

Political Argumentation and Violations of Audience Expectations: An Analysis of the Bush-Rather Encounter

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This research analyzed the 1988 encounter between George Bush and Dan Rather on the CBS Evening News as an attack-rebuttal sequence. The experimental study considered reactions to the 5½-minute mini-documentary (attack) preceding the actual interview and to the live interview (rebuttal) itself. Respondents seeing the mini-documentary only had more negative views of Bush; exposure to the mini-documentary and interview together enhanced Bush's image while Rather's evaluations decreased. Violations of audience expectations about television news structure and conversational norms may have accounted for strong viewer reactions.

In the heat of political campaigns, it is not unusual for politicians and reporters to find themselves engaged in hostile exchanges. It is, however, a startling event when such an exchange occurs live in millions of living rooms on the network evening news. Such was the case of the extraordinary encounter between George Bush and Dan Rather on the January 25, 1988 *CBS Evening News*. When the smoke of what some observers have labeled a "High Noon" duel had cleared, many questions remained for political communication researchers. Why did the event generate such intense audience reactions? Who won and why? What was the impact of the 5½-minute, anti-Bush mini-documentary which preceded the interview? How had the images of Bush and Rather been affected by this media encounter?

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The research reported here was undertaken to provide an in-depth look at the Bush-Rather exchange. Using experimental methods, the researchers considered the encounter from two basic perspectives: the effects of the attack-rebuttal sequence involved and the effects of violations of receiver expectations.

Background

As part of a series of profiles on the presidential candidates, CBS invited George Bush to be interviewed by Dan Rather, and Bush agreed with the proviso that the interview be live. Prior to the interview CBS aired a pre-produced mini-documentary which focused on Bush's role in the Iran-Contra scandal. In the live interview between Bush and Rather that followed the mini-documentary, it was clear that Bush felt he had been set-up by CBS, and he continuously protested the unfairness of concentrating solely on the Iran-Contra issue. Bush found himself in the position of rebutting an attack that began with the lead-in to the mini-documentary, intensified with the opening question from Rather, and continued through the remainder of the encounter. The 9-minute exchange between Bush and Rather can only be called intense and certainly was characterized by continuous interruptions, overlapping talk, and verbal accusations.

This media event generated substantial attention as columnists, reporters, and politicians rushed to give their interpretations. Lengthy stories about it led the evening news on all three networks the next evening, and ABC devoted an entire segment of *Nightline* to it, thus creating a situation wherein news itself became news. Viewer reactions were also astounding, marked most vividly by the thousands of protest calls which flooded the CBS switchboard (Stengel, 1988).

The campaign context in which the event occurred was itself significant. At that point in late January, Bush was trailing Bob Dole as the date (February 8) of the Iowa caucuses neared (Stengel, 1988). More importantly, Bush's campaign strategists were deeply concerned about the "wimp factor" (Alter with Fineman, 1988). Reports after the event indicated that Bush's staff primed him to believe that Rather intended to trap him and make him look bad in the hope of pumping their candidate up to an aggressive stance. To that end, Bush adviser Roger Ailes was standing by with Bush during the actual interview and prompted him with key words and phrases (Schieffer & Gates, 1989). Thus, the Bush campaign strategically anticipated the encounter as a way to refute allegations that Bush was a weak candidate and to counter the wimp factor by portraying Bush as tough and effective.

Attack-Rebuttal Sequence

One key to the significance of the Bush-Rather encounter may be found by looking at the segment (5½-minute mini-documentary and 9-minute interview) as an attack-rebuttal sequence. Although no research has previously addressed such a situation, some relationships can be seen between the Bush-Rather situation and negative advertising research.

Research on negative advertising has demonstrated a clear relationship between attacks and the images of political candidates (Kaid & Boydston, 1987). Sometimes the image effects are not expected ones, however, since backlash effects may result in an attacker's image being damaged as much as the target's image (Merritt, 1984). Despite the potential for backlash, a political candidate must respond or rebut a charge made by an opponent. Conventional wisdom among political consultants today is that an unanswered attack can be very damaging (Bailey, 1988). Research substantiates that a rebuttal ad can be successful in offsetting the effect of a negative ad. Garramone (1985) has found that rebuttal ads reduce the evaluation of the candidate who first attacked, although they do not influence perceptions of the original target. If A attacks B and B rebuts the attack, the rebuttal ad can be expected to decrease evaluations of A but not increase evaluations of B.

