

**THE INFLUENCE OF PARODIES ON POLITICAL SCHEMAS:  
EXPLORING THE TINA FEY-SARAH PALIN PHENOMENON**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Communication with Distinction.

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## ABSTRACT

During the 2008 presidential campaign season, Tina Fey's timely impersonations of Sarah Palin on *Saturday Night Live* attracted overwhelming attention, generating buzz of a possible "Fey Effect" to explain the inverse *SNL* rating surge and Palin rating plummet. This study sought to ascertain if this "Fey Effect" was real and quantifiable by measuring if Fey's impersonations of Palin rendered caricatured traits more salient in the construction of the candidate, namely aspects related to her intelligence, competence, experience and rural background. We employed Schema Theory as the theoretical mechanism to explore if the timely parodies were used to fill-out perceptions of a relatively unknown candidate. We administered a two-part online survey with a three-conditions-between-subjects design to over 200 undergraduate participants from a large Eastern university. The second survey was administered directly after exposure to either a clip of the CBS interview between Katie Couric and Sarah Palin, the *SNL* parody of that interview, or a travel video as a control. Findings show that exposure to both the interview and its parody cause viewers to devote more cognitive attention to Palin's intelligence, competence and experience. In addition, the *SNL* parody is unique in its influence in rendering rural traits more salient in associations with Palin. Ultimately, this research finds that the agency of influence rests in the real Palin, allowing us to establish evidence of a "Palin Effect."

## Chapter 1

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### TV-PG: Politically Germane

Political communication scholars are increasingly recognizing that previous designations of entertainment and news as separate genres have become obsolete, as both maintain political relevance (Jones, 2005; Baym, 2005; Delli Carpini & Williams, 2001). This increasingly vague distinction between entertainment and news programming is illustrated in everything from politicians' inclusion of talk show appearances within their campaign circuits (Baum, 2005), to the extensive political knowledge associated with viewing satire news program *The Daily Show* (Young & Tisinger, 2006). A large body of scholarship verifies the political relevance of entertainment-based television, with audiences gleaning political meaning from political entertainment such as the *West Wing* (Holbert, Pilon, et. Al, 2003) and *The Simpsons* (Williams & Delli Carpini, 2002; Cantor, 1999; Gray, 2006). Late night comedy shows, such as *The Daily Show*, *Colbert Report* and the *Late Show* with David Letterman, are more obvious examples of the infusion of political content into entertainment programming, with a large corpus of literature drawing connections between these programs and effects on political knowledge (Young & Tisinger, 2006), participation (Cao & Brewer, 2008; Hoffman & Thomson, 2009), and evaluations of political leaders (Niven, Lichter & Amundson,

2003; Young, 2004; Moy, Xenos & Hess, 2006; Baumgartner & Morris, 2006).

Given the tendency of political content to overlap with non-news programming, the political implications of entertainment-based television, which reaches a far greater audience than television news (*TV Dimensions*, 2003, p. 239), is an important area of research to explore. In addition, the fact that a constantly evolving media landscape allows political processes to manifest themselves in a variety of ways (Shah, 1998) underscores the importance of applying political communication theories to entertainment-based programming (Holbert, 2005).

### Agenda-Setting and Priming

The quantifiable political implications of entertainment-based television have spawned a broad and fruitful area of research, leading scholars to better identify and explicate the processes responsible for these effects. By employing theories previously applied exclusively in the context of news programming, scholars have been able to establish the political influence of entertainment-based television as well. With its theoretical roots in cognitive psychology and networked models of memory, the tenets of agenda-setting and priming (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987) have served as one framework through which scholars have examined such effects (Holbert, Pillion, et. Al, 2003; Holbrook & Hill, 2005; Holbert, Lambe, Dudo & Carlton, 2007).

Rooted in these core concepts from cognitive psychology, agenda-setting theory posits that news programming does not tell the audience what to think, but rather, its influence rests in its ability to inform the audience what to think *about* (McCombs &

Shaw, 1972). From this perspective, consistent news frames increase the salience of certain issues, thereby encouraging viewers to ascribe increased importance to those issues. With recent and frequent activation in the face of associated constructs, these salient issues then come to inform audiences' cognitive evaluations of other related attitude objects. Specifically, the viewer's subsequent evaluations of political institutions and leaders will be based upon how they address these salient items.

Extant research indicates that issues are not the only constructs that may be primed in the context of political communication. Some studies illustrate that the salience of image characteristics or personality traits can be primed through exposure to mass media as well (Weaver, Graber, McCombs, & Eyal, 1981). In their study on *The West Wing*, Holbert, Pillion, et. Al (2003) found that the program's portrayal of the president primed a more positive image of the president in viewers. There is also scholarship that establishes a connection between the political caricatures present in late-night comedy and the salience of subsequent candidate trait evaluations in judgments of political candidates (Young, 2004; Moy, Xenos & Hess, 2005).

### Construct Accessibility

Agenda setting and priming make sense because of their roots in the underlying concepts of associative network models of knowledge storage and retrieval (Anderson, 1983). According to this literature, information is stored in the form of interconnected networks of related constructs. Once a construct is activated in tandem with other constructs, the residual excitation surrounding these nodes and networks renders these

constructs more likely to be used in subsequent judgments (Carlston & Skowronski, 1986). According to this mechanism, recent and frequent activation of cognitive constructs increases construct salience, hence rendering them more likely to come to mind in relevant decision-making processes.

However, while agenda setting and priming account for the salience of certain constructs, this is a “top of the head phenomenon” (Taylor and Fiske, 1978), indicating that the node is accessed only temporarily (Higgins, 1996). Therefore, these frameworks do not account for long-term construct retrieval, which scholars suggest produces more significant effects in aggregate opinion (Roskos-Ewoldsen, Roskos-Ewoldsen, & Carpentier, 2002). This current analysis incorporates a more comprehensive approach to construct accessibility, one that accounts for both short-term and long-term information storage, in Schema Theory.

First, we will give an overview of Schema Theory, including how it relates to network models of memory and the related concepts of agenda setting and priming. We then offer implications implicit in the model. Finally, its efficient and appropriate application in surveying the political effects of entertainment television will be explored as we examine the impact of exposure to Tina Fey’s popular impersonations of Sarah Palin on *Saturday Night Live* during the 2008 presidential election season.

