Areas of research in political advertising: a review and research agenda

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Political advertising is an increasingly researched area. Yet the sundry natures of research findings to date demonstrate a body of work searching for direction and a unifying theory. A review of 129 published research articles specifically related to the use of advertising in the marketing of elections uncovered eight themes within this body of work, and helped identify gaps that led to six recommendations for areas of future research, in an effort to stimulate and guide future investigations of political advertising.

Keywords: political advertising; election advertising; research agenda; literature review

Introduction

When the history of the early twenty-first century is written, scholars may look back on the years 2011−2020 and refer to it as the election decade. For example, while presidential elections in the United States, France, and Russia grabbed headlines for several months in 2012, they were far from the only presidential elections taking place that year, nor were they the only elections, for that matter. Presidents were also elected in Mexico and Venezuela, South Korea and Taiwan, Albania and Slovenia, Mali and Madagascar among the two dozen countries with elections on the political calendar that year. And that figure does not even take into consideration the countless elections for federal-level posts in other countries worldwide. According to the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), there were 57 countries that conducted presidential, parliamentary, or legislative elections, often over multiple election cycles (IFES 2012). However, with so many elections in so many countries, there is still one element that binds them all − advertising.

While political advertising is a growing area for researchers interested in deepening the knowledge of advertising and promotions (Harris and Lock 2010), as evidenced by the increased number of published articles in the academic literature in recent years, what is lacking is a comprehensive understanding of where research in this area has been and where political advertising research is going. We know where campaign spending on political advertising is going − up. According to the Center for Responsive Politics (2012a), an estimated US $6 billion was spent on advertising for the US elections that took place in November 2012. However, academic research may not be keeping up. This may be because, as some researchers (e.g., Kavanagh 1995; Scammell 1995) have argued, it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of political

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marketing in general. The challenge may be in differentiating between the effects of political marketing and the other factors that influence voters, such as the economic climate, external threats to national security or sovereignty, voter self-identification with candidates, or war. Even within political marketing, advertising is just one element of a campaign's marketing strategy.

Still, political advertising is considered the key element of the political marketing strategy (Chaffee and Choe 1980; Kaid 1981; Kaid and Tedesco 1999), and its importance in elections has been demonstrated (e.g., Evarts and Stempel 1974; O'Shaughnessy 1990; Sheinkopf, Atkin, and Bowen 1972; Soley and Reid 1982). At the same time, marketing researchers have been relatively quiet on the effects of political persuasion (Kim, Rao, and Lee 2009). Therefore, based on the knowledge gap, and in response to Taylor's (2010) call for more research in political advertising, the following literature review is offered to provide a springboard for such a research agenda.

Methodology

The best research in political marketing must provide two key elements: (1) further understanding of how and why the principles of marketing function in a political context, and (2) practical applications for practitioners working on political campaigns. Therefore, perhaps the best place to begin a literature review on the topic at hand is by examining political advertising used in the marketing of elections. It is, after all, the election (marketplace) that functions as the moment when the voter (consumer) casts his ballot (makes a purchase decision).

In following this approach, and to make the review more exact, an online search was initiated using three key words/phrases: (1) 'political advertising,' (2) 'marketing,' and (3) 'elections.' Expanding the search by simply using 'political advertising,' for example, casts too wide a net. To wit, an initial return from simply searching for 'political advertising' in just one of the four databases ultimately used returned more than 2500 published studies, a number only reduced to 1500 when academic journals were specified.

To concentrate this effort on the disciplines that most often conduct research in political advertising − communications, marketing, political science, and psychology − four major databases were used for the search: (1) Communications and Mass Media Complete, to provide results for work by communications researchers on the subject; (2) Business Source Complete, to cover the marketing side of the research stream; (3) ProQuest Political Science Journals, to offer the political viewpoint; and (4) PsycInfo via Ebscohost, to augment the analysis by discovering psychological research conducted in the area. In addition, Google Scholar was searched to capture any outliers the other databases did not find. Studies that appeared in major journals within those four fields, and were published between 1980 and 2013, were included in the search. The reasons for only examining research since 1980 included: (1) the 30-second advertisement spot did not become the primary form of television advertising until the 1980s (Kern 1989) and was used starting with the 1980 US presidential election to help shape a candidate's image (Hubbell 1991; Lakoff 2004; Newman 1994); (2) former US president (1981−1989) Ronald Reagan is often credited as the first candidate to take complex issues and communicate them so they are understood by voters (Newman 2001), by developing key messages that allow the citizenry to agree with their policies rather than simply responding to public opinion (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Shapiro and Jacobs 2000); and (3) Reagan and former US president (1993−2001) Bill Clinton perfected the art of the 'continual

campaign' in which they maintained their election-season marketing activities throughout their duration of service (Jones 1998; Kernell 1997).

Following the search parameters yielded 236 published works with research related to the three key words/phrases. A closer inspection of each article determined whether the content met the criteria of conducting research on political advertising used in the marketing of elections − hereafter referred to as 'election advertising.' After removing papers that did not meet the criteria − for example, research in the communications literature occasionally examined media coverage of elections and candidates rather than discussed research conducted in election advertising (e.g., Chang 2007; Fowler and Ridout 2009; Hayes 2010; Peter, Lauf, and Semetko 2004; Vinson and Moore 2007), and marketing literature occasionally examined strategy or participation outside of election advertising (e.g., Ben-Ur and Newman 2010; Shachar 2009) − the final 129 published articles were analysed for their purpose/objective, theoretical framework, methodology, and findings/results.

Adopting the approaches employed by DeLorme et al. (2012) and Gupta and Zeithaml (2006), analysis involved reading the resulting set of election advertising articles, looking for patterns in the content, and making comparisons across studies. Articles were analysed and coded by a three-judge panel, who assigned temporary categories for labelling purposes to identify themes present in the data (Bernard and Ryan 2010). Following a review of the coding, eight categories of research into education advertising were identified by the judges, who were in agreement on coding for 114 of the 129 (88.36%) of the articles. Additionally, two of three coders were in agreement for 10 of the remaining 15 studies. The senior investigator then resolved any remaining intercoder discrepancies (Carey, Morgan, and Oxtoby 1996). Intercoder reliability was further analysed by calculating Fleiss' Kappa for multiple raters (Fleiss 1971), with the results ($k = 0.8604$) demonstrating a high level of agreement (Landis and Koch 1977). The analysis revealed the research in election advertising generally falls into one of eight categories:

    (1) Advancements and technology;
    (2) Advertisement type;
    (3) Branding;
    (4) Cognitive response;
    (5) Ethics and policy;
    (6) Cross-cultural comparisons;
    (7) Mix and strategy;
    (8) Voter as consumer.

While it was usually easy to distinguish in which of these eight categories each article should be placed, works by several authors fall into more than one category. For example, Gelb and Bush (2011) wrote about public policy in their research on the voter−consumer relationship, Veer, Becirovic, and Martin (2010) covered image as well as marketing mix, Bradley, Angelini, and Lee (2007) researched negative ad type and cognitive response, and Druckman, Kifer, and Parkin (2010) combined ad type (negative advertising) with new technologies (websites). Therefore, each of these can be discussed in the context of either category. Still, the general categories provide a starting point for a more in-depth analysis.

The remainder of this article will be divided into three parts. The first explores and evaluates the various types of research in each of the identified categories in greater

detail. The second attempts to synthesize these articles in order to identify gaps in the research and provide direction for future research endeavours in election advertising. Finally, conclusions and limitations complete the review.

Categorical review

The eight primary categories for election advertising used in the marketing of elections provide ample evidence of the variety of research being conducted in the field since Kelley (1956) first defined the term. A closer look at the research being conducted in each category, and the general results of several of the 129 published works examined in this review, not only demonstrates the quality work being done, but the gaps in the research area overall.

Advancements and technology

Just as the Internet revolutionized marketing and communications on a global scale, and the academic research that goes along with it, practitioners have taken advantage of technological advancements when it comes to campaign advertising (see Table 1). Research in this category looks at the use of new marketing and communications methods, such as

Table 1. Studies primarily focused on advancements and technology.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Druckman, J., Kifer, M.J., and Parkin, M. (2010)	*Political Communication*	Discovered that negative ads are similar across media channels; however, differences were found for the drivers of negativity. Overall, websites don't adopt negative communications until motivated to do so.
Kaid, L.L. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	Exposure medium affects voter choice among undecided voters. Level of political cynicism affected information-seeking and political activity intentions.
Leppäniemi, M., Karjaluoto, H., Lehto, H., and Goman, A. (2010)	*Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*	A 'dual-strategy' campaign − one targeting traditional supporters and one for young voters − is promising for establishing political communication with young people. The Internet should be part of a media mix.
Mylona, I. (2008)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Forty percent of politicians use short messaging service (SMS) for political advertising and campaigning in Greece, with younger members of parliament using it more than older ones.
Taveesin, N.J., and Brown, W.J. (2006)	*Asian Journal of Communication*	Voters in Thailand increased their knowledge through TV ads and party websites. Use of TV and the Internet for did not increase involvement in parties or influence voting behaviour, but it did increase participation.

the Internet or mobile messaging, in an election advertising context. While Kaid (2002) and Druckman et al. (2010) focused their efforts on comparisons and effects between online and offline election advertising, Leppäniemi et al. (2010) and Mylona (2008) examined who leverages technology, looking at politicians and voters, respectively.