By looking at the preceding mini-documentary as an attack on Bush and on the interview situation as a type of rebuttal, the following hypotheses are suggested:

- H₁: Viewing the mini-documentary (attack) alone will result in a significantly more negative evaluation of Bush but no change for Rather.
- H₂: Viewing the mini-documentary (attack) and the interview (rebuttal) will result in no change of evaluation for Bush but a significantly more negative evaluation of Rather.
- H₃: Viewing the interview (rebuttal) alone will result in significantly more negative evaluations of both Bush and Rather.

The third hypothesis is based on the notion that, in the absence of the actual attack, viewers may see the entire exchange as a kind of attack-rebuttal in which Bush and Rather attack and rebut each other, diminishing evaluations of both.

Violations of Receiver Expectations

The effectiveness of communication is conditioned by conformity to societal and cultural norms. Audiences undoubtedly have well-developed expectations about how normal communication occurs, in public as well as

interpersonal encounters. In terms of the Bush-Rather encounter, three specific types of expectations seem relevant. First, viewers may have had expectations about the Bush-Rather encounter based on assumptions about the politician-reporter role and relationship. Second, viewers probably had expectations about the format and structure of television news. Third, audience members may have expected that certain norms of conversational exchange would be followed in a public encounter. An examination of the first two of these types of expectations and the ways in which the Bush-Rather exchange violated them suggests additional hypotheses and research questions.¹

Audiences have been conditioned to accept the media-government relationship as an adversarial one. Studies have shown this relationship to be a constant juxtaposition of conflict and cooperation, a symbiotic relationship in which politicians fear but need the media and the media distrust but are dependent upon politicians (Grossman & Kumar, 1981). Audiences, however, have become accustomed to seeing news reporters and commentators as combatants who can damage, embarrass, and even destroy a political figure (Epstein, 1973; Graber, 1984; Press & VerBurg, 1988). At the same time, viewers believe that journalists have an obligation to be objective. It is, in fact, this mutual expectation held by journalists and their audiences of the desirability of objectivity which has made news so credible (Bennett, 1983; Epstein, 1973; Joslyn, 1984). Viewers, therefore, might not be surprised at the confrontational nature of the Bush-Rather encounter. To the extent, however, that Rather and CBS were perceived as being neither objective nor fair, viewers might have reacted according to the following hypothesis:

- H₄: Respondents who viewed Rather and/or CBS as objective and fair in the Bush-Rather encounter will be significantly more likely to judge Rather as the winner of the encounter.

Audiences of mass communication also develop expectations about media formats (Altheide & Snow, 1988). When tuning into the network evening news, a viewer expects to see certain presentational formats within which the settings, the participants, and the events will conform to and be interpretable in light of preconceived norms, values, and rules. A normal network newscast consists of approximately 22 minutes of actual news stories, each about 60 to 90 seconds in length (Patterson, 1980; Ranney, 1983). Viewers also expect a certain format for each story (Altheide & Snow, 1988) wherein an anchor leads in and makes a point, the point is reinforced by visuals, film clips, or field reporter inserts, and then the anchor sums up and moves to the next story. Bennett (1983) suggests this sequencing is

important in that each day's news offers a series of minidramas, each of which involves the audience for a few moments, creating a "string of high tension" (p. 115). This string is broken about every 5 minutes by a commercial break during which the audience recovers from the tension. In the Bush-Rather encounter, the length, the variation from normal format expectations, and the failure to relieve the audience tension may have accounted for the intensity of viewer reactions. As Edelman (1964) has remarked about deviations from audience expectations regarding the appropriateness of an act and its setting, "A difference in the quality of scene and act produces shock or anger or anxiety or suspicion that the actor is incompetent" (p. 101). This was perhaps particularly true for viewers who saw the interview portion of the confrontation (with or without the preceding mini-documentary), leading to the following hypothesis:

H₅: For viewers of the Bush-Rather interview (with or without the mini-documentary), the more intense the emotional response the lower the post-test evaluations of both participants.