### Schema Theory

Also rooted in networked conceptualization of knowledge and memory, Schema Theory postulates that all information is housed in associated networks, or schemas,

consisting of related nodes based on prior knowledge and experience (Markus, 1977).

According to Fiske and Taylor (1991), people are “cognitive misers,” meaning they have limited information capacities, and do not want to exhaust all their mental resources when making a decision or judgement. Rather, they subconsciously want to reach conclusions as efficiently as possible, so they refer to the appropriate schema, retrieving accessible constructs. Schemas are created through past experience, both direct and mediated (Markus & Zajonc, 1985), and yet they are constantly being updated and altered based on new incoming information.

What do schemas do? Through schematic processing, individuals are able to “go beyond the information given” to make logical hypotheses about what will happen next, what is appropriate in this context, and what a logical response might be – *without* having to cull all the information in the current environment to make sense of it (Weick, 1979; Louis, 1983; Fiske & Taylor, 1984). Imagine that you are taking a short trip, in which you must bring along a suitcase. Being an efficient packer, you put the first few outfits you plan to wear on top, and place your toothbrush and deodorant in an easily accessible pocket. Based on previous vacations, you know that you will need these items most immediately, and do not want to dig through the entire suitcase to find them. Not only would that be a waste of time, but it would also make a mess of your belongings and presumably be quite frustrating.

The tenets of Schema Theory introduce several important implications. First, given that people are “cognitive misers,” they generally expend as little cognitive effort as possible. Therefore, we activate familiar, preexisting networks of information in

judging the unfamiliar (Taylor & Crocker, 1981). These cognitive shortcuts facilitate our quick impressions of entire groups of people, including political parties, ethnic and age groups. Such schemas are generally referred to as group schemas (Stangor, 2000), but are more commonly known as stereotypes. Through our use of such schema, when evaluating an individual, we access a relatable stereotype schema to inform or fill-out our perceptions. Such perceptions may lead to accurate or inaccurate conclusions, depending on the situation (Harris, 1994).

Secondly, the fact that schemas are constructed of stored information begs the question, how do we incorporate new information into this associative cognitive network? In fact, a few factors contribute to the chronic accessibility of new constructs. The *recency* and *intensity* of an incoming message will enhance its perceived importance, rendering it more salient in the mind of the receiver (Higgins, Bargh, & Lombardi, 1985), hence more likely to be integrated into, and perhaps dominate, one's schema. Furthermore, if the message is consistent over time, it will be chronically accessed by the receiver, and therefore become a prominent node in the individual's schema (Price & Tewksbury, 1997).

#### Live From New York...

*Even if you've never watched since what's-his-name left last year, or in the early '90s, or in 1980, SNL has always been there, as reliable as death and taxes, sometimes in your face, sometimes a wallflower at the back of the room that gave you a jolt of surprise when you realized it was still around. - Kevin Forest Moreau (2002)*

One entertainment-based program that deserves more attention in political communication scholarship is NBC's late-night sketch comedy show *Saturday Night Live* (*SNL*). In many ways, the political parodies on *SNL* have served as a precursor to current late night shows. Premiering just over a year after the Watergate Scandal, *SNL* was borne in an era of diminished respect for political figures. The show illustrated this growing disillusionment in the form of political caricatures, the exaggeration of a politician's defining or distinctive features for comic effect. In essence, this is the work of pointed political parody and satire: reducing political events, people, and institutions to their most mockable elements. In talking about the political satire of *The Daily Show*, host Jon Stewart illustrated this concept when he said, "...I think we don't make things up. We just distill it to, hopefully, its most humorous nugget. And in that sense it seems faked and skewed just because we don't have to be subjective or pretend to be objective. We can just put it out there" (Bill Moyers Interviews Jon Stewart, 2003)

In its 34-year tenure, *SNL* has caricatured a score of political figures from both sides of the aisle, from Chevy Chase as a clumsy Gerald Ford to Fred Armisen as a Fauxbama, but perhaps none have drawn as much attention as comedian Tina Fey's impersonations of vice-Presidential candidate Sarah Palin.

#### "The Fey Effect"

Looking back to the highly charged 2008 presidential election season, it is impossible to ignore the overwhelming popularity of Tina Fey's impersonations of Sarah Palin on *SNL*. Drawing in audiences of over 10 million for live airings, and 9 million

more in subsequent showings available digitally and online (Bauder, 2008), *SNL* enjoyed a surge in ratings. The October 18 episode, in which Sarah Palin guest-starred as herself alongside her caricaturist, attracted *SNL*'s largest audience in over 14 years (Snider, 2008). Motivated by this ratings surge, the show even aired two parodies beyond its Saturday night time-slot—the spoof of CBS correspondent Katie Couric's interview of Palin aired on Friday, September 26, and a skit of Fey as Palin alongside Will Farrell as G.W. Bush aired on Thursday, October 23. Popular video-sharing Web sites like YouTube.com and Hulu.com helped propel the parody to unprecedented popularity, allowing viewers to watch and rewatch the skits.

Donning a sleek up-do and a pair of glasses, while laying on a thick Alaskan accent, Fey's performance and appearance were described by journalists as "uncanny" (Adams, 2008; Live from New York, 2008; Puente, 2008), leaving many to call her Palin's "doppelganger" (Chernikoff, 2008; Moraes, 2008; Pierce, 2008). Fey's portrayal of Palin won her an Emmy and even placed her in *Time*'s Person of the Year 2008 issue on the "People Who Mattered List" inviting the accolade, "Fey made smart sexy and nerdy cool, and she proved that comedy can still have serious political clout: her winking impression of Governor Sarah Palin defined the governor before she had a chance to define herself" (Grossman, 2008).

During the 10-week period of the campaign, a total of six parodies aired on *SNL* in which Fey impersonated Palin, consistently packaging the governor as incompetent, inexperienced, ultra-conservative and rural. The biting caricatures were timely; the first parody of Fey as Palin and Amy Poehler as Hillary Clinton, airing just two weeks after

the announcement of Palin's candidacy. The second parody of Palin, with Fey sitting opposite Amy Poehler portraying a stoic and staid Katie Couric, aired just two days following the air date of the original interview it was parodying. In this caricature, Fey's Palin was portrayed as an ill-informed, ultra-conservative neophyte from small-town America (Season 34, Episode 3, 2008).