However, the relative new frontier that is the digital form of election advertising means the opportunity for extensive research remains. In particular, a major gap in research on technology and election advertising exists in understanding the psychology of the voter in response to digital election ads. This, then, helps identify two research agenda opportunities, namely the effects and effectiveness of technology on voters, and voter response in terms of behaviour. Both agenda items will be extensively addressed later in this paper.

Advertisement type

Research in this area typically examines whether negative ads are a successful strategy for candidates (e.g., Chou and Lien 2010; Dermody and Scullion 2005; Garramone 1984). Other research in this area looks at emotions and tone of advertisements (e.g., Masterson and Biggers 1986; Meirick et al. 2011; Ridout and Franz 2008) including fear-based ads (e.g., Biocca 1991a). On the other end of the spectrum, Newman (2001) examined how image-manufacturing success is tied to the ability of a candidate to make a positive emotional attachment to the voter (see Table 2).

Table 2. Studies primarily focused on advertisement type.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Airne, D. & Benoit, W.L. (2005)	*Communication Quarterly*	Most ads featured acclaims (67%) followed by attacks (32%) and defenses (1%). Non-presidential incumbents acclaimed more and attacked less. Party-sponsored ads attacked more than candidate ads.
Allen, B., Stevens, D.P, Marfleet, G., Sullivan, J. & Alger, D. (2007)	*American Politics Research*	Positive relationship between individuals' perceptions of campaign rhetoric and local news watching habits, which has an indirect effect on voter turnout.
Benoit, W.L. (2000)	*Communication Studies*	A review of 1998 US general election found "acclaims" were the most common function, followed by "attacks." Differences were observed by medium (web vs. TV) and candidate (incumbents vs. challenger).
Capelli, S. & Sabadie, W. (2009)	*Revue Française du Marketing*	Intent legitimacy, tactics legitimacy, and practice legitimacy combine with voter rapport with a candidate and situation to impact attitude and intention.
Clark, P.W. & Fine, M.B. (2012)	*Journal of Management & Marketing Research*	Comparative advertisements, when strategically created, are effective on undecided voters.
Coulter, K.S. (2008)	*International Journal of Advertising*	Positive ads and two types of negative ads help viewers form attitude toward candidates, but how they formed is affected by ad type and argument strength.

Table 2.   (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Dardis, F.E., Shen, F., & Edwards, H. (2008)	*Mass Communication & Society*	Issue-based attack ads lead to greater cynicism and lower self-efficacy than character-based attack ads.
Dermody, J. & Hanmer-Lloyd, S. (2005)	*Journal of Marketing Management*	Political advertising in the 2005 British general election relied on denigrating the opposition through image and issue attack ads, and a instilling fear.
Dermody, J. & Hanmer-Lloyd, S. (2011)	*Journal of Marketing Management*	Negative attack ads will fail to engage the electorate and potentially undermine the health of democracy.
Dermody, J. & Scullion, R. (2000)	*International Journal of Advertising*	Voters with little loyalty perceive and use political ads, particularly negative ads, differently. Viewers with low involvement are more open to negative ads.
Holtz-Bacha, C. & Kaid, L.L. (1995)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	The most commonly used format in the 1990 German election was the image-oriented candidate statement. Ads had the ability to change a candidate's image, both positively and negatively.
Hsuan-Yi, C. & Nai-Hwa, L. (2011)	*Journal of Marketing Communications*	People who view negative ads express lower attitudes and voting intentions. Effects of negative ads depends on the importance of the attack points and evidence.
Jasperson, A.E. & Fan, D. P. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	The impact of negative information in ads is roughly four times greater than positive information. However, candidate favorability suffered. Therefore, simply considering the intended impact of negative ads fails to paint a complete picture of effects.
Johnson-Cartee, K.S. & Copeland, G. (1989)	*Journalism Quarterly*	A majority (65%) do not favor use of negative political ads, but recall of such ads is high. But specific instances of negative ad use are permissible.
Johnston, A. & Kaid, L.L. (2002)	*Journal of Communication*	Key differences exist between image and issue ads, with negative ads tending to be issues-related.
Lovett, M.J. & Shachar, R. (2011)	*Marketing Science*	Negativity increases in both knowledge and budget, which also act as mediators in the relationship between closeness of the race and negativity.
Marks, E., Manning, M. & Ajzen, I. (2012)	*Journal of Applied Social Psychology*	Strong, positive messages had a greater impact on attitudes toward candidates than weak, positive messages, while message strength had no effect on negative messages.
Marmor-Lavie, G. & Weimann, G. (2008)	*Political Communication*	Religious and left-leaning parties used more intimacy appeals than nonreligious and right-leaning parties. Intimacy theory has a role in political ad research.

Table 2. (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Meirick, P. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	Comparative ads led to more counterarguments than negative ads, but negative ads provoked more source derogations. Comparative ads prompted more support arguments, positive affect response, and source bolstering.
Meirick, P.C. & Nisbett, G.S. (2011)	*Mass Communication & Society*	Voters with high-knowledge had less reactance and lower opponent ratings, while moderate-knowledge voters had the opposite. Voters without a strong candidate preference were more likely to vote for a candidate supported by negative ads.
Meirick, P.C., Nisbett, G.S., Jefferson, M.D. & Pfau, Michael W. (2011)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Partisan voters had lower evaluations for ads and sponsors for comparative ads attacking a primary opponent than for positive ads or comparative ads attacking a general election opponent. Non-partisan voters in the general election responded more positively to positive ads than comparative ads.
Pinkleton, B.E. (1997)	*Journal of Advertising*	Despite low credibility of negative ads, comparative ads using this strategy lower evaluations of the targeted candidate but do not lower evaluations of the sponsoring candidate.
Pinkleton, B.E. (1998)	*Journal of Communication*	Comparative ads work better than negative ads because it lowers evaluations of the targeted candidate without as great a negative effect on the sponsoring candidate. Comparative ads increase voters' involvement.
Pinkleton, B.E., Um, N.-H., & Austin, E.W. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	Negative ads have no effect on voters' cynicism, efficacy, or apathy. However, voters found negative ads less useful for decision making.
Richardson, Jr., G.W. (2001)	*Journal of Communication*	Exploratory data indicate that the component parts of negativity are: 1) misleading claims, 2) emotional appeals, 3) one-sided attacks, and 4) a generally loathsome view of politicians.
Robinson, C. (2010)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Parties demonstrating strong voter orientation in ads achieved electoral goals. Parties with a product orientation (i.e. selling a remarkable, rather than responsive, leader) had less success.
Rudd, R. (1986)	*Western Journal of Speech Communication*	Ads designed to appear to address policy issues failed, with the exception of revealing a candidate's specific position on the issue or specific policy proposal. Issues and images are intertwined, but image is most important.

(*continued*)

Table 2.   (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Scammell, M. & Langer, A.I. (2006)	*Media, Culture & Society*	Audience dislike of political ads may have less to do with negative/positive content balance and more to do with the pleasure/information balance.
Scullion, R. & Dermody, J. (2005)	*International Journal of Advertising*	A comparison of three general election party election broadcasts (PEBs) found similarities in that issues were dominant over image.
Shen, F. (2012)	*Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*	Voters concepts of information/transformational advertising was similar to their concepts of issue/image advertising, though incumbents used more transformational and positive appeals than challengers, who used more informational appeals and negative ads.
Shen, F., Dardis, F.E. & Edwards, H.H. (2011)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Exposure levels and candidate preferences effected voters' perceptual differences of negative ads. An increase in perceived effects of negative ads predicted support for campaign finance reform.
Stevens, D. (2012)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Negative ads do not have more impact than positive ads. Instead, the impact of negative ads may be due more to information it contains regarding the issue.
Torres, I.M., Hyman, M. R. & Hamilton, J. (2012)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Candidates are evaluated higher after voters view attack ads from the candidate rather than a party.
vanHeerde-Hudson, J. (2011)	*British Politics*	There is no increase in the number of negative ads in UK general elections since 1964. Less than half of all appeals are negative, and when ads are negative they focus on issues rather than image.
Veneti, A. & Poulakidakos, S. (2010)	*Journal of Journalism & Communication*	Comparisons in two elections show differences in the use of image versus issue, the dominance of emotional appeals, the change from social-orientation to economic-orientation, and negative strategy employed by one party versus the other.

Negative ads not only dominate the airwaves, but the amount of research on negative election advertisements is substantial. While Taylor (2010, 681) seemed to muse depressingly that 'even more negative attack ads than usual' were part of the US elections in 2010, these 'attack' ads are one of the most popular research topics, with one out of every four published works in this review investigating negative advertising in some capacity. Most studies looked at whether negative ads were successful for the candidates who employed them as part of their campaign strategies (e.g., Allen et al. 2007; Garramone 1984; Marks et al. 2012).

The most rigorous research in negative political ads examined their success on voters' memory (Bradley et al. 2007; Newhagen and Reeves 1991), while other research tested

possible marketing models (Biocca 1991b; Coulter 2008) for practitioners to follow. Results of case studies on negative election ads have been mixed, with Dermody and Scullion (2000) supporting its continued use for specific audiences, and Richardson (2001) arguing previous research failed to take audiovisual and narrative elements into account for holistic viewing of ads the way voters see them.

