY 11th ELECTION AND
RESULTING COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	24	0	36	4	+.150
2	x	7	0	3	4	+.350
1	x	4	0	0	2	+.667
TOTALS		42	0	42	14	+.214

In contrast, American Heritage purchased 17 advertisements and maintained its strategy of promoting itself while criticizing CMI. Coefficients for American Heritage's ads ranged from a $-.287$ to a $+.350$, with an overall coefficient of $-.029$. Table 11 shows the comparisons of statements for the firm.

TABLE 11

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY AMERICAN HERITAGE CABLE TELEVISION
FOR THE JULY 11th ELECTION AND RESULTING
COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	11	5	3	2	+.165
3	x	12	17	6	4	-.062
2	x	2	5	1	2	-.188
1	x	4	6	1	2	-.084
1	x	7	0	3	4	+.350
2	x	1	8	4	2	-.287
1	x	5	1	3	4	+.171
1	x	3	4	1	4	-.042
1	x	4	2	5	4	+.024
1	x	5	4	2	4	+.030
TOTALS		81	99	46	44	-.029

Coefficients for July 25th Election

The final campaign of the 1978 elections was carried out over a 10-day period between July 16 and July 25. American Heritage Cable Television averaged 160 inches of newspaper advertising for each of those 10 days. The firm's ads ran virtually unopposed until July 21 when "Citizens for Truth in Cable Television," a front group funded by Cablecom-General, began purchasing advertisements in an apparent attempt to convince voters to reject American Heritage at the polls.

American Heritage's main theme for its ads had

been to tell voters that this would be their "last chance" to get cable television. Cablecom-General's front group disputed this claim and stated that both Cablecom and CMI intended to try again at a franchise, possibly in the fall. The group also questioned American Heritage's claims for serving all the homes in the city, its financial ability and its use of what the group called "deceptive" advertising.

American Heritage, however, did not alter its campaign strategy, despite the opposition. Table 12 shows that the firm's advertising became even more positive as CTCTV and CMI began to attack it.

TABLE 12

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY FIRMS IN THE JULY 25th ELECTION AND
RESULTING OVERALL COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Firm	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
Am. Her.	571	38	76	53	+.594
CTCTV	0	64	19	40	-.401
CMI, Inc.	0	5	0	2	-.714
TOTALS	571	107	95	95	+.395

Table 13 shows the coefficients for American Heritage during the campaign for its election ranged from a +.004 to a +.991, the most positive campaign by the firm. Whether voters, in giving American Heritage 74.6 percent approval in the final election, really wanted that

firm, or, as some have suggested, just "wanted to get it over with," cannot be inferred from this discussion.

TABLE 13

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY AMERICAN HERITAGE CABLE TELEVISION IN THE
JULY 25th ELECTION AND RESULTING
COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
1	x	1	0	6	1	+.021
4	x	3	0	7	2	+.075
5	x	8	0	0	3	+.727
2	x	7	0	0	1	+.875
2	x	4	0	6	2	+.134
2	x	7	1	0	1	+.583
2	x	12	0	2	2	+.643
2	x	27	0	1	1	+.898
3	x	19	12	1	3	+.119
1	x	314	0	0	3	+.991
1	x	3	0	6	2	+.090
1	x	1	0	14	2	+.004
1	x	29	0	1	2	+.876
TOTALS		571	38	76	56	+.599

Table 14 compares the advertising statements made by Cablecom-General's front group against American Heritage.

TABLE 14

COMPARISON OF FAVORABLE, UNFAVORABLE, NEUTRAL AND NON-RELEVANT
STATEMENTS BY CITIZENS FOR TRUTH IN CABLE TELEVISION ABOUT
AMERICAN HERITAGE CABLE TELEVISION AND RESULTING
COEFFICIENTS OF IMBALANCE (C)

Frequency		Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Non-Relevant	C
2	x	0	4	4	5	-.154
3	x	0	9	1	4	-.579
1	x	0	8	1	4	-.547
1	x	0	3	7	4	-.064
1	x	0	7	1	4	-.510
1	x	0	11	0	5	-.688
TOTALS		40	42	14	26	-.384

The data do not provide sufficient information from which to infer how strongly voters identified with the advertising statements.

For that reason, the Q sort technique was adopted as a means of identifying advertising effectiveness.

Q Sorts of Advertising Statements

The second research problem is to determine the degree to which a sample of six voters identifies with specific messages presented by the cable television firms through their newspaper advertisements.

The problem suggests these research questions:

1. If the advertising statements had an effect on voters' decisions, then their ratings of statements defined as positive or negative should not be significantly different.

We would expect that the statements published in advertisements were either calculated to win votes or to dissuade people from voting for a particular firm. If the statements were influential, voters could be expected to agree that statements supporting a firm are "positive," and statements opposing a firm are "negative."

2. If the advertising statements had an effect on voters' decisions, then their ratings of statements in either Q sort should be significantly different. Voter's overall ratings of statements in the first Q sort--involving a firm that was defeated--should be negative as determined by the group mean. Voters' overall ratings of statements in the second Q sort--involving statements about the firm that won the franchise--should be positive as determined by the group mean.

3. If the advertising statements had their expected effect on voters' decisions, then their ratings of statements should not be significantly different from the ratings of the expert panel.