**AMY POEHLER AS KATIE COURIC:** *Senator McCain attempted to shut down his political campaign this week in order to deal with the economic crisis. What's your opinion of this potential 700 billion dollar bailout?*

**TINA FEY AS SARAH PALIN:** *Like every American I'm speaking with, we're ill about this. We're saying, 'Hey, why bail out Fanny and Freddie and not me?' But ultimately what the bailout does is, help those that are concerned about the healthcare reform that is needed to help shore up our economy to help...uh...it's gotta be all about job creation, too. Also, too, shoring up our economy and putting Fannie and Freddy back on the right track and so healthcare reform and reducing taxes and reigning in spending... 'cause Barack Obama, y'know...has got to accompany tax reductions and tax relief for Americans, also, having a dollar value meal at restaurants. That's gonna help. But one in five jobs being created today under the umbrella of job creation. That, you know...Also...*

As early as the beginning of October journalists buzzed about a possible "Fey Effect" in response to the inverse relationship of the *SNL* viewing surge and Sarah Palin's rating plummet. In a leading Rasmussen poll about this possible Fey effect, it was reported that 33 percent of independents believed that the caricature was hurting the GOP ticket (Sands, 2008).

Even Palin could not ignore the mounting attention and scrutiny surrounding the Fey impersonations, joking during a GOP rally in Florida that her CBS interview gaffes were intended "to keep Tina Fey in business" (Barr, 2008). Before her appearance on

*SNL* on October 18, she told speculative journalists that she would love to appear alongside Fey. “I love her. She's a hoot and she's so talented and it would be fun to either imitate her or keep on giving her more material” (Sands, 2008).

Her *SNL* debut invited even more speculation and debate. Some praised Palin’s appearance as both a demonstration of her good humor and a strategic necessity, such as politico Robert Thompson, who said of her performance, “She didn’t do herself any harm and in some respect neutralized the Tina Fey effect” (Harper, 2008). Others criticized the choice, arguing that going along with the caricature exacerbated its message and resulting criticism (Lightman, 2008).

Although journalists and pundits reinforced the notion that some kind of Fey effect on public opinion was in motion, there was no empirical research at the time to support such a claim. Even though the Rasmussen poll did report an impressive estimate of self-reported effects, asking individuals if media messages are affecting their own or others’ political judgments is ripe with measurement error and bias. As found in the psychological phenomenon sleeper effect, people have a hard time recalling where they heard something, let alone what it does to them (Holvand & Weiss, 1951). Hence, using such measures would be problematic in terms of their ability to reveal a causal relationship between the parodies and negative ratings of Palin. In addition, the many other variables at play that would affect selective exposure and perception would require more sophisticated experimental and statistical methods to tease out a causal effect. To evaluate the potential impact on public opinion posed by exposure to the Fey

impersonations, we need 1) a theoretical framework to account for the underlying mechanism at work and 2) a controlled experimental design to assess said effects.

### Schema Theory as a Theoretical Mechanism

This study proposes Schema Theory as the mechanism by which the *SNL* parodies were able to be influential in viewers' perceptions of Sarah Palin. The first aspect of Palin's candidacy that renders it a likely context for media effects stems from the fact that until the announcement of her candidacy, Palin was largely unknown to the American citizenry. Immediately following the McCain campaign's announcement, journalists and the public alike were scrambling to find out more about this newcomer to the national political stage. Within the first 36 hours of her nomination, her Wikipedia page received over 1.1 million hits, making it the most popular Web site in August 2008 (Vargas, 2008). According to the results of a Gallup poll administered on August 30, just one day after the announcement of her candidacy, seven out of ten Americans did not know who she was, or enough about her to form an opinion, making her name identification the lowest among all of the most recent vice-Presidential candidates (Newport, 2008). Unable to tap into preexisting schemas or heuristics to serve as bases for judgments about Palin, the public and journalists alike, were engaged in the construction of "Sarah Palin" schemas, or mental scripts, by utilizing and organizing whatever information was available.

The relationship between Palin and her traveling press corps was described as "barely existing" nearly a month after her nomination (Vogel, 2008). Upon her meeting

with Afghan President Hamid Karzai at the United Nations, the McCain camp put forth press regulations that restricted editorial coverage but allowed photographs of Palin—an announcement that was met by a chorus of disapproval (Orr, 2008). Palin now admits she had been “bottled up” from reporters during the campaign (Pienciak, 2009). The fact that the McCain camp thwarted press access to Palin, served only to heighten the ambiguity surrounding the GOP’s VP pick.

As outlined earlier; recency, intensity and consistency, are the three factors that increase the salience of new information, allowing it to become integrated as a chronically accessible schematic construct. As a result of what was perceived by some as an information void on the Alaskan Governor, Fey’s popular impersonations of Palin, beginning just two weeks after the announcement of her candidacy, provided even more of an opportunity to help inform audience’s mental models of who Palin was. The intensity of the impersonations, including frequency and duration, are illustrated by the viral phenomena that the clips became in the online world, reaping in over 26 million views in late October on the official NBC Web site alone (Albrecht, 2008). Furthermore, these *SNL* skits, averaging six to ten minutes in length, allotted more time to this image than in news programming, which has become increasingly journalist-centered, the average sound bite apportioned to politicians on nightly newscasts having declined to an average of eight seconds (Hallin, 1992). Consequently, while candidates are not given an opportunity to speak in their own voice in such a short time, *SNL* allotted their faux-candidates ample time, albeit putting words in their caricaturists’ mouths as they did it.

Especially in light of the press' lack of contact with Palin, journalists integrated the *SNL* parodies as part of their newscasts in order to bulk up the coverage of the guarded candidate (Young, 2009). This served to increase message consistency, because these parodies were showcased in news reports and newscasts in addition to the *SNL* airings. Furthermore, content was consistent between the skits and their real-life source material, as several portions of the parody scripts were verbatim quotes from Sarah Palin. Such was the case in the parody of Couric's interview of Palin that aired on September 26, 2008, the script of which was an amalgam of quotes from both CBS interview segments.