It appears, however, that methodological consistency is an issue for researchers. Therefore, a gap in the research stream exists for an approach to election advertising type that could be adopted universally. This opportunity leads to research agenda items related to (1) applying consumer behaviour models and methods to voters, and (2) the development of theoretical frameworks upon which to ground election advertising studies.

Branding

Until recently, brands were associated with parties rather than individuals (Needham 2006; Smith 2001; White and de Chernatony 2002). That changed with the election of Reagan in 1980 and the creating of a presidential image (Hubbell 1991), and was further substantiated in recent candidate-as-brand research (French and Smith 2010; Guzmán and Sierra 2009; Schneider 2004; Smith 2009). Early research in this category by Shyles (1988) examined the use of political advertisements to assist in the shaping of that individual brand. Later efforts examined image-based advertising designed to develop branding for either a candidate or a political party (e.g., Kern and Just 1995; Smith 2001) and include the use of celebrity endorsements in election advertising (e.g., Henneberg and Chen 2007; Veer et al. 2010).

Since then, research has included work on the development of candidate brand image (Kern and Just 1995), or that of both party and candidate (Smith 2001). Finally, this area of research includes use of celebrities to endorse candidates (Choi and Berger 2010; Henneberg and Chen 2007; Veer et al. 2010) to see if celebrities have the same effect on politicians as they do on products. Results were mixed, with most finding level of salience to the audience the determining factor (see Table 3).

A gap exists in the category as a whole because of the relative newness of the candidate-as-brand concept. Therefore, opportunities abound to examine candidate brands using existing branding metrics, as well as to create a better understanding of how candidate brand building takes place in a political environment, and the role election advertising plays in that construction. The effectiveness of candidate brands is another gap in this nascent field, as is the understanding of the voter−brand relationship. These gaps can be overcome by a closer examination of voters as consumers, thus creating a research agenda opportunity discussed in detail in the next section.

Cognitive response

As the internal processing complement to the external branding and image efforts, cognitive response research in election advertising has looked at whether voters respond to rational arguments that attempt to shape public opinion (see Table 4). Also known as issues-related advertisements, research in this area (e.g., Kim et al. 2009; O'Cass 2002a) examines whether arguments that explain where a candidate stands on an issue or attempt to inform voters about a specific ballot initiative have been successful. Typically the most rigorous research often involves recall and memory (e.g., Bradley et al. 2007; Faber and Storey 1984), while Jin et al. (2009) provide the fundamentals on voter attitudes toward election advertising by developing a scale for future research, and finding that political beliefs do

Table 3. Studies primarily focused on branding.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Findings
Choi, C., and Berger, R. (2010)	*Journal of Business Ethics*	The Internet has extended the global reach and influence of celebrities beyond the entertainment sector into the political realm.
Elebash, C. (1984)	*Journal of Advertising*	British political parties and candidates were moving quickly towards building an image for leaders, but the conservative party was more successful.
Hoegg, J., and Lewis, M. V. (2011)	*Journal of Marketing Research*	Effects of a candidate's physical appearance are dependent on trait associations with the party. Appearance-based inferences about candidates can influence election outcomes, but impact is driven by trait associations at the party brand level.
Kern, M., and Just, M. (1995)	*Political Communication*	Messages in ads are more likely to stimulate discourse than news media coverage. Negative ads are highly effective against the target even if the source is penalized.
Shyles, L. (1988)	*Political Communication & Persuasion*	While ads offer accurate portrayals of candidates, the role messages can be nullified by perceived dissonance by voters in terms of the images they convey about the candidates they represent.
Smith, G. (2001)	*Journal of Marketing Management*	In the 2001 UK general election, Labour gained an advantage in image building by its ads. But in the 4-week campaign, there is no evidence to suggest a clear winner or loser in image terms.
Veer, E., Becirovic, I., and Martin, B.A.S. (2010)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Voters with low political salience were more likely than engaged voters to vote for a political party with a celebrity endorser. Using a celebrity did not show an increase in voter intention.

not predict attitude, while political involvement does. Finally, a significant portion of cognitive election advertising research focuses on effects of certain aspects of the ads (e.g., Burton and Netemeyer 1992; Holtz-Bacha and Kaid 1995; O'Cass 2002a; Perloff and Kinsey 1992).

In general, research on cognitive response to election ads focuses on salience and involvement (Burton and Netemeyer 1992; Craig et al. 2005; Newman and Sheth 1984; O'Cass 2002, 2005) or evaluation and influence (Biocca 1991a, 1991b; Cho 2008; Chou and Lien 2010; Dermody and Scullion 2005; Hill 1989; Hsuan-Yi and Nai-Hwa 2010; Pattie and Johnston 2002; Phillips et al. 2008; Sides et al. 2010). Missing from these efforts is how the ads are processed by voters, exhibiting a gap in the voter-as-consumer research, as does the lack of additional efforts to use the scale developed by Jin et al. (2009).

Table 4. Studies primarily focused on cognitive response.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Biocca, F. (1991a)	*Television and Political Advertising, Vol. 1: Psychological Processes; Vol. 2: Signs, Codes, and Images*	Viewers have differing methods of fine-grain processing for meaningful stimuli based on type of ad which can lead to success or failure of effectiveness.
Biocca, F. (1991b)	*Television and Political Advertising, Vol. 1: Psychological Processes; Vol. 2: Signs, Codes, and Images*	Semantic processes of a viewer construct a mental model of the political message, helping discover how different voter groups react to political ads.
Bradley, S.D., Angelini, J.R. & Lee, S. (2007)	*Journal of Advertising*	Negative ads activate aversive motivational systems, causing viewers to reflexively move away. And details from negative ads are more easily recognized, but are more inaccurately reported.
Burton, S. & Netemeyer, R.G. (1992)	*Psychology & Marketing*	Enduring and situational involvement have direct effects on response involvement, and vary across individuals. Enduring involvement has an indirect impact on response involvement.
Cho, J. (2008)	*Communication Research*	Voters responded to increased ads by seeking more political information through news, Internet, and social networking sites, and engaging in more political discussion.
Chou, H.Y. & Lien, N.H. (2010)	*International Journal of Advertising*	Polls have a positive effect on attitudes toward candidates and voting intentions, allowing leaders to use negative ads to generate cognitive and candidate responses. Negative ads from an incumbent elicit better cognitive responses.
Craig, S.C., Kane, J.G. & Gainous, J. (2005)	*Political Communication*	Knowledgeable voters who read a local paper less frequently were more likely to learn about candidate policy than voters who did not. In addition, TV news does little to increase issue-based learning.
Dermody, J. & Scullion, R. (2005)	*Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*	Young voters in the UK had high levels of awareness, but unfavorable attitudes toward most political ads, equating attitudes toward politics. Most considered political ads to be as persuasive as commercial ads.
Faber, R.J. & Storey, M. C. (1984)	*Journal of Advertising*	Unaided recall was greater for preferred candidate's ads than the opponent's. However, 34.4% of respondents could not recall anything from either ad.

Table 4. (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Garramone, G.M., Atkin, C.K., Pinkleton, B.E. & Cole, R.T. (1990)	*Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*	Negative ads may cause greater candidate image discrimination and attitude polarization. Ads did not differ for effects on involvement in the election, communication behavior, nor voting likelihood.
Gerber, A.S., Gimpel, J.G., Green, D.P. & Shaw, D.R. (2011)	*American Politlcal Science Review*	Ads have strong effects on voting preferences, but these rapidly dissipate. This up-and-down pattern is similar to changes based on priming.
Hill, R.P. (1989)	*Journal of Advertising*	Voter response and attitude toward ads are more positive for ads in which the sponsor is shown as positive and the opponent is not mentioned.
Hsuan-Yi, C. & Nai-Hwa, L. (2010)	*International Journal of Advertising*	Poll standing has a positive effect on attitude toward the candidate and voting intention; leaders can use negative ads to generate better responses; negative ads sponsored by incumbents elicit better responses; and poll ranking and status combine to affect voters' responses to negative ads.
Jin, S.J., An, S. & Simon, T. (2009)	*Psychology & Marketing*	Five dimensions emerged during scale development on voter beliefs: 1) information, 2) veracity, 3) cynicism, 4) entertainment, and 5) "money politics."
Kim, H., Rao, A.R. & Lee, A.Y. (2009)	*Journal of Consumer Research*	Abstract appeals are more persuasive than concrete appeals when voters' decisions are temporally distant and the opposite it is imminent. Results are stronger among the politically uninformed.
Masterson, J.T. & Biggers, T. (1986)	*Psychology: A Quarterly Journal of Human Behavior*	Partial support that ads elicit emotions along three continua: 1) pleasure / displeasure, 2) arousal / nonarousal, and 3) dominance / submissiveness.
Newhagen, J.E. & Reeves, B. (1991)	*Television and Political Advertising, Vol. 1: Psychological Processes; Vol. 2: Signs, Codes, and Images*	Recognition and identification were more accurate when viewers saw negative ads as opposed to positive or comparative ads.
Newman, B.I. & Sheth, J.N. (1984)	*Journal of Advertising*	US female voters in the 1980s were more involved, interested and concerned about politics. Candidate characteristics were the primary influence on voting.
O'Cass, A. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	Voter involvement, satisfaction, and emotion affected believability of a positive campaign. Only involvement and satisfaction affected a negative campaign.