In this case, the expert panel serves as a control group which rates the statements according to how they would predict the voters would respond. The expert panel becomes very much like a cable television firm's advertising staff weighing the messages the firm will present to voters.

4. If the advertising statements had an effect on voters' decisions, then their ratings of statements should

not be significantly different from those of the expert panel on identified subcategories of statements.

It was reasoned that if there was some indication that voters and experts were significantly different in their ratings of statements in either Q sort, then the differences should show up in the analysis of the statements concerning particular aspects of the elections; i.e., governmental involvement, service to subscribers, informational statements, slogans and claims, financial ability and past experience.

Selection of Statements

Analysis of the firms' advertisements in The Nonpareil produced a list of over 300 statements that were included in computing the Coefficients of Imbalance. The researcher subjectively judged the statements to be positive, negative, neutral or non-relevant according to a set of definitions.

From these statements, 144 were selected so as to represent the major identified public issues in the campaigns of the various firms. Care was taken to keep the number of statements for or against a firm in proportion to the advertising lineage for that firm. Thus, a firm that had a higher overall percentage of advertising lineage had more of its statements included in the Q sorts.

This, it was felt, would duplicate the impact of

the overall volume of advertising messages by each firm and, thus, approximate the real world situation surrounding an election of this sort.

Since the elections involved four companies, two "front groups" which were financed by two of the companies, and several personalities, it was decided that including the firms' names or those of the personalities would tend to confuse the Q sorters. Since the purpose of the Q sorts was to measure the effectiveness of the advertising messages, not recognition of the firm's name, the names of firms and personalities were substituted with "our firm," "their firm," or "representative."

Each of the Q sorts contained 67 statements--42 defined "positive" statements, and 25 defined "negative" statements. Each statement was placed on an index card and coded for later retrieval of response information.

Statements in the first Q sort contained 42 statements supporting American Cablevision, and 25 statements made by firms opposing American Cablevision.

Statements in the second Q sort contained the same number of positive statements, but were apportioned among Cablecom General, CMI Inc., and American Heritage, the three firms competing in the last three elections. Statements by the firms about their competitors were similarly distributed in the 25 negative statements.

A complete list of all statements in the Q sorts is found in Appendix A.

The raw scores of voters and experts were then incorporated into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to yield standardized z scores which were then treated with Pearson Correlation Coefficients, t-tests and, as a check on validity, various nonparametric tests such as Wald-Wolfowitz Runs Test.

Data from Q Sorts

Realizing the problem of converting the rank scores of the respondents into z scores and then treating them as interval data, the researcher decided that the technique was applicable to this study for two reasons:

1. Emmert and Brooks note that research using Q sort data has taken parametric and nonparametric courses depending upon how the Q sort is performed. A forced Q sort will yield a normal distribution under the control of the researcher and can thus be treated as at least interval data.

Using an unforced Q sort--where respondents are allowed to place the units under study in any of the designated piles in any quantity they deem important--often results in problems of obtaining a normal distribution. Thus, the data from the Q sorts requires the use of nonparametric statistics.

While this study used the unforced Q sort in an attempt to allow respondents to identify with as many statements as possible, it was found that 11 of the 12

elected to place the cards in approximately normal distributions over the seven piles.

2. As Stephenson and others have pointed out, the validity of the Q sort is found intrinsically--that the ratings of the units under study are true reflections of the individual's interaction with the units as opposed to mere scores on a test. Such information, then, requires the more powerful parametric tests of significance.

As a check on the z-score data, the raw scores were treated with nonparametric tests. The Wald-Wolfowitz Runs Test and the Kendall/Spearman Correlation Coefficients revealed similar indications of significance as those found with the parametric t-test and Pearson Correlation Coefficients, respectively.

Table 15 shows the magnitude of the Pearson Correlation Coefficients and their resulting level of significance. Overall, voters in the first Q sort rated statements nearly the same as the experts. While significant ($p < .001$), the magnitude of the coefficient accounts for only 17.2 percent of the response variance.

This would seem to indicate that the remaining variance is found elsewhere in the statements or in factors outside the scope of this study.

In the second Q sort, voters' and experts' ratings correlated with each other with a significance level of $p < .004$; again, however, the magnitude of the coefficient accounted for only 10 percent of the variance.

TABLE 15

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR VOTERS AND EXPERTS
IN THE FIRST AND SECOND Q SORTS
OF ADVERTISING STATEMENTS

	Expert 1	Expert 2
Voter 1*	0.4146 p <.001	-----
Voter 2*	-----	0.3185 p <.004

*Numerals following group designations denote whether the group was rating statements in the first or second Q sort.

Table 16 shows the correlation coefficients for voters' and experts' responses to defined positive statements in the first and second Q sorts.

The two groups seemed to rate the positive statements with greater similarity in the first Q sort than in the second. In the first Q sort, the correlation coefficients indicates 29.8 percent of the variance is explained. In the second Q sort, the coefficient's magnitude accounted for 14.4 percent of the groups' variance.

TABLE 16

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR VOTERS AND EXPERTS ON
POSITIVE STATEMENTS IN THE FIRST AND SECOND Q SORTS
OF ADVERTISING STATEMENTS.

	Expert 1	Expert 2
Voter 1	0.5466 p <.001	-----
Voter 2	-----	0.3795 p <.002

The coefficients on negative statements show a wider divergence of opinion on their effectiveness than was found in the coefficients on the overall statements or those resulting from responses on the positive statements.