The one-dimensional Fey caricatures represented an easily digestible image of Palin, which should have enabled viewers to easily access their schemas to evoke this image without too much cognitive effort, especially because these traits may be closely related and recalled in other stereotype schemas. The multiple parodies and replays thereafter would have required viewers to repeatedly activate this caricature, hence, rendering certain traits more salient in the minds of viewers. Given that these constructs were rendered accessible in memory, we should expect that exposure to a caricatured version of Palin that highlights certain aspects of her character traits ought to result in the enhanced salience of certain constructs; namely judgments of her intelligence, competence, experience and rural background. We can postulate that these easily accessible caricatures will prime viewers to link aspects of the parody with their overall assessment of Sarah Palin.

A growing corpus of research has indeed supported the influence of parodies on candidate evaluations, including indications that negative portrayals of politicians for comic effect chip away at political trust and participation (Baumgartner & Morris, 2006), political knowledge and partisanship serve as moderating variables in the effects of late-night comedy exposure (Young, 2004), and that there are direct effects from exposure to late night programming on evaluations of candidate character traits (Moy, Xenos, & Hess, 2005). Where this study differs, however, is in its explanation of how a caricature can influence the construction and subsequent perceptions of a previously unknown candidate based on these caricatured traits, as explicated through the framework of schema theory. Therefore, we propose our main hypothesis of the study:

H1: Exposure to impersonations of a previously unknown political candidate will increase the salience of the politician's caricatured traits/aspects in the minds of viewers.

In addition, given that people are "cognitive misers," they will want to expend as little mental effort as possible. Therefore, they will activate and recall only the most accessible constructs. Because we hypothesize that aspects of the parody will be the primed, most accessible constructs, other constructs will be less salient, and therefore not retrieved in subsequent evaluations. According to the principles of memory storage capacity, there is a finite capacity of information we are able to recall in working memory (Cowan, 2000). Given this threshold, it can be hypothesized that when certain salient

items are culled, the accessibility and recall of other items decreases. Therefore we propose our second hypothesis:

H2: The increased salience of parody-related constructs as a result of exposure to political impersonation will decrease the salience of non-parody related media events and stories in the minds of viewers.

## **Chapter 2**

### **HYPOTHESES**

To test this potential “Fey Effect,” an online survey was administered to over 200 undergraduate participants. Students completed a pre-test with various items on their political behaviors, media use and opinions on the four major candidates of the 2008 election. For the purposes of this study, the most relevant item was an open-ended prompt that asked the question "What are the first words or phrases that come to mind when you think of Sarah Palin?" Two weeks later, those participants were divided into three experimental groups and administered the second part of the experiment. Directly after exposure to either a clip of the CBS interview between Katie Couric and Sarah Palin, the *SNL* parody of that interview, or a Peru travel video as a control stimulus, respondents were asked to complete a similar set of questions, including the same open-ended prompt from the pre-test.

A coding instrument was employed to code and evaluate the content of these open-ended responses. In the scope of this study, the most relevant items in the coding scheme include: a measure of the salience of constructs related to Palin's intelligence, competence and experience (ICE score), a measure of the salience of constructs related to her rural, small-town background (rural score), an index to measure the salience of items

primed by major media events and narratives about Palin (media index), an index to measure the salience of items related to more policy issues or platforms (issue index), and an index to measure the salience of items specifically related to the parody (SNL Index).

Given the public's initial unfamiliarity with Sarah Palin and the timely, easily evoked image by Fey that portrayed Palin as unintelligent, incompetent, inexperienced and rural, we should expect that these traits were rendered salient in people's mental constructions of who she was. We hypothesized that:

H1: Exposure to an impersonation of a previously unknown political candidate will increase the salience of the caricatured traits or aspects of that politician in the minds of viewers.

If H1 is valid, then we should find these operational hypotheses to be supported in the data:

H1A: The salience of constructs related to Palin's intelligence, competence and experience will be stronger after exposure to Fey's impersonation on *SNL*.

H1B: The salience of constructs associating Palin with rural traits will be stronger after exposure to the *SNL* parody.

H1C: The salience of intelligence, competence and experience constructs will be greater in the post-test among participants in the *SNL* condition than those in the CBS condition.

H1D: The salience of rural constructs will be greater in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

Given the increased salience of these caricatured attributes that would come to inform people's schema about her, we should see that these salient parody-related attributes will be culled, while other less accessible and activated nodes are displaced and therefore not recalled in evaluations of Palin, in order to preserve mental resources. We hypothesized that:

H2: The increased salience of parody-related constructs as a result of exposure to political impersonation will decrease the salience of non-parody related media events and stories in the minds of viewers.

If H2 is valid, then we should find these operational hypotheses to be supported in the data:

H2A: Looking at the SNL condition, the salience of *SNL*-related items will be stronger after exposure to the parody.

H2B: In the SNL condition, the Media Index will be lower after exposure to the parody.

H2C: In the SNL condition, the Issue Index will be lower after exposure to the parody.

H2D: The salience of the SNL Index will be higher in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

H2E: The salience of the Media Index will be lower in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

H2F: The salience of the Issue Index will be lower in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

## **Chapter 3**

### **METHOD**

To test my hypotheses, I employed a three-conditions-between-subjects design using undergraduate participants at a large Eastern university. The experiment consisted of two online surveys. Approximately 375 students were invited to participate from courses in business, history, anthropology, political science, mass and interpersonal communication. Of those, a total of 255 students (68 % response rate) started the pre-test, four of which did not complete it (Pre-test N= 251). Only those who completed the pre-test were eligible to participate in the post-test, which was completed by 225 students (Post-test N= 225). In exchange for their participation, students who completed both parts of the study were entered in a raffle to win one of four Amazon.com gift certificates, in the amount of \$100, \$50 or \$25

The study was administered online through Qualtrics Survey Software. On Monday April 27, students were emailed a link to complete an online survey and given until Friday May 1 to complete it. All participants were given the same pretest survey, which included an open-ended prompt and items on media usage, presidential candidate trait ratings, political interest and participation. Two weeks later, on Monday May 11, students who completed the pre-test were emailed a link to complete the second part of

the survey and given until Friday May 15 to complete it. In this part of the experiment, students were randomly assigned to view one of three clips embedded into the survey. The clip was then followed by the post-test questionnaire including some of the same items as the pre-test, in addition to political knowledge and participation items. The participants in Condition 1 viewed a YouTube clip (approximately six minutes in length) of Katie Couric's interview with Sarah Palin that aired on *CBS*, while those students in Condition 2 viewed a Hulu.com clip (approximately six minutes) of the *Saturday Night Live* parody of that interview, featuring Amy Poehler as Katie Couric and Tina Fey as Sarah Palin. The control group was shown a YouTube clip on travel in Peru (approximately 10 minutes). Randomization checks on pretest variables, including graduation year, gender, political interest, political attention, party identification and opinions of the four presidential candidates, showed no significant differences between conditions.