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Table 4. (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
O'Cass, A. (2005)	*Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*	Ad believability is influenced by voter involvement, perceived behavioral control, and satisfaction. Party preference also plays a role in believability.
Pattie, C.J. & Johnston, R. J. (2002)	*Political Communication*	Party election broadcasts (PEBs) influence UK voters, particularly in their evaluations of parties and leaders. Viewers of a third party PEBs become more likely to support the party.
Perloff, R.M. & Kinsey, D. (1992)	*Journal of Advertising Research*	Political consultants and journalists differ significantly in their perceptions of political ads, while both thought negative ads had powerful effects.
Phillips, J.M., Urbany, J. E. & Reynolds, T.J. (2008)	*Journal of Consumer Research*	Negative ads produced more critical responses, but prompted more changes in voter intention. Four effects were found – reinforcement, backlash, defensive reactance, and position change.
Sides, J., Lipsitz, K. & Grossman, M. (2010)	*American Politics Research*	Voters separate evaluations of campaign tone from evaluation of how much useful information they receive. But those who believe a campaign is negative will not necessarily find it uninformative.
Tedesco, J.C. (2002)	*Journal of Advertising*	Emotional responses to ads were strong predictors of candidate image evaluations. Ad evaluation was associated with valence of the message strategy and its emotional content at specific points in the ad.
Tinkham, S.F., Weaver-Lariscy, R. & Avery, E.J. (2009)	*Journal of Advertising*	Both young and old voters did not accurately recall negative and ambiguous messages. Results were mixed regarding persuasive impact of ads, with young voters showing attitudinal vulnerability, and old voters showing behavioral vulnerability.
Valentino, N.A., Traugott, M.W. & Hutchings, V. L. (2002)	*Political Communication*	Subtle race cues in ads increase issue alignment for "racialized" issues like affirmative action, welfare, and crime policy. Ideology can be primed by racial cues.
Yoon, K., Pinkleton, B., & Ko, W. (2005)	*Journal of Marketing Communications*	Effects and effectiveness of negative ads depend on the voter's situational involvement and candidate credibility. Highly involved voters have greater cynicism when a high-credibility candidate uses them rather than a low-credibility candidate. Cynicism does not change for low involvement voters.

Cross-cultural

This is one of the most widely researched categories in election advertising, likely because two of the most common publication outlets for political marketing research are the *International Journal of Advertising* and the *European Journal of Marketing*, the latter of which published special issues on political marketing in 1996, 2001, and 2010. Typical efforts are case studies focusing on how election advertising differs based on culture, regulation, and political structure, providing comparisons from country to country (e.g., Elebash 1984; Griffin and Kagan 1996; Moring 1995).

With the two international publications providing an outlet, and encouraging continued research in political marketing through special sections and editorial commentaries (e.g., Taylor 2010), the number of comparison studies between US election advertising and campaigns with non-US based advertising is high (see Table 5). These comparison studies typically focus on how regulatory policies or cultural differences in various countries affect the style of political advertising used in an election (e.g., Holtz-Bacha and Kaid 1995; Marmor-Lavie and Weimann 2008; Moring 1995; Siune 1991; Tamar and Yoram 1998). Other studies provided direct country-to-country comparisons, usually between other countries and the United States (e.g., Griffin and Kagan 1996; Elebash 1984; Tak, Kaid, and Khang 2007; Holtz-Bacha, Kaid, and Johnston 1994).

From the analysis, four specific gaps in the literature were identified: (1) an historical perspective attempting to explain how and why these cultural contexts developed, (2) the effects of cultural aspects on voter response to election advertising, (3) cultural effects on the creation of regulations and policy that affect election ads, and (4) qualitative content analysis research analysing elections advertisements between cultures or over time. All these create a research rich agenda proposed later in the paper.

Table 5. Studies primarily focused on cross-cultural issues.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Beltrán, U. (2007)	*Political Communication*	Political ads and news coverage functioned together to effect changes in candidate preferences, with news coverage accounting for more of the variance.
Griffin, M., and Kagan, S. (1996)	*Political Communication*	Visuals from the 1992 US presidential election and Israeli national elections varied on ethnic, religious, national, or subcultural imagery. Elaborate cultural images support unifying mythic themes better than issue-specific rhetoric.
Harris, P., and Lock, A. (2010)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Identifies issues for research in political marketing, including the influence of technology. Calls for more studies crossing cultures and empirical research to establish key constructs.
Holtz-Bacha, C., Kaid, L. L., and Johnston, A. (1994)	*Political Communication*	French and US ads are dominated by issues, while German ads concentrate more on party and candidate images. French ads use more logical appeals, while US and German ads primarily use emotional appeals.

(*continued*)

Table 5. (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Kaid, L.L., and Holtz-Bacha, C. (1995)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	Similarities exist across cultures in that most ads focus on issues, are mostly positive, are emotional, don't differ from incumbent to challenger, and are effective.
Lopez-Escobar, E., LLamas, J.P., McCombs, M., and Lennon, F.R. (1998)	*Political Communication*	Ads and media coverage in Spain exist in a reciprocal relationship. Ads printed in newspapers influenced media agendas of TV and newspapers, while TV news coverage influenced the advertising agenda on TV.
Maier, M., and Tenscher, J. (2009)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	Parties in Germany failed in their use of TV ads to create successful campaigns in 2004, while smaller parties were successful by using personalization strategies aimed at specific target audiences.
Mazzoleni, G., and Roper, C.S. (1995)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	Attitudes towards incumbents declined when ads did not address scandals, but instead focused on candidate credibility. Ads had no effect on attitudes towards challengers, who used emotional appeals more.
Mujani S., and Liddle, R.W. (2010)	*Journal of Democracy*	Voters in Indonesia's third election since the introduction of democracy were motivated by: (1) support for individual leaders and candidates, (2) influence of campaigns, (3) perceptions of the economy, (4) evaluations of governmental performance, and (5) party identification.
Panagopoulos, C., and Green, D.P. (2011)	*Political Research Quarterly*	Nonpartisan radio ads are an effective and cost-efficient means of raising Latino voter turnout. Results underscore the distinction between a group's typical voting rate and the extent to which it can be mobilized.
Siune, K. (1991)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	Danish belief in equal access to new political parties could lead to political instability. But the ad system meets the needs of voters, who see it as balanced and their primary source of election information.
Tak, J., Kaid, L.L., and Khang, H. (2007)	*Asian Journal of Communication*	A comparison of TV ads from Korea and the US found each kind was reflective of its cultural values with regard to high-/low-context communication, degree of uncertainty avoidance, and nonverbal expressions.
Tamar, L., and Yoram, P. (1998)	*Political Communication*	Despite the use of spot advertising in the campaign mix, the effectiveness of ads in Israeli elections was diminished by the manner in which it was covered by the news media.

Ethics and policy

One might believe that given the amount of government intervention in campaign policy and ethics (e.g., Federal Election Campaign Act 1971; Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act 2002; *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* 2010 in the US alone) that researchers would be keen to evaluate policy and its effects. Yet the research in this area is limited to either the legislative effects on campaigns in general and election advertising specifically (Soberman and Sadoulet 2007), or predictions of changes in public policy (Hill 1991; Shaw and Ragland 2000) based on public opinion and legislative actions (see Table 6).

This area of research typically falls into evaluations and critiques of existing policy and how it has changed or will change campaign advertising (e.g., Hill 1991; Soberman and Sadoulet 2007). Research in this category also often exposes holes in existing policy and provides recommendations for future public policy (e.g., Shaw and Ragland 2000). However, studies on whether the policies have been implemented, and if so, what their effects have been, have not been found, thus exposing a gap in the literature.

Table 6. Studies primarily focused on ethics and policy.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Banker, S. (1992)	*Journal of Business Ethics*	Negative ads are not unethical, but serve a positive function by creating alternative rhetorical visions that contribute to voter decision making.
Gelb, B.D., and Bush, D. (2011)	*Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*	Reflecting on the Citizens United verdict in the US Supreme Court, insights for political strategists and public policy makers are provided for objectives, audiences, partnerships, and communications.
Hill, R.P. (1991)	*Advances in Consumer Research*	Use of negative ad strategies diminishes positive perceptions by voters of all candidates and reduces candidate believability.
Haug, M.M., Koppang, H.,, and Svennevig, J. (2010)	*Nordicom Review*	Without ads or party-controlled TV programming in Norway, there was a 'moderator bias' in journalists' treatment of politicians along the political divide.
Shaw, G.M., and Ragland, A.S. (2000)	*Public Opinion Quarterly*	The US public is dissatisfied with campaign finance practices, perennial incumbency, and the influence of political action committees.
Soberman, D., and Sadoulet, L. (2007)	*Management Science*	When there is significant polarization among undecided voters, and campaigns have large budgets, parties reduce ad spend on opponent's constituency and aggressively focus on traditional supporters.