On negative statements, voters in both the first and second Q sorts did not agree significantly with the experts.

Table 17 shows the correlations of voters and experts on defined negative statements.

TABLE 17
CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR VOTERS AND EXPERTS ON
NEGATIVE STATEMENTS IN THE FIRST AND SECOND Q SORTS
OF ADVERTISING STATEMENTS

	Expert 1	Expert 2
Voter 1	0.1364 p <.258	-----
Voter 2	-----	0.1892 p <.182

When voters' responses to defined negative statements are compared for both Q sorts they show strong similarities in their ratings. Their selection of negative statements in the Q sorts correlated with a magnitude of 0.87, ($p < .001$), accounting for about 76 percent of the variance.

Experts' ratings on the negative statements correlated with a magnitude of 0.89, ($p < .001$), accounting for

about 79 percent of the variance.

What the Pearson Correlation Coefficients tell us is that voters and experts rated the positive statements some what similar, but that they differed significantly in their perception of negative statements. Overall, however, the coefficients seem to indicate there was no significant difference between the voters and experts when all statements were measured.

Table 18 is a summary table and shows how the voters and experts judged the overall Q sort statements and the subcategories of positive and negative statements as measured by the t-test.

TABLE 18

VALUES OF T AND TWO-TAILED PROBABILITIES OF OVERALL
STATEMENTS IN FIRST AND SECOND Q SORTS,
AND IN STATEMENT SUBCATEGORIES

Overall Statements	<u>t</u>	Two-tailed Probability
Voter 1	0.73	p < .5
Voter 2	-0.07	p < .9
Expert 1	-0.14	p < .9
Expert 2	.93	p < .4
<u>FINANCING-POSITIVE</u>		
Voter 1 with Expert 1	1.23	p < .3
Voter 2 with Expert 2	.48	p < .7
<u>FINANCING-NEGATIVE</u>		
Voter 1 with Expert 1	.23	p < .8
Voter 2 with Expert 2	-4.24	p < .003

INFORMATION-POSITIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	1.22	p < .3
Voter 2 with Expert 2	-1.01	p < .4

INFORMATION-NEGATIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	-----	-----
Voter 2 with Expert 2	.25	p < .8

SERVICE-POSITIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	.69	p < .5
Voter 2 with Expert 2	.50	p < .6

SERVICE-NEGATIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	.69	p < .5
Voter 2 with Expert 2	1.33	p < .2

SERVICE-NEGATIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	-----	-----
Voter 2 with Expert 2	1.33	p < .2

GOVERNMENT-POSITIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	-1.32	p < .3
Voter 2 with Expert 2	-----	-----

GOVERNMENT-NEGATIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	2.10	p < .05
Voter 2 with Expert 2	-----	-----

SLOGANS-POSITIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	.02	p < .9
Voter 2 with Expert 2	1.77	p < .09

SLOGANS-NEGATIVE

Voter 1 with Expert 1	- .88	p < .4
Voter 2 with Expert 2	.54	p < .6

In the first Q sort, voters perceived the defined positive statements as negative as indicated by their group mean ($\mu = -0.4$). Defined negative statements were perceived as positive by the voters ($\mu = +0.7$). The

difference in the means, however, was not significant.

In the second Q sort, voters reversed their directional decisions on statements. This time, they saw the defined negative statements as negative ($\mu = -0.06$) and the defined positive statements as positive ($\mu = +0.04$). Once again, the difference in their perception on the statements was not significant.

Experts showed more agreement on overall statements in the first Q sort than in the second. Again, however, the differences were not significant.

In the first Q sort, experts perceived of defined positive statements as positive ($\mu = +0.08$) and defined negative statements as negative ($\mu = -0.1$).

In the second Q sort, experts rated defined positive statements as negative ($\mu = -0.5$) and defined negative statements as positive ($\mu = +0.9$).

What the overall t-test indicates is that voters and experts in both Q sorts did not see a large difference between positive and negative statements. Also, voters and experts did not agree on the directional qualities of the statements. This could mean that statements by a firm seeking election were perceived as reasons for voting against the firm--exactly opposite of what would be expected if the advertising messages had their intended effects.

The same reversal applies to statements opposing a firm. Voters and experts differed on the directional

qualities of these statements leading to the possibility that some sort of backlash was in operation.

With such a finding, we could infer that even though voters did not agree with the firm's statements about itself, the voters gave positive votes to the firm because of the negative statements made against it.

Treatment of subcategories of statements with the t-test showed four areas where significant differences were taking place between the perception of statements of voters and experts.

Statements concerning governmental involvement in the election are only found in the first election and thus are only included in the first Q sort.

These statements were strongly positive or negative as determined by the Coefficients of Imbalance. Thus, we expected the differences, if any, between voters and experts to vary to a larger degree than for other, less clear-cut issues.

In the first Q sort, voters and experts showed no significant difference in their perception of positive governmental statements. The group means ($\mu = -5.8$ for voters and $\mu = -0.7$ for experts) indicate both groups saw the defined positive governmental statements as negative, and that voters perceived of the statements as more negative than did experts.

Voters and experts differed significantly ($p < .05$, two-tail) on their perception of negative governmental statements.

Experts ($\mu = -1.5$) said these statements were negative. Voters, however, said the statements were strongly positive ($\mu = +2.3$).