#### Randomization Measures.

*Candidate evaluations.* In order to measure opinions of each of the four candidates, participants were asked to indicate favorability of Joe Biden, Barack Obama, John McCain and Sarah Palin on a 10-point scale (0 meaning very unfavorable, 10 meaning very favorable, and 5 meaning neither favorable nor unfavorable toward that person) in the pretest (T1) and posttest (T2).

*Candidate trait ratings.* In order to measure perceptions of candidate traits, students were asked how well the following words or phrases describes each of the four

candidates: “Strong leader,” “Stupid,” “Compassionate,” “Experienced,” “Knowledgeable,” “Cares about people like me,” “Trustworthy,” “Charismatic,” “Moral,” “Dishonest,” “Commands Respect,” “Thoughtful,” “Inspiring,” and “Incompetent.” For each item for each candidate, respondents were asked to judge these traits on a 10-point scale (1 meaning not well at all and 10 meaning extremely well). This measure appeared in both the pretest (T1) and posttest (T2). Additionally, “Stupid,” “Dishonest” and “Incompetent,” were subsequently reverse-coded to match the valence of the other trait items.

*Political interest.* In the pretest (T1) and posttest (T2), participants were asked whether they were “Extremely interested” (coded as 4), “Very interested” (coded as 3), “Somewhat interested” (coded as 2), “Not very interested” (coded as 1), or “Not at all interested” (coded as 0) in the 2008 presidential campaign.

*Political attention.* Participants were asked to indicate how often they paid attention to information regarding the candidates during the campaign season in the pretest (T1) and posttest (T2) of the study. The scale for this item included “A lot of the time” (coded as 4), “Very much” (coded as 3), “Some of the time” (coded as 2), “Very little” (coded as 1), or “Not at all” (coded as 0).

Open-ended responses. In both the pre-test (T1) and posttest (T2), participants were asked to indicate the first words or phrases that came to their minds when they thought of each of the following candidates: Joe Biden, John McCain, Barack Obama and Sarah Palin. In the pretest, these prompts were issued immediately following the media

use items, and randomized through Qualtrics. In the post-test of the experiment, these prompts were issued immediately following exposure to the experimental stimuli. The Sarah Palin prompt was the first question for all posttest respondents, and the other three candidates were randomized through Qualtrics. A coding scheme was developed to evaluate the content of these open-ended responses, with various constructs designed to capture the salience of various aspects of Palin's character, personality, appearance, media image, and issue positions.

*Palin Open-ended Content analysis.* The coding scheme applied to the open-ended items consists of 16 different coding constructs. To determine reliability of the coding scheme constructs, a sample of 30 random participant responses was coded independently by two trained coders using the coding rules for the 16 open-ended coding constructs. Based on these 30 participant responses, a Krippendorff's Alpha of 1.0 was obtained for 13 out of 16 items in the coding scheme. Based on the strong reliability estimates, we only ran one trial. These 16 categorizations were useful in that each word or term in an open-ended response was mutually exclusive and exhaustive, being placed into one of the 16 categories. However, for the purposes of this study, we focused on the responses for five of these 16 categories.

The content analysis applied to open-ended items included two constructs designed to capture the salience of various aspects of Sarah Palin.

*Salience*: Intelligence, competence, experience (ICE score). The ICE score measures the presence or absence of salient thoughts related to Sarah Palin's intelligence, competence, and experience (Alpha of 1.0). If any part of the response makes reference to any of these attributes, it is coded as 1, and if these traits are not mentioned, the response is coded as 0. It merely measures if these references are present or not.

*Salience*: Palin's rural roots. This item captures the salience of comments related to Sarah Palin's rural roots (Alpha of .66), coded as 1 as present or 0 for not present. Terms like "small-town," "hick," or "back-country," are examples of salient rural items.

Next, the coding scheme included three items structured as indexes that counted the total number of related terms in the response.

*The Media Index* (Alpha of 1.0) was designed to capture the frequency of constructs present in Palin's media coverage. This index captured the frequency of the following terms (or their variations) in a given response: "Pregnant daughter," "Child with down syndrome," "Hunt, moose, caribou," "Hockey or hockey mom, lipstick or pitbull?," "Joe Sixpack," and "Cost of wardrobe?" This item is used to measure the salience of certain frames consistently present in major media networks during the campaign.

*The Issue Index* (Alpha of .76) measures the salience of issue-related items, by totaling the number of terms present in the response. Examples of issue items include mentions of gun control, healthcare, abortion and the financial crisis.

*The SNL Index* (Alpha of 1.0), measured the salience of items in participant responses that were consistent with constructs present in the *SNL* parodies. This index was measured by totaling the number of related terms in the response, based on the following terms (or their variations): “Katie Couric,” “SNL,” “Tina Fey or Fey,” “Russia/proximity of Alaska to Russia,” “You Betcha,” “Ya know,” “Maverick,” “Bush doctrine,” and “Caribou Barbie.” Additionally, all response terms were mutually exclusive, being counted toward only one category.

## Chapter 4

### ANALYTICAL PROCEDURE AND RESULTS

H1 posited that exposure to an impersonation of a previously unknown political candidate will increase the salience of the caricatured traits or aspects of that politician in the minds of viewers. To determine the validity of H1 we put forth that:

H1A: The salience of constructs related to Palin's intelligence, competence and experience will be stronger after exposure to Fey's impersonation on *SNL*.

To test H1A, we ran a paired samples T-Test to compare the ICE scores between the pre and the post tests among participants in the SNL condition. As illustrated in Table 1, among subjects in the SNL condition, the ICE Score was significantly greater ( $p < .001$ ) in the post-test than the pre-test, hence confirming our hypothesis that these constructs would be more salient after exposure to the parody. The ICE Score was also significantly greater after exposure to the stimulus among subjects in the CBS condition ( $p < .001$ ). However, no significant differences emerged between pre and post for those in the control group ( $p = .10$ ).