Mix and strategy

The seventh area of research in election advertising pertains to how the ads complement the marketing mix or are part of the overall campaign strategy (e.g., Dermody and Scullion 2001; Soley and Reid 1982; Tinkham and Weaver-Lariscy 1995; Weaver-Lariscy and Tinkham 1996) either in terms of marketing mix or advertising expenditures (see Table 7). The research is typically designed to discover and/or recommend the most effective marketing mix or campaign strategies, usually in a post-election analysis of the results in comparison to practitioner implementation (e.g., Goldstein and Freedman 2002; Huang and Shaw 2009; Weaver-Lariscy and Tinkham 1996).

Table 7. Studies primarily focused on mix and strategy.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Barkin, S.M. (1986)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Republicans spent more on radio and TV ads, with strategic planning directing the effort. TV's role worldwide allows voters to see candidates in multiple roles and situations.
Basen, I. (2009)	*Canadian Journal of Communication*	The combination of old and new media to pro-actively frame an opponent led to election success for the Conservative Party in the 2008 election in Canada.
Bauer, H.H, Huber, F. & Herrmann A. (1996)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Reputation, which is expensive to build and can be destroyed by a single negative experience, functions as an element of substance to be communicated through political ads.
Bowler, S., Donovan, T. & Fernandez, K. (1996)	*European Journal of Marketing*	The more political parties rely on outside professionals for their marketing, a growing trend in organizational innovation, the weaker they may become.
Chang, C. (2007)	*Asian Journal of Communication*	Candidate-initiated issue agendas and journalist-initiated issue agendas influenced one other in Taiwan presidential elections, but unequally with candidate-initiated issue agenda having a greater impact.
Chapman, R.G. & Palda, K.S. (1984)	*Marketing Science*	Expenditures influence votes, with campaign-initiated expenditures positively related and rival's expenditures negatively related. There is carry-over to following elections, giving incumbents an advantage.
Chun-Ping, C. & Chien-Chiang, L. (2009)	*Journal of Economic Policy Reform*	Spending on ads by candidates who share a party with the leader has an effect on votes earned. Ad spending has a significant effect on votes earned, but is greater for challengers.
Connaughton, S. & Jarvis, S.E. (2004)	*Journal of Communication*	Patterns in Latino-oriented ads emerge − positive invitations to self-identify with a party, a Latino-centric worldview rather than focus on the candidate − that position Latinos as a growing force in US politics.
Dermody, J. & Scullion, R. (2001)	*Journal of Marketing Management*	Ads play a key role in agenda setting and control of election themes in the UK. Media coverage of ads to reinforce party stereotypes. There was little use of the Internet as a vehicle to support campaigns.

(*continued*)

Table 7.   (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Devlin, L.P. (1994)	*Political Communication*	Advertising early and using consistent imagery fared better than advertising later, creating multiple images, and varying ads.
Devlin, L.P. (1995)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	Examination of US presidential ads from 1952-92 revealed: 1) good foundation spots are important; 2) having few spots signifies a good campaign; 3) good campaigns need memorable ads; 4) image and issue ads are important; 5) best campaigns use good negative and positive ads.
Fletcher, D. & Slutsky, S. (2011)	*Public Choice*	A probabilistic voting model in which individuals have preferences for one candidate over the other based on a variety of factors related to campaign activities, such as level of advertising and ad buys, rather than issues.
Goldstein, K. & Freedman, P. (2002)	*Political Communication*	Ads must be studied at market level; level of competition affects ad volume; parties, interest groups, and down-ballot race ads must be considered when evaluating tone; competitiveness and negatively are positively related; timing and tone must be considered in tandem; temporal and geographic targeting create conditions to see ad effects.
Harris, P., Lock, A. & O'Shaughnessy, N. (1999)	*Marketing Intelligence & Planning*	Last minute advertising led to passage of the referendum. However, this may have been a result of one's propensity to vote rather than voting direction.
Henneberg, S.C. & Chen, Y.-L. (2007)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	While celebrities are becoming more vocal in national elections, general theories such as Americanization do not account for the presence of celebrity politics. It is also necessary to understand cultural context.
Hinson, R. & Tweneboah-Koduah, E.Y. (2012)	*Journal of African Business*	"Product factors" were the key them in an election in Ghana, followed by organizational themes, process, and market factors.
Huang, T. & Shaw, D. (2009)	*Journal of Political Marketing*	In the 2008 election, Barak Obama pursued a "mixed" strategy similar to Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, and both Obama and John McCain allocated resources to states they identified as most important to winning.
Moring, T. (1995)	*Political Advertising in Western Democracies: Parties & Candidates on Television*	The first election in Finland to allow paid spots yielded short, uninformative ads that avoided positions on issues and instead relied on imagery to support verbal rhetoric, but resulted in a more aware electorate.
O'Shaughnessy, N. (2005)	*Journal of Marketing Management*	Campaigns should not blur their focus, symbolism is key, and elections are increasingly determined by precision targeting of swing voters in a UK election.

Table 7.   (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
O'Shaughnessy, N.J. & Henneberg, S.C. (2007)	*Journal of Public Affairs*	In the 2004 US election, contextual factors were heavily weighted toward Bush. Campaign managers understood and applied the concept of the "perpetual political marketing campaign" initiated by Reagan.
Parmalee, J. (2002)	*Political Communication*	A framing analysis of six candidate primary campaign videos found one consistent frame − media validation of the candidacy.
Porto, M.P. (2007)	*Political Communication*	TV news and ads played contrasting roles in terms of framing effects during the 2002 Brazilian presidential election. Exposure to news led voters to support the frame promoted by the incumbent, but exposure to ads led voters to reject this frame.
Quinn, P. & Kivijarv, L. (2005)	*International Journal of Advertising*	Increased donations at the local as well as national level drove the growth in advertising in the 2004 general election. Early spending, niche advertising, and a focus on "swing states" also lead to increased spending. Spending by political interest groups changed campaign strategy.
Ridout, T.N. & Franz, M. (2008)	*Political Communication*	Measures used by researchers to examine campaign tone are at least moderately positively correlated with each other, and campaign tone effects voter turnout.
Roberts, M. & McCombs, M. (1994)	*Political Communication*	Newspapers set the agenda for local TV news reporting on political issues, political ads are an agenda setter for TV news and newspaper coverage.
Shachar, R. (2009)	*Journal of Marketing Research*	Marketing activities rather than closeness of a race have a dramatic effect on voter turnout rate. Only when the marketing variables are not accounted does closeness affect turnout.
Sherr, S.A. (1999)	*Political Communication*	Five patterns exist for the use of children in ads: 1) economic insecurity, 2) poverty, 3) crime, 4) war, and 5) hope for the future. Visual rhetoric helps frame the candidate as the one who works on behalf of children.
Soley, L.C. & Reid, L.N. (1982)	*Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*	Promotional expenditures are related to election success. Promotional expenditures are as important as party affiliation or incumbency, and affect votes received in both high- and low-involvement elections.
Stephens, N. & Merrill, B.D. (1984)	*Journal of Advertising*	Older voters were more susceptible to persuasive messages than younger voters because they changed more during the course of a campaign. Older voters were much more likely to contribute to a candidate.
Stroud, N.J. (2010)	*Journal of Communication*	Partisan selective exposure is related to polarization, or can lead to polarization over time. In some cases, the reverse is true in that polarization leads to partisan selective exposure.

Table 7. (*Continued*)

Author(s) and year	Publication	Key findings
Tinkham, S.F. & Weaver-Lariscy, R. A. (1995)	*Political Communication*	An issues or image strategy is independent of incumbency status. Challengers use negative strategies significantly greater than incumbents. The choice to use negative ads and focus on an opponent's image is predicted by status.
Weaver-Lariscy, R.A. & Tinkham, S.F. (1996)	*Journal of Business Research*	Direct mail is increasingly being used, with incumbents showing greater usage than challengers. But challengers increased chances of winning if they allocated proportionately more funds to direct mail.

Most of these studies are based on results of the campaign, often measured in either candidate success (Chun-Ping and Chien-Chiang 2009; Goldstein and Freedman 2002) or voting behaviour (Chapman and Palda 1984; Fletcher and Slutsky 2011). There is also an historical element to election ad strategy that Barkin (1986) explains when looking at how Dwight Eisenhower's US presidential campaign in 1952 changed the way political marketing was conducted.

Other research on effective marketing mix or campaign strategies compared advertising expenditures to targeted electoral college votes (Huang and Shaw 2009) or evaluated the use of direct mail (Weaver-Lariscy and Tinkham 1996) in election results. Specific advertising strategies such as targeting seniors (Stephens and Merrill 1984; Tinkham, Weaver-Lariscy, and Avery 2009) or leveraging celebrity endorsements (Veer et al. 2010) are also evaluated and provided as managerial implications.

One omission in this research area is a meta-analysis that researchers could use as a starting point for future work, and practitioners could use to create campaign strategies. Research recommendations for in-depth analysis of ad type and the use of technology in election ad campaigns help substantiate two research agendas proposed in the next section.

Voters as consumers

The final category may be the most important on a number of fronts, but could also be the most overlooked. It centres on the relationship between the 'individual as voter' and the 'individual as consumer' in an attempt to compare marketing influences and audience behaviour in both contexts (e.g., Gelb and Bush 2011; Peng and Hackley 2009). Determining whether voters can be treated the same as consumers is a key for those conducting research as well as those implementing strategies. However, a limited number of studies have attempted to evaluate this relationship (see Table 8).