Thus, the t -test shows the indications of significance found in the Pearson Correlation Coefficients is substantially correct: That voters did not like the statements of American Cablevision, but liked even less the statements other firms were making about the firm. Still, voters seemed to identify with some negative statements about the firm.

A significant difference ($p < .003$, two-tail) was found in the second Q sort's negative financing subcategory. Voters said the statements were negative ($\mu = -0.1$) while the experts said the statements were strongly positive ($\mu = +3.8$).

On positive financial statements, while not significant, the data give some indication that experts saw the statements as negative ($\mu = -2.2$) while voters saw them as positive, but nearly neutral ($\mu = +0.3$).

Also interesting was the finding that voters and experts differed ($p < .09$, two-tail) on their assessment of the importance of slogans and claims made by the firms in the second Q sort. Voters ($\mu = +0.8$) said the statements were slightly positive, while experts ($\mu = -2.4$) said they were negative.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was two-fold:

1. To measure the general direction of cable television advertising in the four franchise elections to see if, as critics had said, the ads were generally negative in content.

2. To measure the effectiveness of the advertising statements in an attempt to define whether voters would identify with negative or positive statements.

The Coefficients of Imbalance indicated the advertisements were generally negative when one firm was attempting to defeat another, and generally positive when a firm was promoting itself.

The significant finding from the Coefficients of Imbalance, however, was that--on an overall basis--the content of the advertising tended to balance out toward a more neutral reading. As a broad indicator, the coefficients showed the firms behaved in an expected manner.

Thus, a firm that was up for election refrained from linking its name to advertisements that opposed another firm. "Front groups" did the dirty work while the company promoted itself under its own name.

The coefficients also showed that the most negative advertisements appeared in the first election when American Cablevision was attacked by Cablecom General and, to a lesser extent, by CMI Inc. The issues in this election also appeared to be more numerous than in the

final three elections--a point that might help explain the general agreement between voters and experts in the Q sort procedures.

For this study, had the Q sort and Coefficients of Imbalance procedures been reversed, the researcher could have adjusted individual statements in the imbalance coefficients for the proper direction--whether they were truly "positive" or "negative." The Q sorts showed that, contrary to the researcher's subjective opinion about what direction the statements should take, the statements were often rated opposite in direction by both voters and experts.

Probably the most significant finding from this study, however, is that voters and experts did not differ significantly in their overall perception of positive and negative statements when logic would tell us that they would.

Particularly in the statements from the first election, voters seemed to say through their Q sort selections that they did not agree with the statements American Cablevision was making about itself. They also seemed to say that they resented other firms making negative statements about American Cablevision and the city government and, for that reason, would vote for American Cablevision.

Although the sample size used for this study is not large enough to generalize results as meaningful to the entire population of voters, there is an indication

that some sort of backlash vote was in progress.

It may also be true that voters already had their minds made up about the elections even before the advertising campaigns began.

Evidence for that inference is found in a pre-study the author did for another section of this study. A sample of 10 voters was polled as to their reasons for voting for or against various firms in the elections. Six of the respondents, regardless of how they voted, added the comment to the questionnaire that they had already made their decision about cable television, and were prepared to vote regardless of what information was sent their way by the competing firms.

The respondents were also asked to indicate how they received most of their information about the cable television elections. All marked the newspaper and personal conversations with friends or relatives. Very few indicated direct mail or television advertising had any effect on their decision. No one would admit being influenced by Lee Terry or Don Filbert. Further study of a broader sample might reveal some of the reasons why people voted the way they did.

The makeup of the Q sorts themselves might also help explain some of the variance in responses between voters and experts. As noted previously, the second Q sort contained no statements concerning governmental involvement because the firms chose not to hammer at that

point in the last three elections.

Thus, voters and experts in the first Q sort had ample opportunity to make clear decisions about agreement or disagreement about the City government--a local issue with which voters could identify. In the second Q sort, however, the statements generally dealt with more abstract qualities of the various firms and this may account for the wider split in the selections of the two groups under study.

Another part of the puzzle may be found in the process of voting itself. Voters do not cast ballots in degrees of positiveness or negativeness: They vote absolutely for an issue or absolutely against an issue. Their reasons for doing so however, may be a combination of, literally, hundreds of pieces of information and uncountable emotional considerations.

Thus, analysing the Q sort data from a seven-point scale approach may not be representative of how an actual election takes place. It could be inferred that the true test of the Q sort procedure will be found in the extreme answers by voters and experts--in those statements which the group said would absolutely help them vote for or against a firm.

Tables 19 and 20 show the frequencies with which voters and experts in both Q sorts judged subcategories of statements as either strongly positive or strongly negative (the extreme points of the scale).

TABLE 19

COMPARISON OF VOTERS' AND EXPERTS' SELECTIONS OF
EXTREME POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE STATEMENTS BY
SUBCATEGORIES IN THE FIRST Q SORT

CATEGORIES	VOTERS		TOTALS	EXPERTS		TOTALS
	+	-		+	-	
Financing	17	7	24	4	10	14
Service	41	6	47	27	0	27
Slogans	12	23	35	2	1	3
Government	11	37	48	3	11	14
Information	24	4	28	6	0	6
TOTALS	105	77	182	42	22	64

In Table 19, of the voters' 105 strongly positive responses, 94 were recorded on defined positive statements while 11 were recorded on defined negative statements. Voters judged 40 of the defined negative statements as strongly negative and said 37 of the positive statements were strongly negative.