To test H1, we also posited that:

H1B: The salience of constructs associating with Palin as rural traits will be stronger after exposure to the SNL parody.

To test H1B, we ran paired samples T-Test to compare the rural salience scores between the pre and the post tests among participants in the SNL condition.. As illustrated in Table 2, among subjects in the SNL condition, the Rural Score was significantly greater in the post-test than in the pre-test ( $p=.057$ ), hence confirming our hypothesis that these constructs would be more salient after exposure to the parody. Among subjects in the control group, the Rural Score was significant *lower* in the post-test than in the pre-test ( $p=.033$ ). There were no significant differences between pre and post among subjects in the CBS condition ( $p=.658$ ).

To further test H1, we generated the following operational hypothesis:

H1C: The salience of intelligence, competence and experience constructs will be greater in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than those in the CBS condition.

To test H1C, we ran an independent samples T-Test to compare the ICE Scores between post tests among participants in the SNL and CBS conditions. As illustrated in Table 3, there was no significant difference between conditions ( $p=.468$ ), hence not

confirming our hypothesis. As shown in Table 1, both SNL and CBS conditions had a significantly higher ICE Score within conditions after exposure to either experimental stimuli (both with a  $p < .001$ ). An independent sample T-Test between the ICE Scores from the SNL and CBS conditions and the control group show that the salience of ICE constructs is significantly higher in the experimental groups (SNL  $p < .001$ ; CBS  $p = .039$ ), as illustrated in Table 3.

The last operational definition put forth to test for H1 posited that:

H1D: The salience of rural constructs will be greater in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

To test H1D, we ran an independent sample T-Test to compare the Rural Scores between post tests among participants in the SNL condition and CBS conditions. As illustrated in Table 3, there was no significant difference between conditions ( $p = .233$ ), hence not confirming our hypothesis. An independent sample T-Test between the Rural Scores in the SNL condition and the control showed that the salience of rural constructs is significantly greater after exposure to SNL ( $p = .028$ ), as shown in Table 3. A T-Test between the Rural Score in the CBS condition and the control found no significant difference after exposure to CBS ( $p = .271$ ).

H2 posited that exposure to political impersonations will increase the salience of parody-related constructs and decrease the salience of non-parody related media events and stories in the minds of viewers. To determine the validity of H2, we put forth that:

H2A: Looking at the SNL condition, the salience of *SNL*-related items will be stronger after exposure to the parody.

To test H2A, we ran a paired samples T-Test to compare the SNL Indexes between the pre and post tests among participants in the SNL condition. As illustrated in Table 4, the SNL Index was significantly *lower* in the post-test than the pre-test among participants in the SNL condition ( $p=.006$ ), hence contradicting our hypothesis that these items would be more salient after exposure to the parody. The SNL Index was also significantly lower in the post-test than the pre-test for those in the CBS condition ( $p=.005$ ), while no significant differences emerged between pre and post within in the control ( $p=.099$ ).

In addition, we put forth the following operational hypothesis to test for H2:

H2B: In the SNL condition, the salience of items associated with media coverage of Palin will be lower after exposure to the parody.

To test H2B, we ran a paired samples T-Test to compare the Media Indexes between the pre and post tests among participants in the SNL condition. As illustrated in Table 5, among subjects in the SNL condition, the Media Index was significantly lower in the post-test than the pre-test ( $p=.010$ ), hence confirming our hypothesis that these items would be less salient after exposure to the parody. The Media Index among subjects in the CBS condition was lower in the post-test than the pre-test, approaching significance ( $p=.068$ ), while there were no significant differences between the pre and post tests among subjects in the control ( $p=.689$ ).

Accordingly, we posited that:

H2C: In the SNL condition, the salience of political issue and platform-based items will be lower after exposure to the parody.

To test H2C, we ran a paired samples T-Test to compare the Issue Indexes between the pre and post tests among participants in the SNL condition. As illustrated in Table 6, no significant differences emerged between the pre and post-tests among those in the SNL condition ( $p=.708$ ), hence not confirming our hypothesis that these items would be less salient after exposure to the parody. There were also no significant differences between pre and post among participants in the CBS condition or control group (CBS  $p=.118$ ; control  $p=.531$ ).

To further test H2, we put forth the following operational hypothesis:

H2D: The salience of the SNL Index will be higher in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

To test H2D, we ran an independent sample T-Test to compare the SNL Indexes between post tests among participants in the SNL and CBS conditions. As illustrated in Table 3, there was no significant difference between conditions ( $p=.156$ ), hence not confirming our hypothesis. No significant differences emerged in the results of an independent sample T-Tests between the SNL Indexes among participants in the SNL condition and the control group either ( $p=.365$ ). However, an independent sample T-Tests between the SNL Indexes among participants in the CBS condition and the control group show that the SNL Index is significantly lower in the CBS condition than the control in the post-test ( $p=.019$ ).

H2E: The salience of the Media Index will be lower in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

To test H2E, we ran an independent sample T-Test to compare the Media Indexes between post-tests among participants in the SNL and CBS conditions. As illustrated in Table 3, there was no significant difference between conditions ( $p=.173$ ). However, an independent sample T-Tests between post-tests among those in the SNL condition and

control group did show that the Media Index is significantly lower in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition ( $p=.004$ ). An independent sample T-Test between post-tests among participants in the CBS condition and control group found that the Media Index was lower in the post-test among participants in the CBS condition, approaching significance ( $p=.071$ ).

Lastly, to test the validity of H2, we posited that:

H2F: The salience of the Issue Index will be lower in the post-test among participants in the SNL condition than the CBS condition.

To test H2F, we ran an independent sample paired sample T-Test to compare the Issue Index between post-tests among participants in the SNL and CBS condition. As illustrated in Table 3, there was no significant difference between these two conditions ( $p=.122$ ). Additionally, independent sample T-Tests between post-tests among participants in the CBS condition and the control, as well as the SNL condition and the control showed no significant differences either (CBS v. control  $p=.449$ ; SNL v. control  $p=.271$ ).