In this analysis, only Lock and Harris (1996), Gelb and Bush (2011), and Peng and Hackley (2009) studied the overlap, or transition, from one audience to another. In the latter work, the authors examined voter responses to election advertising and found limits to the voter−consumer analogy because of the different contexts that require differing messaging and results in unique audience responses. They concluded that marketing researchers must be careful in making sweeping generalizations when it comes to attributing consumer behaviour to voter behaviour. And even though Lock and Harris (1996) provide seven reasons why voters differ from consumers, and also look closely at the brand

Table 8.   Studies primarily focused on voter-consumer relationship.

Author(s) and year	Publication	Findings
Lock, A., and Harris, P. (1996)	*European Journal of Marketing*	Political marketing differs from service marketing in seven ways, but differences have not been sufficiently investigated. Frameworks or models are needed, with exchange theory providing a starting point.
Peng, N., and Hackley, C. (2009)	*Qualitative Market Research*	Basic processing of commercial and political media messages are similar at the macro level. But challenges to the voter−consumer analogy revolve around differing contexts in each case, and reflect differing responses at the micro level.

strategies used in political marketing and the impact of public policy, they are quick to point out there are no defined boundaries or a good general theory of political marketing.

This provides ample research opportunities to better define, understand, and market to the voter−consumer. Applying appropriate consumer behaviour theoretical foundations, models, and methods to the voter−consumer paradigm then opens a wide door for ambitious researchers, and supports the recommendation for an entire research agenda.

Developing a research agenda

To develop a research agenda, a review of the 129 articles must provide opportunities for further understanding of how and why the principles of marketing function in a political context, and offer practical applications to practitioners who work on political campaigns. Based on the synthesis of the articles and gaps discovered, six agendas have been identified that offer the opportunity for additional research in election advertising.

Research agenda I: Generate empirical support for the existence or nonexistence of the 'voter as consumer' paradigm

Are voters consumers? Can the two be treated similarly when it comes to marketing strategy and the marketing mix? Is selling a candidate the same as selling a car? Do theoretical foundations of consumer behaviour hold in voter behaviour? Early research (e.g., Lock and Harris 1996) has suggested there may not be much similarity between voters and consumers. More recently, researchers (e.g., Peng and Hackley 2009; Scammell and Langer 2006) and practitioners (e.g., Wilner 2012) seem to agree there are limits to the 'voter as consumer' paradigm. Specifically, Scammell and Langer (2006) argue the better approach may be investigating the differences through examination of political and commercial advertising, because while the latter attends to audience aesthetics, the former's hard-sell approach attempts to be sincere but with little regard to audience pleasure. However, other researchers argue that there may be commonality between consumers and voters in terms of advertisement perception (Jin et al. 2009), thus making it possible to study attitudes and beliefs for election advertising by translating voter attitudes and beliefs from a consumer context (e.g., O'Cass 2002b).

Still, while the goals of the political marketer and the consumer marketer are the same − to influence the behaviour of the target audience in a way that results in an exchange between 'buyer and seller' − the way each measures success differs. Most

consumer-based firms would be thrilled with 40% market share. But gaining 40% of the vote in politics in a two-candidate race means you have lost by a landslide. As a result, voters are not treated the same as consumers when it comes to advertising strategy. In a two-party system, for example, political strategists cannot afford to focus all their efforts on one core consumer base, but must identify multiple segments that can be coalesced into achieving 50.1% market share. In addition, while most people understand the value of owning a car, voter turnout in recent elections (e.g., 66% in the 2010 UK parliamentary elections; 57.5% in the 2012 US presidential election; 49.1% in the 2011 Swiss assembly elections) seems to indicate that not everyone ascribes the same value to casting a vote.

Therefore, the most glaring gap in the marketing literature related to election advertising is the need for a better understanding of the 'voter as consumer' paradigm. Lock and Harris (1996) provided ample impetus to initiate such research with their identification of the differences between voters and consumers. Of the seven differences, one of most intriguing is that all voters make their decision on the same day, though early voting is an increasing trend (Mason 2010). Research in this area could look at group dynamics of the voting location, effect of candidate signage adjacent to the voting location, effect of candidate or candidate representative solicitation adjacent to the voting location as a form of personal selling, influence of election advertising in temporal relation to election day, effects of social influences on voter decision in temporal relation to election day, and so on. In conducting any of this research, it is important that academics do so in the context of comparison between voter behaviour and consumer behaviour.

Along these same lines, Lock and Harris (1996) identify the concept that voters do not receive any tangible product for their investment, that they are obligated to the decision of the whole, and that can they cannot easily replace the selected candidate. Because there is no customer service or exchange centre for voters, and with the daunting political process of the recall election the only recourse of the dissatisfied voting bloc, post-election analysis would be vital to determine if voters' attitudes toward the election outcome, or the elected candidate, are affected by the election advertising connected with that candidate.

Finally, they identify the challenge of the brand in political marketing, and the difficulties campaign strategists have in establishing and reinforcing the brand image of the candidate in an election, particularly for a challenger. As Lock and Harris (1996, 22) point out, 'the political party or candidate is a complex intangible product which the voter cannot easily unbundle. As a consequence, most voters have to judge on the overall packaged concept or message.' This identifies opportunities for research in the cognitive methods voters go through when attempting to understand a political brand, the need for a model that captures the voters' cognition throughout an election campaign, the possible different modes voters use when dealing with incumbent versus challenger candidates in brand understanding, and the effects of election advertising in creating or solidifying that brand. In addition, a need exists to discover what other marketing elements contribute to candidate brand building within the advertising realm. For example, does the use of a celebrity endorser really affect voter attitude, as it does for product and service marketing? If so, how? If not, why is it not effective in political marketing? As of yet, all of these represent untapped discoveries.

Research agenda II: Identify reasons for success and failure to impact voters through new technology

The use of technology in politics is increasing (Kaid 2002), but research into the core of political marketing to identify key influences is missing (Dann et al. 2007). And when it

comes to election advertising, campaigns have not truly embraced new technology (Wilner 2012) nor, it seems, have researchers. This may be a result of early research comparing TV ads to Internet ads that found mixed results in their effectiveness (Kaid 2002). Still, there is a difference between consumer and political marketing online (Leppäniemi et al. 2010), that researchers can examine and campaign managers can leverage for their online election advertising strategies. Websites alone provide a representative sample of election races with voluminous amounts of information that is both unmediated and holistic (Druckman et al. 2010), offering researchers an opportunity to closely examine campaign behaviour in terms of advertising strategies.

In addition, the latest technological advancements such as social networking (Facebook) and mobile messaging (Twitter) provide opportunities in the technology category for election advertising research. For example, do registered voters watch political ads when these are posted on a social networking site? And, more importantly, what kind of effect do they have? Because Twitter does not allow for replay of advertisements, but rather transmits links to online advertisements, only the links can be forwarded by people with such an account. But how effective are campaigns that employ such a strategy? Do voters pass along these links and, if so, at what regularity? And, finally, do recipients of forwarded links, whether from the campaign itself or personally trusted sources, view the ad, at what rate, and with what effect? The results could be extremely valuable for political marketers in their campaign strategies going forward.

In the 2008 and 2012 US presidential elections, the Obama campaign was praised by political pundits and the media for implementing new strategies using social media. However, it was 'traditional' email that proved to be the most effective in generating funds, volunteers, enthusiasm, and votes (Dumenco 2012). But only a fraction of these emails had video links, and even fewer contained advertisements. The simple reality may be that campaign strategists have not yet figured out how to use the latest technology to their fullest advantage, relying on it instead primarily for reaching supporters and raising funds (McChesney and Nichols 2012). In the 2004 US presidential election, roughly two thirds of Internet spending was designed to raise money or register voters rather than for persuasion or supporting a candidate (Quinn and Kivijarv 2005).

The exception may be the use of YouTube. This online video site has become the home of more than 600 candidates in US elections alone (Michel and Pilkington 2012) and was used by both Obama and Romney in the 2012 US presidential election. The advantages of using YouTube rather than traditional media outlets are cost and speed. There is no media buy with YouTube, saving campaigns valuable funding to pay for broadcast political ads, and campaigns can react almost immediately to their rival's messages and attempt to counter any claims. YouTube videos by candidates also appear to be developed with the idea that they will be forwarded via social media (Michel and Pilkington 2012), yet there is little research on the effectiveness of political ads on social media to affect attitudes or behaviour. In addition, while YouTube does have its benefits, how many voters will tune in to a candidate's YouTube channel? And who will those individuals be? Will any of them be undecided voters, or will it simply be a case of 'preaching to the choir?' And, should voters access the channel, what types of ads will be most effective in this communications setting?

YouTube also has the added dimension of being a participative medium, meaning that voters can create their own content and upload it to the source. However, that opens the door for parody, with roughly 10% of all YouTube ads falling into this category (Berthon, Pitt, and Campbell 2008). Parodies, or spoof ads, are particularly plentiful in political advertisements, as evidenced by the number of spoof posters created in the 2010 British

general election (Dermody and Hanmer-Lloyd 2011), and that the fourth-most viewed YouTube video in 2007 was a parody of Hillary Clinton running for president (Berthon and Pitt 2012).