Method

The experimental procedure involved the use of videotaped copies of the Bush-Rather interview and the preceding mini-documentary, acquired from the Vanderbilt Television News Archives. Using a pretest/posttest design, four treatments were devised as follows:

1. View mini-documentary only ($n = 45$)
2. View interview only ($n = 33$)
3. View mini-documentary and interview ($n = 43$)
4. Control group, no stimulus ($n = 41$)

Respondents were 162 undergraduate students at a large midwestern university and were enrolled in a basic communication course. Treatments were randomly assigned to respondent groups on a per class basis, a procedure which seemed justified by the similarity in the composition of each group and was borne out by a comparison of the pretest scores on questionnaires and on demographic characteristics of each group.²

A verbatim transcript of the interview and a video transcript marking television camera shots, angles, and times were prepared in order to permit close examination of the entire interview process. From an analysis of the written and video transcripts, conclusions were drawn about conversational exchange patterns and the video structure of the interview. These

data were not used to test hypotheses but did yield insight into possible violations of viewer expectations, as reported in the discussion section.

Administration of Stimulus Materials

The experimental treatments were administered during the last 2 weeks in April 1988. The respondents completed a pre-test questionnaire. Stimulus materials were administered to each group 5 to 6 days following the pretest; posttests were administered in the same session. Fortunately, during the intervening time between pretest and posttest, no significant events occurred regarding the presidential race or the Iran-Contra scandal which might have interfered with subject evaluations.

Three versions of the Bush-Rather exchange were devised, and videotapes of each were utilized as stimuli. The mini-documentary-only group saw just the 5½-minute mini-documentary questioning Bush's role in the Iran-Contra scandal. The interview-only group saw only the 9-minute Bush-Rather exchange, and the mini-documentary-plus-interview group viewed both. The control group, of course, received no stimulus.

The videotapes were shown in classrooms and were introduced by graduate students who told respondents they would be watching a segment of news recently aired on CBS and to which their responses were being sought. Respondents were debriefed following each showing.

Measuring Instrument

The pretest questionnaires consisted of simple demographic questions and a semantic differential on George Bush and Dan Rather. The semantic differential consisted of 12 bipolar adjectives rated on a 7-point scale.³ Respondents were instructed to record their reactions to Bush and Rather on each adjective. The instrument was an adaptation of a measure originally developed to examine candidate image but also used to evaluate news commentators (Kaid & Boydston, 1987; Kaid, Singleton, & Davis, 1977; Sanders & Pace, 1977). The scale achieved acceptable reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha = .83, pretest; .85, posttest).

All posttest questionnaires repeated the same 12-item semantic differential described above. In addition, the mini-documentary-only group responded to a 6-item scale with 5-point agree-disagree statements designed to test perceptions of the *fairness* of the mini-documentary. The fairness scale (Cronbach's alpha = .95) included items which asked the audience to respond to whether CBS had presented both sides of the issues, had been informative rather than judgmental, had implied Bush was not being truthful, and had represented responsible journalism. Posttest questionnaires

for the group which viewed both mini-documentary and interview also included this 6-item fairness scale, along with 16, 5-point agree-disagree statements testing perceptions of the interview and concentrating on how Bush and Rather treated each other during the conversational exchange. Three items from this group of 16 statements formed an *objectivity* scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = .95$) on which viewers reacted to whether (1) Bush was misled about the contents of the interview, (2) Bush was treated fairly in the interview, and (3) Rather was objective and unbiased. The posttest instrument for this group also included seven items describing respondents' emotional reactions to the interview. Using "a lot," "a little," or "not at all" as responses, respondents reported if they had felt tense, uncomfortable, sympathetic, excited, embarrassed, involved, or surprised. The selection of these emotions was based on descriptions of the encounter in news magazines and from statements made by news reporters and political observers. A final aspect of the posttest questionnaire for the mini-documentary-plus-interview group asked if respondents had seen the program when it was originally aired⁴ and asked who had won the encounter followed by an open-ended "why?"

The posttest questionnaire for the interview-only viewing group contained the same questions as the mini-documentary-plus-interview group with the exception of the omission of the 6-items that measured the fairness of the mini-documentary. Of course, the posttest for the control group included only the semantic differentials on Bush and Rather.