## **Chapter 5**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### Spreading Activation

The Fey-Palin narrative that dominated the 2008 election season begged the question of whether these caricatures influenced the public's perceptions of the vice-Presidential candidate. This study sought to ascertain evidence of a possible "Fey Effect" by measuring if Fey's impersonations of Palin rendered caricatured traits more salient in the construction of the candidate, namely aspects related to her intelligence, competence, experience and rural background. Using Schema Theory as a theoretical mechanism, we explored the proposition that the timely *SNL* parodies should have been used to fill-out perceptions of a relatively unknown candidate, that the recency, frequency and consistency of these parodies should have continued to activate this easily accessible image, and that these factors converged to place the caricatured image prominently in the public's "Palin Schema."

Results did in fact support our hypothesis that exposure to the parody increased the salience of constructs associated with her intelligence, competence, experience and rural background. However, it should be noted that exposure to the parody yielded similar results as exposure to the real CBS interview on which the comedy sketch was

based. In both of these experimental groups, respondents had a significantly higher ICE Score in the post-test. This means that both the real interview and its *SNL* parody caused viewers to devote more cognitive attention to items associated with Palin's intelligence, competence and experience.

Additionally, participants in both experimental groups had significantly lower Media and SNL Indexes after exposure to stimuli. To explain this finding, we must first consider the nature of these two constructs. Unlike the ICE or Rural salience scores, the Media and SNL Indexes were comprised of more general, and meta-aspects of media and *SNL* content. For example, the SNL index consisted of explicit mentions of Fey, "SNL," and quotes from the iconic impersonation. Meanwhile, the media index included references to events and themes popular in press coverage of Palin, including her daughter's pregnancy, explicit references to the Couric and Gibson interviews and Palin quotes. In this way, these two constructs reflect a more surface level processing of concepts related to media coverage or *SNL* than the ICE or Rural indexes might indicate.

Hence, the increased salience of ICE constructs within the CBS and SNL conditions may illustrate the concept of spreading activation. With direct exposure to the relevant stimuli (in this case, the actual CBS and *SNL* interviews), nodes that are linked, both directly and indirectly, to those stimuli are subject to residual excitation, and therefore culled into mental focus (Anderson, 1983). In this case, the stimuli may have directly activated the media and *SNL* constructs but, due to residual excitation, resulted in the increased salience of these more subtle, yet Palin-associated details (ICE constructs).

Earlier, this research mentioned the concept of finite cognitive capacity, which makes sense in the context of these findings—participants devoted less cognitive attention to media and parody-related material, instead activating and retrieving the ICE constructs that had been subject to residual excitation.

Fey's Palin: A Backwoodsy Kinda Gal

**WILL FERRELL AS PRESIDENT BUSH:** *My God you are folksy.*

**TINA FEY AS GOVERNOR SARAH PALIN:** *Why thank you Mr. President. I like to think I'm one part practiced folksy, one part sassy and a little dash 'a high school bitchy.*

One unique outcome of the parody, compared to the original *CBS* interview, however, was its ability to render rural traits more salient in the minds of viewers. The salience of constructs related to Palin's rural, small-town nature was significantly higher after exposure to the parody and, oppositely, the Rural Score was significantly lower in the post-test for those in the control group, further strengthening the significance of this rural effect. Findings suggest that Fey's portrayal of Palin, including a thick accent and a "folksy" demeanor, permeated people's thoughts about Palin, hence priming and activating rural constructs.

Earlier we mentioned the role of group schema, or stereotypes, which are the cognitive networks based on entire groups of people. People generally cull information from such schema when filling in or informing their quick impressions of a person. This allows them to go beyond the explicit information given. Given the nature of a caricature, it makes sense that these easily packaged images complement and play into pre-existing

schematic stereotypes. The one-dimensional Fey caricatures primed rural stereotypes, allowing participants to make associations with Fey, including designations such as “hick” or “backwoodsy” (two such criteria coded within the Rural Saliency Score).

### The Sarah Palin Effect

We conducted this study to establish a quantifiable connection between the popular, yet biting Fey caricatures and the diminished esteem for the politician on which they were based, thus ascertaining evidence of a real “Fey Effect.” Unlike cross-sectional research, this study employed a three-conditions-between-subjects design, which systematically manipulated exposure to the stimuli, thereby allowing us to control for issues of self selection. This, combined with the initial randomization tests help increase our confidence that we have isolated the causal direction between exposure and increases in saliency.

Through this exploration, we conclude that if a “Fey Effect” did exist, it may have been driven by something stronger: The Palin Effect.

Given that participants in the CBS condition showed a significant difference in their ICE Scores after stimuli exposure in addition to those within the SNL condition, we cannot hold Fey responsible for the increased saliency of these constructs—that may have been Palin’s doing herself. The parodies were drawn directly from the interviews, often quoting Palin verbatim. Even before the *SNL* parody of the Couric interview was aired, viewers of the CBS interview had their own insults to dish-out regarding their perceptions of Palin’s intelligence, competence and experience. Perhaps the reason the

live *SNL* showing of the CBS interview parody received such high ratings (a 15 share in metered markets, making it the highest rated show on television on September 28; Gorman, 2009), was because people knew that the real Palin made herself a mockable character and were eager to see the satirized version of the interview that was described as “disastrous” (Alternet).

These two forms of content are so intertwined, it is conceptually impossible to view the parody as a distinct entity from its real-life source. Put simply, the parody could not exist without the original interview. Hence, perhaps it is both fair and logical to identify the actual agency in the context of “parody” effects within the original texts themselves. Such a conclusion certainly seems relevant here.

Another explanation for the “Palin Effect” is that Fey’s caricatures may have already been enmeshed in people’s Palin schemas, if they had been exposed to them during the campaign season. People in the study, which was completed several months after the election season was over, may have been basing evaluations of Palin on both the real Palin and Fey’s one-dimensional impersonation, as both may have already exercised some influence in shaping participants “Palin” schemas. In their study on the agenda-setting and priming effects of crime dramas, Holbrook and Hill found that genre of information, fictional or non-fictional, does not have a bearing on its ability to activate associated nodes, hence explaining why both the real-life interview and its fictional depiction could have produced a similar effect.

### Unanswered Questions

A few questions still remain unanswered. Because the contents of the real-life interview and the parody are so intertwined, it is impossible to know to what extent subjects had their schemas already informed by the Fey caricatures. How much previous exposure to the parody may have shaped people's Palin schemas has a few implications. First, it suggests that either Palin dug her own grave or that the content is so interconnected that it cannot be differentiated in people's schema. If the Fey impersonations are shaping these schema, it is a confirmatory sign that the nature of the parodies complemented the process of chronic accessibility in information storage and retrieval.