In the first Q sort, experts correctly predicted the direction of the voters would take in the service, government and information subcategories, but incorrectly predicted how many statements in those subcategories the voters would find meaningful.

Of the experts' 42 strongly positive responses, 41 were recorded on defined positive statements. Only one defined negative statement was judged to be strongly

would like to have it, but for varying reasons, none of which included better reception.

Four of the voters said they had grown tired of the programming on commercial television and were looking forward to some variety. One respondent said she and her husband would purchase cable television because her sons liked to watch sports.

One of the statements in the second Q sort that was rated strongly positive by both voters and experts was a claim by Cablecom General that it would offer television programs on demand--that people could use a catalogue to select from over 2,000 video tapes to be presented over one of the channels. That claim by the firm was made only once in the firm's advertisements.

Five of the voters agreed that the negative statement, "A vote against this firm will be a vote for good government," would help them vote against the firm in question--in this case American Cablevision. However, three of the voters said the statement, "If more than one cable television firm is approved by voters, the City Council must select from winning firms," was highly positive--that the statement would help them vote for American Cablevision.

This vacillation between similar statements only adds to the complication of attempting to pinpoint advertising effectiveness.

Although some individual advertising statements

might be influential, as voters said they were, most statements had little influence as judged by the voters. The larger question of which statement or combination of statements precipitated the defeat of some firms and the victory of one firm remains unanswered.

The study does show support for some of the statements made after the individual elections.

1. Negative advertising, however it is measured, did "turn off" voters.

2. The City Council's involvement with the elections, for some voters, reached a deeper level of resentment that was focused on the city's government.

3. People did want cable television, but didn't like the process of going through four elections to get it.

Lee Terry's statement that the voters "just wanted to get it over with," may also hold some validity. The researcher noted that all respondents, both voter and expert alike, became impatient when told they would be required to do a second Q sort after they had struggled with the first 67 statements.

Finally, the study points to the need for further research which would encompass the responses of more of the voting population from the cable television elections.

The Q sort technique, coupled with personal interviews, could reveal much of the intricate web of interpersonal decision making that seems to have been involved in

the four cable television franchise elections in Council Bluffs.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Q SORT STATEMENTS FROM MAY 16TH ELECTION BY SUBCATEGORY

Financing-Experience: Positive

A 5. A vote for our firm means a \$2 million industry for the city.

A13. A vote for our firm will mean tax relief for the citizens of the city.

A22. Our firm has the most experience of all the competing firms.

A24. Our firm has the financial resources to build the system for your city.

A25. There are no public funds involved in the construction of our cable television system.

Financing-Experience: Negative

B 4. If you vote for this firm 3,400 homes in the city will be denied access to cable television.

B21. The firm in this election will charge higher subscription fees than will the firm in the next election.

B22. The firm in this election will have less investment in the community and will pay less property taxes than the firm in the next election.

B23. The firm in this election has a backlog of unbuilt cable systems and this means the system for your city will be delayed.

Information: Positive

A 3. By voting for our firm you are not obligated to subscribe to cable television.

A12. Our firm wants to be part of your community.

A14. Our firm has constructed 6,362 miles of cable in the last five years.

A15. Our firm operates 97 separate cable television systems in the United States.

A16. Our firm is the second largest in the United States with 300 franchises in 31 states.

A19. Our firm will serve every home in the city.

A27. Our firm serves 700,000 cable television subscribers in the United States.

A28. Our cable television system will not interfere with your present television reception.

A38. Our firm is the only one that now serves cities in your state.

Slogans-Claims: Positive

A17. Why wait for some distant date? Vote for our firm now.

A18. Even if you don't want to subscribe to cable television, don't deny the service to your neighbors by voting against our firm.

A20. Cable television was defeated in the 1973 elections. Don't repeat that mistake by voting against our firm.

A26. This is your chance to get cable television for the city.

A29. Our cable television system is the best one for this city.

A32. Our cable television system offers more sophisticated electronics.

A36. A vote for our firm will be your chance to get something Omaha does not have.

A39. Our firm will support local charities.

A42. Nearly a million subscribers to our system can't be wrong.

Slogans-Claims: Negative

B 1. Vote for their firm in this election and you'll live with the wrong decision for 25 years.

B 6. Just because this firm may get the proper number of yes votes does not mean it is the best system.

B15. There are two other firms who will have cable franchise elections after this firm's election; a no vote for this firm means you want a choice.

B17. A vote against this firm in this election will mean a better cable television system in the next election.

B20. The firm in this election has an inferior system to the one in the next election.

Service: Positive

A 6. Our firm offers television shows via satellite.

A 7. Everyone can afford to subscribe to our cable television service.

A 8. Our firm will offer better programming.

A 9. Our firm will offer more movies.

A10. Our firm will offer movies and Broadway shows through Home Box Office.

A11. Our firm will offer more sports programs.

A21. A vote for our firm will mean you will have more television viewing choices.

A25. Our firm offers a 24-hour news, weather and sports channel.

A30. Our firm's cable television system will provide channels for use by schools and city government.

A31. Our firm will offer free installation during the first 30 days the system is in operation.