Results

Testing for the first three hypotheses basically involved a comparison of the mean scores in the pretest and posttest evaluations of Bush and Rather in each treatment group. The 12-items on the semantic differential scale were summed to produce the dependent variable, an image score for each participant. An initial ANOVA comparison of image change scores among groups indicated a significant difference among groups for both Bush, $F(3,158) = 2.884, p < .05$, and Rather, $F(3,158) = 6.090, p < .01$, indicating that viewers' responses to the Bush-Rather encounter did differ depending on which version was viewed.

Given the significant differences observed between treatment groups by the ANOVA, multiple comparisons of group means were performed in order to specifically identify those groups exhibiting the most significant changes in image scores and to test the first three hypotheses. Table 1 displays comparisons of mean scores for individual treatment groups. The first hypothesis proposed that viewing the attacking mini-documentary

alone would result in more negative evaluation of Bush but no change for Rather. This hypothesis was confirmed since viewers gave Bush a pretest evaluation of 54.1 but a significantly lower evaluation of 51.5, $t(44) = 2.30$, $p < .05$, in the posttest. Rather's pretest and posttest scores, however, did not differ substantially.

The second hypothesis received only partial confirmation. The mini-documentary (attack) plus interview (rebuttal) sequence did significantly lower Rather's image, $t(42) = 3.71$, $p < .05$, from 63.7 in the pretest to 58.8 in the posttest. The sequence did not, however, leave viewer evaluations of Bush the same. Bush's image underwent a positive enhancement, $t(42) = -1.70$, $p < .05$, from 54.1 in the pretest to 56.3 in the posttest.

Table 1 also displays the mixed results from the third hypothesis. Although viewing the interview alone did indeed reduce Rather's evaluations, $t(32) = 1.92$, $p < .05$, from 62.0 to 59.0, no decline in Bush's image occurred. In fact, the change in Bush's evaluation was actually in a positive direction, although the change was slight and not statistically significant.

Overall, then, it appears that the mini-documentary attack alone had the effect of diminishing Bush's evaluation. The addition of the interview not only allowed Bush to offset the negative effect on his own image, but also resulted in a decline in audience evaluation of Rather. This result is perhaps all the more dramatic when one realizes that in the pretest for all groups, Rather benefitted from a substantially higher pretest evaluation than Bush. The exposure of the audience to the interview and/or the interview plus mini-documentary treatment compressed the images of the two participants so that by the end Rather had not only declined in absolute terms but he no longer enjoyed any significant superiority to Bush in comparative

Table 1
Evaluations of Bush and Rather: Comparisons of Pre and Posttest Mean Scores

	Mini-docum. Only (n = 45)	Interview Only (n = 33)	Mini-docum. and Interview (n = 43)	Control (n = 41)
<i>Bush</i>				
Pretest	54.1	54.1	54.1	51.7
Posttest	51.5*	55.4	56.3*	52.7
<i>Rather</i>				
Pretest	61.1	62.0	63.7	57.5
Posttest	62.0	59.0*	58.8*	58.4

*t-value is significant at $p < .05$ for a one-tail test.

terms. It is important to note also that the control group experienced no significant change regarding either participant.

The fourth hypothesis suggested that audience perceptions of fairness and objectivity would relate to judgments of who won the encounter. To measure the latter, respondents who viewed the interview (with or without the mini-documentary) were asked to say "who came out on top, who won or lost" the exchange. Pearson correlations between judgments of who won the encounter and the fairness of the documentary (interview plus mini-documentary group) and the objectivity shown in the interview (interview plus mini-documentary group) support H_4 . The more objective, $r(74) = .48, p < .05$, and fair, $r(41) = .30, p < .05$, the viewers felt that Rather and CBS were in the mini-documentary, the more likely they were to believe Rather had "won" the exchange that followed.