Furthermore, the findings of this study confirmed what was on respondents' minds in response to Palin—namely, her intelligence, competence, experience and rural background. However, we cannot make a claim regarding whether these salient items are viewed negatively or positively, and if these valenced associations are dependent on genre of stimuli.

### Limitations

We recognize that there are a few factors that may lessen a claim for causality with any experiment conducted in a controlled setting, and we address these limitations here. Given that this research took place at a large Eastern university, our sample consisted of college students, ages 18-22, and therefore cannot be generalized to the greater population. In addition, studies that are not in real-time do pose some challenges,

because we do not know the extent of previous exposure. However, the design of this study does control for these potential problems. A three-conditions-between-subjects design, employing a pre and post-test, showed significant differences between the experimental and control groups. Randomization checks between the conditions confirmed that there were no significant differences between groups from the outset. Given these factors, our confidence in the causal direction between independent and dependent variables is strong.

### Future Research

The significance of these findings again confirms that political entertainment deserves more research attention. The lack of distinction between the effects of the *SNL* parodies and the CBS interview further illustrate that it is illogical to designate news and entertainment as separate genres, as both maintain political relevance. Hence, future research should continue to consider the political relevance and impact of non-traditional political information. Furthermore, this study assessed one aspect of the parodies by testing the salience of certain caricaturized traits. However, using other independent and dependent variables may provide a more comprehensive picture of the effects of this cultural phenomenon. Future studies should consider the moderating effects of individual level constructs in these salience effects. These variables might include political knowledge, interest, and gender. In addition, a reliable measure of valence should be used in future research to determine participants' attitudes toward the salient qualities they associate with the attitude object itself.

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## Appendix A

### TABLES

**Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Paired Samples T-Tests comparing Pre and Post test estimates: ICE Score (Salience of Intelligence, Competence, and Experience)**

		Condition			
		CBS	SNL	Control	Total
		<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>
ICE Salience Score	Pre	.45 (.50)	.29 (.49)	.36 (.48)	.37 (.49)
	Post	.67 (.47)	.73 (.48)	.45 (.50)	.62 (.48)
	<i>p</i>	<b>&lt;.001</b>	<b>&lt;.001</b>	.10	<b>&lt;.001</b>
	<i>N</i>	77	74	73	224

**Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Paired Samples T-Tests comparing Pre and Post test estimates: Rural salience score**

		Condition			
		CBS	SNL	Control	Total
		<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>
Rural Salience Score	Pre	.05 (.22)	.04 (.19)	.10 (.31)	.06 (.25)
	Post	.06 (.24)	.12 (.32)	.02 (.16)	.07 (.25)
	<i>p</i>	.658	<b>.057</b>	<b>.033</b>	.835
	<i>N</i>	77	74	73	224

**Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Independent Samples T-Tests comparing test estimates (for the ICE Salience Score, Rural Salience Score, SNL Index, Media Index, and Issue Index) between conditions**

Condition		T2 ICE Score	T2 Rural Score	T2 SNL Index	T2 Media Index	T2 Issue Index
CBS	<i>M (SD)</i>	.67 (.47)	.06 (.24)	.15 (.48)	.20 (.52)	.16 (.59)
SNL	<i>M (SD)</i>	.72 (.44)	.12 (.32)	.28 (.60)	.10 (.35)	.05 (.22)
Control	<i>M (SD)</i>	.45 (.50)	.02 (.16)	.37 (.65)	.40 (.79)	.10 (.35)
Comparisons		Significance of Difference Between Conditions				
CBS v. SNL	<i>p</i>	.468	.233	.156	.173	.122
SNL v. Control	<i>p</i>	<b>&lt;.001</b>	<b>.028</b>	.365	<b>.004</b>	.271
CBS v. Control	<i>p</i>	<b>.039</b>	.271	<b>.019</b>	<b>.071</b>	.449

**Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Paired Samples T-Tests comparing Pre and Post test estimates: SNL Index (Salience of constructs directly related to *Saturday Night Live* parodies)**

		Condition			
		CBS	SNL	Control	Total
		<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>
SNL Salience Index	Pre	.36 (.55)	.52 (.78)	.57 (.99)	.48 (.79)
	Post	.15 (.48)	.28 (.60)	.37 (.65)	.27 (.59)
	<i>p</i>	<b>.005</b>	<b>.006</b>	.099	<b>&lt;.001</b>
	<i>N</i>	77	74	73	224

**Table 5. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Paired Samples T-Tests comparing Pre and Post test estimates: Media Index (Salience of constructs prevalent in Palin Media coverage)**

		Condition			
		CBS	SNL	Control	Total
		<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>
Media Salience Index	Pre	.33(.55)	.35(.72)	.46(.94)	.38(.75)
	Post	.20(.52)	.10(.35)	.41(.79)	.24(.59)
	<i>p</i>	<b>.068</b>	<b>.010</b>	.689	<b>.016</b>
	<i>N</i>	77	74	73	224

**Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations and Significance tests using Paired Samples T-Tests comparing Pre and Post test estimates: Issue Index (Salience of issue-related constructs)**

		Condition			
		CBS	SNL	Control	Total
		<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>M(SD)</i>
Issue Salience Index	Pre	.05 (.22)	.04 (.19)	.06 (.30)	.05 (.24)
	Post	.16 (.59)	.05 (.22)	.09 (.34)	.10 (.42)
	<i>p</i>	.118	.708	.531	<b>.090</b>
	<i>N</i>	77	74	73	224

## Appendix B

### HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL University of Delaware

Protocol Title: UG Thesis: "The Influence of Parodies on Political Schemas: Exploring the Tina Fey-Sarah Palin Phenomenon"

Principal Investigator

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Type of Review:

Exempt                      Expedited                      Full board

Exemption Category: 1    **(2)**    3    4    5    6

Minimal Risk:             yes            \_\_\_\_\_ no

Submission Date: 4/14/09

HSRB Approval Signature <i>Elizabeth Daggis Peloso</i>	Approval Date <i>4/21/09</i>
HS Number <i>XMP 410</i>	Approval Next Expires <i>n/a</i>