Research agenda III: More in-depth research into the effects of ad type and strategy

While some argue there has been too much research on negative ads, what is certain is that the focus on ad type has come at the expense of studies examining issues vs. individuals within the auspices of a variety of ad types − negative, positive, neutral, comparison, fear-inducing, etc. Perhaps examining ad type within the context of the three strategies identified by Goldstein and Wilner (2012) offers a better approach. These strategies are: (1) message and tone − these reflect the market research results by the campaign staff; (2) time of day advertisements air − identifies the voters targeted by the campaign; and (3) count of ad spots by market − helps weigh the effect of the ads in relation to other markets, and is more effective than simply counting money spent on ads (Goldstein and Wilner 2012).

For example, if you were an American living in a 'swing state' − one that was not necessarily certain to vote for one candidate or the other − in 2012, you saw far more advertisements than the majority of the country. Only 67 of the top 210 media markets saw significant numbers of campaign ads, with the residents of Cleveland, Ohio, able to see an average of 87 presidential campaigns ads each week, almost 20 more per week than the second-place swing state, Florida (Goldstein and Wilner 2012). In fact, of the record US $3.1 billion spent on the 2012 US presidential campaign, $2.9 billion was spent on 'spot' advertising, and just $2 million on national broadcast advertising (Cromwell 2012). While it is easy to uncover how much money was spent on ads in swing states − for example, political action committees Crossroads GPS and Priorities USA Action spent US $55 million and $50 million to support the Romney and Obama campaigns, respectively − when the ads aired is more telling of campaign strategy (Goldstein and Freedman 2002). Did more ads run during daytime, when a stay-at-home mom might be watching, or during prime-time sporting events, when more males are likely to be tuned in? If they ran during both, which one had more ad spots than the other? This would indicate who a campaign thought was a more convertible voter, or perhaps who a campaign thought was more worth protecting. For example, the percentage of female voters age 18−49 who said they were likely to vote for Obama on election day never dropped below 50% over the course of the campaign, ranging from a high of 64% in March to exactly 50% in October before ending at 58% (Pew Research Center 2012). Romney, meanwhile, saw the likelihood of these same women voting for him range from a low of 28% in the summer after a series of controversial statements by other candidates of his party, to a high of 44% just a month away from the election (Pew Research Center 2012). Was the change in the poll numbers − Obama's low coincided with Romney's high − the result of specific targeted advertisements? If so, the opportunity is ripe for researchers to follow Goldstein and Wilner's (2012) guide by examining the message and tone of the ads, as well as the time of day and location where the ads ran, to draw some conclusions. In fact, examining any demographic from any election using these three elements for analysis provides fertile ground for extensive research not only in political advertising in any context or country, but any type of advertising for any use.

However, because of the prevalence of negative advertising in political campaigns, researchers have focused extensively on this category (e.g., Garramone et al. 1990; Marks et al. 2012; Pinkleton 1997, 1998; Richardson 2001; Stevens 2012). The results have been

mixed, and the debate is still being waged in the laboratory, and the campaign office. The call here, then, is for continued research to help steer the debate towards a conclusion that offers generalizable, empirical evidence as to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of negative political ads. In that regard, Taylor (2010) posits that the level of truthfulness in election advertising seems to be on the decline. Is it? Watchdog organizations have developed (e.g., FactCheck.org by the University of Pennsylvania; PolitiFact.com by the *Tampa Bay Times*) and researchers must determine (1) if facts in political ads should be placed on an endangered list; (2) if watchdog organizations are effective in informing the voter, affecting voter attitude, or changing candidate behaviour; (3) if voters are aware of or affected by advertisements that play loose with the facts; and (4) how factually accurate ads compare to ads with unsubstantiated claims in terms of voter behaviour.

Researchers must look beyond the negative ads and determine whether other types of affective advertising strategies resonate with the target audience. Specifically, resonance advertising, which in the election advertising realm connects a candidate with a voter to develop stronger ties between the two, needs consideration for the first time. For example, George H.W. Bush and Clinton used songs from the 1960s and 1970s in their 1992 US presidential campaigns to take Baby Boomers back in time in an attempt to transfer any emotional attachment they have from past periods to the candidates. Therefore, the use of music in election advertising may have similar effects on voters as it does in product or service advertising.

This presents an opportunity for future research. So too does the use of emotional advertising. One of the most effective ads in the history of US political campaigns is the 'Daisy Ad' used by the Lyndon Johnson re-election effort in 1964. The ad relies on fear, but fear is different from negativity in that is not always ad hominem. Therefore, basic research is necessary to evaluate fear-based ads to determine if they are playing on voter emotions, or simply making negative comments about the opponent. Likewise, the use of other emotions in advertising warrants study, specifically the use of trust, reliability, and security in political ads, particularly with security moving to the forefront in politics since the events of September 2001.

Research agenda IV: Identify the effects of intra- and inter-cultural influences in the effectiveness of election advertising

In Portugal, it is called 'elections advertising.' In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is known as a 'political clip.' In Latvia, it is 'pre-election agitation,' and in Italy, 'self-managed space.' Each of these terms is used by legislators to define political advertising for regulatory purposes, and thus provides a window into the cultural influences on election ads. Therefore, any discussion of the intra- and inter-cultural effects on such ads must begin with a definition of election advertising. For purposes here, I rely on the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities' broad concept that election advertising is always paid, and for the purpose of propaganda (EPRA 2006). Unfortunately, such advertising is banned or highly restricted in some countries (e.g., Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Romania, Sweden and the UK), but is legal in others (e.g., Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Hungary, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, and the Baltic States). Immediately, this appears to place researchers on an uneven playing field. However, that non-starter is just as quickly rejected, as similarities can easily be found (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 1995).

Therefore, the argument here is that policy differences more accurately signal an intra-cultural influence on election advertising effectiveness. Though the effect of public

policy is the topic of a separate research agenda, it cannot be overlooked that policy is often driven by cultural norms and, as a result, is an extension of the culture. Therefore, an historical analysis of culture and policy outcomes would seem a logical place to initiate this research agenda. Such an analysis should seek to discover how cultural traditions, heritage, ethnicity, religion, race, gender, and governmental history (i.e., socialist, fascist, democratic, totalitarian) have shaped election advertising regulation. Once that has been established, the effects of such advertising to influence voter behaviour and election outcomes can be assessed. What is the relationship between legislative restrictions, or lack thereof, on election advertising and election success, and how do these compare across cultures? How does regulation affect voter turnout? How does it affect voter attitudes? How does candidate spending vary by culture as a result of public policy? And what alternative strategies do candidates adopt from one culture to another, based on campaign expenditures, as a result of various cultural/policy approaches to election advertising?

Any inter- and intra-cultural analysis of election advertising must compare and contrast ads via thorough content analysis. Because research often compares political advertisements in the US against political ads in other countries (e.g., Elebash 1984; Griffin and Kagan 1996; Holtz-Bacha et al. 1994), one new place to begin could be with the concept of anti-Americanism, which Krastev (2004) suggests is one of the factors driving global politics in the twenty-first century. In political rhetoric, anti-Americanism functions as a 'master framework' that is both broad and flexible when used to appeal to constituents. Consider the political communications conducted by Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran, or Vladimir Putin of Russia, and how they positioned themselves rhetorically in contrast to US policy and culture. Any analysis of current election advertising should include the anti-Americanism concept simply because it is being used as a political resource (Krastev 2004).

Still, electoral practices in different parts of the world show convergence in spite of differences in political cultures, histories, and political institutions of numerous countries (Dann et al. 2007; Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 1995). The challenge, then, for researchers is first to analyse what similarities and differences exist across cultures in general, then to place them in an election advertising context. For example, recent research suggested that while young Canadians' attitudes toward politics are so negative that it has become socially acceptable not to vote (Goodman et al. 2011), voters in China were generally in favour of censorship and authoritarian personalities in their politics (Guo and Feng 2012), and political marketing strategists may have a bright future in Africa (Hinson and Tweneboah-Koduah 2010). There also appears to be a trend of hardening views on 'social divide' issues such as same-sex marriage, universal healthcare, abortion, and immigration (Soberman and Sadoulet 2007).

Where to start? Perhaps it is as simple as 'following the money.' The economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China (also known as the 'BRIC' nations) are expected to grow from 15% of the total economy of the G6 countries − France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, and the UK − to more than 50% by 2025 (Goldman Sachs 2003). And even though multinational corporations are taking advantage of the economic growth in the BRIC nations, there has been a paucity of advertising research relating to them (Taylor 2012). Researchers should also not overlook South Africa, whose gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is expected to exceed that of the G6 nations by the middle of the twenty-first century (Goldman Sachs 2003). These countries, therefore, should provide fertile ground for present and future research and analyses related to inter- and intra-cultural effects of election advertising.

Research agenda V: Explore the effects of public policy on election advertising and election outcomes

Cultural effects on advertising content are not the only differences between countries worldwide. Policy differences should also be explored. In the UK and Israel, for example, election advertisements are limited to a specific time period prior to a general election, and specific time slots (EPRA 2006). In Mexico, negative political ads are banned, while other countries, including most of Scandinavia, ban all election advertising, and instead provide candidates TV exposure for free.