A33. Our firm will offer religious and family shows via the Christian Broadcasting Network.

A35. Our firm will offer 12 channels of viewing now, with a potential for 23 channels later on.

A40. Our firm will bring in programs from Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis and Atlanta, Georgia.

A41. Our firm will offer children's programs.

Service: Negative

B25. The firm in this election has inferior programs to the firm in the next election.

Government: Positive

A 1. Our firm was recommended by the City Council.

A 2. Our firm was recommended by the Citizens Study Committee on Cable Television.

A 4. Our firm was recommended by the Mayor's Study Committee on Cable Television.

A34. The City Council, not the cable television firm, will regulate the subscription fees you pay.

A37. Have faith in your elected officials who recommended our firm from all the other applicants.

Government: Negative

B 2. Because the City Council must ultimately decide which cable television firm will serve the city, a yes vote for their firm will mean you have no choice among the firms.

B 3. The City Council has its mind made up for the firm in this election, therefore you have no choice in which firm serves the city if you vote yes for their firm.

B 5. If you vote for this firm you'll be letting the City Council make your decisions for you.

B 7. Why is the mayor of this city backing the firm in this cable franchise election?

B 8. The mayor tampered with the Citizens Study Committee which recommended the firm in this election.

B 9. The local representative of the firm in this election handled the re-election campaign of the mayor and therefore the mayor is obligated to that representative.

B10. A member of the City Council and a member of the Citizens Study Committee believe our firm is better qualified than the company now seeking election.

B11. The local representative of their firm would attempt to influence the programs you would receive over their cable system.

B12. The local representative of their company put pressure on the Citizens Study Committee which recommended his firm.

B13. If you vote for their firm, that means someone else will decide which firm will bring cable television to the city.

B14. A vote against this firm will be a vote for good government.

B15. If more than one cable television firm is approved by voters, the City Council must select from the winning firms.

B18. A no vote against this firm is a vote against the mayor and the firm's local representative who handled the mayor's re-election campaign.

B19. The decision by the Citizens Study Committee to recommend this firm was wrong.

B24. Because this firm's local representative handled the mayor's election campaign, his cable firm should be rejected.

Q SORT STATEMENTS FROM REMAINING ELECTIONS
BY SUBCATEGORY

Financing-Experience: Positive

C 2. This firm has only sold six cable systems in its history.

C 3. This firm has built twice as many cable systems as the other two firms.

C13. Our firm has constructed five cable television systems in the past five years.

C20. Our cable television company is in a better financial position than the other two firms.

Financing-Experience: Negative

D 1. Their firm has sold 35 of their cable television systems, nearly half of them.

D 4. Their firm would not serve all the homes in the city.

D 6. Their firm hasn't built one cable television system in the past five years.

D 8. Their firm doesn't have the necessary experience.

D 9. Their firm was thrown out of an Oklahoma city because of poor service.

D10. Their firm has sold 19 of its franchises in 11 states.

D12. Their firm will not guarantee not to sell your city's cable television system once it is constructed.

D18. This firm has never built a cable system as large as this city needs.

D23. This firm claims to be more experienced, but has only been in existence several weeks.

D25. This firm sold many of its franchises in its own home state.

Information: Positive

C12. Our cable television firm serves 109 systems in the United States.

C17. Our company is the only one of the three that is based in your state.

C23. This is the last scheduled election on cable television. This is your last chance to get this service.

C24. Voters turned down cable television in 1973. Don't repeat this negative vote.

C26. Votes for our firm will not mean a change in "free television" that you now receive.

C27. A vote for our firm does not mean you must subscribe to cable television.

C42. Seventy percent of the homes in our franchised areas receive cable service.

Information: Negative

D14. Their firm operates 39 systems compared to our 109 systems.

D15. The other two firms are not based in this state.

D17. The other two firms have less experience than our firm.

D19. Vote for their firm and you will be gambling with inexperience.

D21. Despite what this firm says, this will not be your last chance to vote for cable television; other firms are interested in supplying service.

Slogans: Positive

C 1. You can put your faith in our firm.

C 4. This firm has more experience than the other two firms.

C 9. Even though two other cable television firms have elections, the best system is yet to come.

C10. Our cable system is the best and you deserve the best.

C11. Our firm pledges to stay with the community, not sell its franchises as the other firms have done.

C14. Our firm has grown tremendously.

C16. Our cable system is the best one for this city.

C18. Our firm offers you the best service of the three firms.

C22. Our firm will back up its promises.

C25. Our firm will offer cable television to your home faster than the other firms.

C29. If our firm is approved, you will receive better pictures on your television set.

C30. Our company is smaller and therefore it cares more about your city.

C31. Our company will furnish free Christmas lights for the city.

C35. Our firm does not sling mud like the other firms.

C39. You'll get more with our firm.

C41. Our firm will rebuild the city's cable system every 10 years.

Slogans: Negative

D 5. Don't make a 25-year mistake by voting for their firm.

D 7. If you vote for their firm, you'll be settling for less than the best.

D20. Don't let this firm use your city as a training ground for their technicians.

D22. This firm's advertising is false and deceptive.

Service: Positive

C 5. Our firm will offer an Iowa news channel.

C 6. Our firm will not increase the price of subscriptions.

C 7. Our firm will not leave any homes in the city without cable television service.

C 8. Our firm will offer lower subscription rates than the other two firms.