One may posit that limiting ads to a short time frame prior to election day does not allow a candidate to build an argument for why someone should vote for them. However, this belief simply opens up the possibility for a researcher to make cross-cultural comparisons between countries that have policy limiting ad timing and placement versus those that do not in terms of voter awareness and voter behaviour, as well as to consider voter sentiment within the context of a country's political advertising policies. It would also be interesting to analyse and/or make comparisons with the policies of the US, which has a television industry dependent on the income generated by political advertising (Mander 2012) and will lobby to prohibit any sanctions on such ads.

This, in turn, opens another door for possible research into the cultural mechanisms that influence policy making in various countries. For example, media ownership groups in the US have put pressure on the governmental body that regulates television advertising, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), to allow ownership of multiple media by the same group. That is, a corporation may be allowed to own television stations, radio stations, and newspapers in the same media market, a law that was passed, and then immediately challenged, in 2007. It has yet to be settled in court. At the same time, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is considering amending its General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) to allow unlimited entry by media groups, removing any limitations on foreign media ownership (McChesney, Lewman, and Scott 2005), thus enabling them to buy any media outlets, resulting in even more media concentration, and challenging public broadcasting networks that exist in countries such as Canada, Germany, New Zealand, the UK, and the US (Mander 2012). How, then, might GATS affect existing policy in countries like Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Ireland, and Italy that grant free air time to candidates, who often use the space to run political ads (EPRA 2006)?

The two most recent, and perhaps most important, developments in public policy related to election advertising are: (1) changes in regulations regarding its legality (e.g., Norway revised its policy to allow political advertisements as long as they cease four weeks prior to an election (ERPA 2006); and (2) revisions to campaign finance laws (e.g., the *Citizens United* decision by the US Supreme Court in 2010 allowed corporations to make unlimited contributions to political campaigns). It is the latter that provides researchers ample opportunity to make cross-cultural comparisons based on differing approaches to campaign finance legislations, and the resulting election outcomes associated with those policies.

For example, in Germany, political parties rather than political candidates receive government funding, while US candidates are the ones eligible for public funds rather than the political parties. Both countries have limits to what the government will provide − €133 million in Germany and $10 million in the US − but no limits on the amount individuals or corporations may contribute to an individual candidate's campaign. However, German law requires disclosure for contributions of more than €10,000 a year, while US law does not require any disclosure if the contribution is made to a

Political Action Committee (PAC) that does not have any formal ties to a particular candidate. This latter provision, created from the *Citizens United* ruling, is what allowed a PAC backing Romney for US president to spend US $45 million in the final two weeks after receiving checks from wealthy donors, including $10 million from billionaire Sheldon Adelson, who spent an estimated $100 million on the 2012 election (Center for Responsive Politics 2012b).

Unfortunately for Romney and Adelson, the additional funding did not produce the result they wanted − a Romney victory. This leads one to ask whether the relationship between election advertising spending and election outcomes is typically positively or negatively related. While Adelson's contributions did not help Romney, nor some of the other candidates he supported in 2012 (e.g., Newt Gingrich, Pete Hoekstra), former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg's PAC spent US $3 million on negative ads during a primary election for a US representative in California and was seemingly successful as the target of the ads was defeated. But do unlimited contributions to political campaigns always equal massive spending on election advertising? And does massive spending on election advertising always equal election victory? And, finally, is there any evidence that unlimited contributions and massive spending on election advertising are more likely to lead to election victory in certain situations (e.g., primaries vs. final election; negative ads vs. issues-based ads; presidential vs. legislative; by party; by country, etc.)?

Research agenda VI: Develop theoretical and practical frameworks upon which to base research in political advertising

While early political advertising research provided practitioners with models to implement (Sheinkopf, Atkin, and Bowen 1972; Stephens and Merrill 1984), researchers have typically used three theories as the foundation for their scientific studies in political advertising: (1) functional theory of political campaign discourse (Benoit 1999), (2) issue ownership theory (Petrocik 1991), and (3) direction-of-comparison theory (Tversky 1977).

Functional theory of political campaign discourse argues that discourse in political campaigns is a means to an end in that voters elect the candidate who appears preferable but may not be perfect, so that just being better than the opponent is good enough (Benoit 2001, 2003; Benoit, Blaney, and Pier 1998; Benoit et al. 2003; Brazeal and Benoit 2006). The theory is based on the concept that three kinds of discourse work in concert in an informal cost−benefit analysis performed by the voter to develop a favourable impression of a candidate: (1) acclaims that emphasize a candidate's strength, (2) attacks that emphasize an opponent's weaknesses, and (3) a defense that refutes a candidate's alleged weaknesses (Benoit 2001). Further, functional theory posits that political campaign discourse only takes place on the topics of policy and character (Benoit, Blaney, and Pier 1998).

Issue ownership theory argues that election success is related to the issues that candidates broach during the course of a campaign, with each political party perceived, by voters, as more competent regarding the issues it owns, thus giving a candidate of that party an advantage over competing candidates on those issues (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994; Brasher 2003; Brazeal and Benoit 2008). Therefore, even though candidates from differing parties may discuss the same issues, voters perceive the issue or issues to be owned by one party or the other. If candidates spend more time discussing the issues they are perceived to own, they can increase the salience of those issues with voters (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994). Because issues of importance to a party typically originate within the party's constituency, issue ownership tends to remain consistent over time as a party and its supporters enjoy a symbiotic relationship (Petrocik 1996).

Direction-of-comparison theory is grounded on the concept that most human judgments about objects are derived by determining similarities and differences as part of a comparison between objects (Tversky 1977). As individuals compare features and attributes of the objects, they begin to make decisions in order to take action. In political terms, one might compare candidates' positions on a particular issue, their level of attractiveness, or their party. Political advertisements make it easier for voters to make comparisons between candidates by mentioning both candidates in almost half the ads, and making direct comparisons 22% of the time (Boiney and Paletz 1991). While the features and attributes in the comparison do not change based on the order of comparison, the direction in which the comparison is made − comparing candidate A to candidate B vs. comparing candidate B to candidate A − does have an effect on voter attitudes (Clark and Fine 2012). This is why voters have an easier time recognizing when new information about a candidate is made available than they do recognizing when specific information is no longer available (Agostinelli et al. 1986), and why variance in communication can make different features and attributes salient to voters when comparing candidates (Dhar, Nowlis, and Sherman 2000).

While these theories provide a foundation for empirical research in election advertising, they lack the explanatory power of a general theory of political marketing that could provide the foundation for research in election advertising. Such a theory should explain both ontological (e.g., exchange, market, social embeddedness, structural connectedness) and epistemological (e.g., relationships, interactions, systems, management) aspects of political marketing (Henneberg 2008). Questions to be answered may include: What does election advertising do to people? What do people do with election advertising? What relationships exist between messages contained in political ads and an individual's conscious, unconscious, and intuitive processing? What relationships exist between the stimuli of an election ad and individual affective and cognitive processes? What effect does election advertising have on the formation of political brand perception, and how do the associations and meanings in election ads associate with an individual's perceptions of political brands? And how do election advertisements interact with other stimuli to affect individual behaviour? A solid theory of political advertising should touch on each of these.

Finally, research in election advertising suffers from a lack of consistent constructs and theories upon which it can be based. Harris and Lock (2010) championed the development of specific constructs that capture voter attitudes and behaviours. While that work is ongoing, the recommendation here is a concerted effort to develop a general theory of political marketing that captures the function of election advertising. Until that happens, research in marketing for elections will be beholden to communications and consumer behaviour theories, both of which have been argued to be limited for research in political marketing (Gelb and Bush 2011).

Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations

This literature review suffers from the same limitations as most such efforts − the inevitability that specific important published works and research studies were overlooked. This is usually the result of key word searches and database limitations, not the desire of the reviewer. In this effort, more than 200 articles were returned by five different database sources when the key words 'political advertising,' 'marketing,' and 'elections' were used. These key words were chosen because of the belief that political advertising is a key function in the marketing of elections, and to overlook the point of voter decision-

making (the election) is a mistake. Further, simple searches, without being as specific as possible in the use of key words, leave a researcher open to casting too wide a net on a research topic.

This review identified that research in political advertising related to elections is centred on eight categories: (1) advancements and technology, (2) advertising type, (3) branding, (4) cognitive response, (5) ethics and policy, (6) cross-cultural comparisons, (7) mix and strategy, and (8) voters as consumers. Of these eight, 'voters as consumers' may provide the most promise for future research because of its connection between political marketing and consumer behaviour. In that regard, six agendas were identified to help researchers delve deeper into the various aspects of election advertising. They are:

(1) Generate empirical support for the existence or nonexistence of the 'voter as consumer' paradigm;
(2) Identify reasons for success and failure to impact voters through new technology;
(3) Conduct more in-depth research into the effects of ad type and strategy;
(4) Identify the effects of intra- and inter-cultural influences in the effectiveness of election advertising;
(5) Explore the effects of public policy on election advertising and election outcomes;
(6) Develop theoretical and practical frameworks upon which to base research in political advertising.

It is hoped that this review of the key research related to political advertising in support of elections will spark further research and discussion on this important topic.

The field for research in political advertising is wide open. Only two areas − international case studies and negative attack ads − have been put under the academic microscope with any regularity. But even in the case of negative advertising, it only represents a small fraction of the possible research avenues in resonance- and emotion-based advertising. Research in political advertising is thriving. The six research agendas proposed will hopefully help channel research and maximize the efforts toward the development of a general theory of political marketing.

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