C15. Waiting to vote for our firm will mean you won't have to purchase extra equipment in order to receive cable television.

C19. Our firm will offer more program choices.

C21. Our firm has won more awards for public access programming.

C28. Waiting to vote for our firm in the last election will mean you will save 26 percent on subscription fees and 33 percent on extra equipment.

C32. Our firm offers a medical channel for use by your city's physicians and medical personnel.

C33. Our firm offers movies and educational programs on demand from customers who use a catalogue to make their selections.

C34. Our firm will not offer pornographic movies.

C36. Our firm will have one channel devoted to carrying commercial network programs not offered by the three stations you now receive.

C37. Our firm will offer a separate, private channel for your city's school system.

C38. Our cable system offers an emergency alert system for your home.

C40. Our firm will offer family and religious programs over the Christian Broadcasting Network.

Service: Negative

D 2. Their firm proposes a subscription fee for Home Box Office that is 16 percent higher.

D 3. Their firm proposes a 26 percent increase in subscription rates for cable television.

D11. Vote for their firm and they will raise the subscription rates on you.

D13. If their firm is approved, you will have to purchase extra equipment in order to get cable television.

D16. The other two firms won't offer Iowa news.

D24. Although this firm claims it will serve all the homes in the city, its proposal states that only high density areas will be served.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

SELECTION OF EXTREME POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE STATEMENTS BY VOTERS AND EXPERTS IN FIRST Q SORT *

Positive

A 3. By voting for our firm you are not obligated to subscribe to cable television (V).

A 8. Our firm will offer better programming (V).

A 9. Our firm will offer more movies (V).

A10. Our firm will offer movies and Broadway shows through Home Box Office (VE).

A15. Our firm operates 97 separate cable television systems in the United States (V).

A16. Our firm is the second largest in the United States with 300 franchises in 31 states (V).

A17. Why wait for some distant date? Vote for our firm now (V).

A19. Our firm will serve every home in the city (V).

A21. A vote for our firm will mean you will have more television viewing choices (VE).

A22. Our firm has the most experience of all the competing firms (V).

A24. Our firm has the financial resources to build the system for your city (V).

A25. Our firm offers a 24-hour news, weather and sports channel (VE).

A28. Our cable television system will not interfere with your present television reception (V).

A30. Our firm's cable television system will provide channels for use by schools and city government (V).

A31. Our firm will offer free installation during the first 30 days the system is in operation (V).

* V = Voters selected; E = Experts selected; VE = Voters and Experts both selected.

A35. Our firm will offer 12 channels of viewing now, with a potential for 23 channels later on (V).

A40. Our firm will bring in programs from Chicago, Kansas City, Minneapolis and Atlanta, Georgia (VE).

B16. If more than one cable television firm is approved by voters, the City Council must select from the winning firms.

Negative

A 1. Our firm was recommended by the City Council (V).

A20. Cable television was defeated in the 1973 elections. Don't repeat that mistake by voting against our firm (V).

A34. The City Council, not the cable television firm will regulate the subscription fees you pay (V).

A37. Have faith in your elected officials who recommended our firm from all the other applicants (V).

B 1. Vote for their firm in this election and you'll live with the wrong decision for 25 years (V).

B 9. The local representative of their firm in this election handled the re-election campaign of the mayor and therefore the mayor is obligated to that representative (V).

B14. A vote against this firm will be a vote for good government (V).

B19. The decision by the Citizens Study Committee to recommend this firm was wrong (V).

B21. The firm in this election will charge higher subscription fees than the firm in the next election (E).

B23. The firm in this election has a backlog of unbuilt cable systems and this means the system for your city will be delayed (E).

B24. Because this firm's local representative handled the mayor's election campaign, his cable firm should be rejected (E).

SELECTION OF EXTREME POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE STATEMENTS
BY VOTERS AND EXPERTS IN THE SECOND Q SORT

Positive

C 4. This firm has more experience than the other two firms (V).

C 6. Our firm will not increase the price of subscriptions (V).

C13. Our firm has constructed five cable television systems in the past five years (V).

C19. Our firm will offer more program choices (VE).

C26. Votes for our firm will not mean a change in "free television" that you now receive (V).

C27. A vote for our firm does not mean you must subscribe to cable television (V).

C33. Our firm offers movies and educational programs on demand from customers who use a catalogue to make their selections (VE).

C34. Our firm will not offer pronographic movies (V).

C36. Our firm will have one channel devoted to carrying commercial network programs not offered by the three stations you now receive (E).

C38. Our cable system offers an emergency alert system for your home (V).

Negative

C31. Our company will furnish free Christmas lights for the city (V).

D 2. Their firm proposes a subscription fee for Home Box Office that is 16 percent higher (E).

D 3. Their firm proposes a 26 percent increase in subscription rates for cable television (E).

D 5. Don't make a 25-year mistake by voting for their firm (V).

D11. Vote for their firm and they will raise the subscription rates on you (VE).

D22. This firm's advertising is false and deceptive (V).

D23. This firm claims to be more experienced, but has only been in existence several weeks (V).

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Books

- Berelson, Bernard, Lazarsfeld, Paul F., and McPhee, William N. Voting. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954.
- Burton, Phillip W. and Miller, J. Robert. Advertising Fundamentals. Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1970.
- Crawford, John W. Advertising 2nd Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1966.
- Darnell, Donald K., and Brockriede, Wayne. Persons Communicating. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976.
- Douring, Karin. Frontiers of Communication. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1975.
- Emmert, Philip, and Brooks, William D. Methods of Research in Communication. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1970.
- Hepner, Harry W. Advertising: Creative Communication With Consumers. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964.
- Janis, Irving L., and Fadner, Raymond. "The Coefficient of Imbalance." in Language of Politics, pp. 153-169. Edited by Harold D. Lasswell, Nathan Leites & Associates. South Norwalk, Connecticut: George W. Stewart Publishers, Inc., 1949.
- Jones, Robert W. The Business of Advertising. London: Longman Group Ltd., 1974.
- Katz, Elihu, and Lazarsfeld, Paul F. Personal Influence. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955.
- Klapper, Joseph T. "The Social Effects of Mass Communication." In, Wilbur Schramm, (ed.). The Science of Human Communication. New York: Basic Books, 1963.

- Lavidge, Robert J. and Steiner, Gary A. "A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness." In, Arnold M. Barbar and C. H. Sandage, (eds.). Readings in Advertising and Promotion Strategy. Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin Inc., 1968.
- Lazarsfeld, Paul F., Berelson, Bernard, and Gaudet, Hazel. The People's Choice, 2nd ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1948.
- Newell, Thomas M. "The Declining Market for Pigs in Pokes." In. Robert M. Kaplan (ed.). The Marketing Concept in Action. Chicago: American Marketing Association, 1964.
- Pool, Ithiel deSola. The Prestige Press: A Comparative Study of Political Symbols. Cambridge, Mass: The M.I.T. Press, 1970.
- Schramm, Wilbur. The Science of Human Communication. New York: Basic Books Inc., 1963.
- Stephenson, William. The Study of Behavior: Q-Technique and Its Methodology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953.
- Wilmot, William W., and Wenburg, John R. Communication Involvement: Personal Perspectives. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1974.

Booklets

- Newspaper Advertising Bureau. Basic Facts About Newspapers, New York: Newspaper Advertising Bureau, 1975.

Journals

- Adams, John B., and Mullen, James J. "Diffusion of the News of a Foreign Event: A Nationwide Study." Journalism Quarterly 46 (1969): 545-57.
- Bauer, Raymond. "The Communicator and the Audience." Journal of Conflict Resolution 2 (1958): 67-68.
- Beal, George M., Rogers, Everett M., and Bohlen, Joe M. "Validity of the Concept of Stages in the Adoption Process." Rural Sociology 22 (1958): 166-168.

- Coleman, James S., Katz, Elihu, and Menzel, Herbert. "The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Physicians." Sociometry 20 (1975): 253-270.
- Deutschmann, Paul, and Danielson, Wayne. "Diffusion of Knowledge of the Major News Story." Journalism Quarterly 37 (1960): 345-55.
- Douglas, Dorothy F., Westley, Bruce H. and Chaffee, Steven H. "An Information Campaign That Changed Community Attitudes." Journalism Quarterly 3 (1970): 496+492.
- Greenberg, Bradley S. "Dimensions of Informal Communication." In, Lloyd R. Bostian. "The Two-Step Flow Theory: Cross-Cultural Implications." Journalism Quarterly 1 (1970): 109-117.
- Greenberg, Bradley S. "On Relating Attitude Change and Information Gain," Journal of Communication 14 (1964): 157-171.
- Kaplan, Stuart J. "Current Status of Cable Television in the Top 100 Markets." Journalism Quarterly 55 (1978): 251-255.
- Katz, Elihu. "The Two Step Flow of Communication: An Up-To-Date Report on an Hypothesis." Public Opinion Quarterly 21 (1957): 61-78.
- Kernan, Jerome B., and McNeal, James V. "The Closest Thing to Measuring Advertising Effectiveness." Business Horizons 15 (1964): 73-80.
- McLeod, Jack M., Becker, Lee B., and Byrnes, James E. "Another Look at the Agenda-Setting Function of the Press." Communication Research 1 (1974): 131-166.
- Troldahl, Verling C. and Van Dam, Robert. "Face-to-Face Communication about Major Topics in the News." Public Opinion Quarterly 19 (1965): 626-34.

Theses

- Wilson, Sharon. "A Quantitative Analysis of Readership of Inserts in the Omaha World-Herald." Master's Thesis, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 1978.

Periodicals

Smith, Ralph Lee. "The Wired Nation," The Nation, 18 May 1970, pp. 582-614.

Unpublished Reports

Alden, Paul. American Television and Communications Corp., Englewood, Colorado. Interview, 3 March 1978.

Filbert, Don. American Cablevision of Council Bluffs, Inc., Council Bluffs, Iowa. Interview, 16 March 1978.

Gregory, Leonard. "Project Improve: Council Bluffs, 1973-74," Council Bluffs Independent School District, 1974. (Mimeographed).

Leonard, Laurie. American Heritage Cable Television of Council Bluffs, Inc., Council Bluffs, Iowa. Interview, 8 February 1979.

Lovitt, Douglas. Assistant director of voter registration for the State of Iowa. Telephone interview from Des Moines, Iowa, 14 March 1979.

Publishers Report to Audit Bureau of Circulation, Council Bluffs Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Iowa, 30 September 1978. (Typewritten).