The fifth hypothesis was concerned with the relation between viewers' emotional responses and evaluations of Bush and Rather. An examination of Table 2 shows that the interview between Bush and Rather did evoke considerable emotional response from viewers.⁵

Substantial numbers of viewers felt tense, uncomfortable, excited, involved, and surprised by the encounter. Many were sympathetic, and some were embarrassed. However, the relationship between emotional responses and posttest evaluations of Bush and Rather were not uniformly in the direction predicted; that is, intense audience responses would lower evaluations of both participants. The hypothesis was partially confirmed for Rather. As Table 2 shows, viewers who felt uncomfortable, sympathetic, and embarrassed also had more negative feelings toward Rather. No

Table 2
Viewer Feelings Evoked by Bush-Rather Interview

	A Lot	A Little	Not At All	Corr. w/ Posttest Rating of Bush	Corr. w/ Posttest Rating of Rather
Tense	44.2%	34.9%	20.9%	.02	-.08
Uncomfortable	27.9	37.2	34.9	.07	-.23*
Sympathetic	18.6	41.9	39.5	.49*	-.22*
Excited	39.5	51.2	9.3	-.04	.16
Embarrassed	9.3	27.9	62.8	.02	-.21*
Involved	48.8	39.5	11.6	-.03	.31*
Surprised	51.2	34.9	14.0	.28*	-.07

*Pearson correlation significant at $p < .05$.

significant negative correlations were present for Bush. For Bush, in fact, the positive evaluation went up as viewers experienced sympathy and surprise.

Discussion

This investigation sought to provide an in-depth analysis of the Bush-Rather exchange in terms of two perspectives: (1) viewing the event as an argumentation sequence of attack-rebuttal, and (2) determining the effects of violations of viewer expectations. In discussing the results, both the experimental findings and the results of content and conversational analyses were incorporated to explore the exchange more fully.

The first three hypotheses were advanced in order to test the impact of the event on viewer evaluations of the participants. In argumentation terms, it was proposed that the mini-documentary preceding the actual interview sequence could be described as an "attack" on Bush, providing Bush with no opportunity for rebuttal. The results confirmed conventional wisdom suggesting that an unanswered attack can be very damaging since respondents viewing the mini-documentary alone reported significantly more negative evaluations of Bush. Clearly, Rather and CBS, in airing the mini-documentary, created a negative attitude toward Bush prior to the interview sequence.

However, past research has substantiated that the opportunity for rebuttal is successful in offsetting the effect of a negative portrayal; that is, the rebuttal may not raise evaluations of the person attacked but it will lower evaluations of the attacker. These expectations were partially confirmed since Bush's opportunity to rebut during the interview resulted in a lowering of Rather's evaluation. But the rebuttal did more than lower the evaluation of the attacker in this case; it actually increased the positive evaluation of Bush.

In the interview-only group, evaluations of Rather decreased while those of Bush stayed about the same. That both participants did not suffer as predicted indicates that the interview seen alone more closely paralleled the results of previous attack-rebuttal research. This finding seems to place even more significance on the effect of the preceding CBS mini-documentary. In this case, the preceding attack contained in the mini-documentary actually served to help Bush, probably by fostering the appearance that he had been set-up.

It would be convenient to attribute these results to partisan judgments, expecting the predispositions about Bush and Rather to account for many of the differences. In fact, a telephone survey in an Arkansas county a week after the event found that audience perceptions of Bush and Rather's

behaviors were affected by party identification (Rollberg, Sanders, & Bard, 1989). This explanation is, of course, largely belied here by the pretest/posttest design and the existence of the control group which experienced no change toward either participant. However, in order to control for the possible influence of party affiliation on the image-change scores, a 4×3 ANOVA was performed with treatment group and party affiliation as the independent variables. Although main effects for treatment group were significant (as previously reported), no significant main effects were found for party affiliation for either Rather or Bush. Nor were there any significant interaction effects between treatment group and partisan affiliation. This seems to indicate that partisan predispositions were not responsible for the changes elicited by the Bush-Rather encounter.

A second purpose of this investigation was to determine the effects of the Bush-Rather event on violations of viewer expectations. Past research has demonstrated that audiences expect journalists to be hard on (but objective toward) political figures, and results here confirm that respondents who viewed Rather and CBS as objective and fair also judged Rather to be the "winner" of the encounter. In comparing responses of various groups, those viewing only the mini-documentary rated the mini-documentary as significantly more fair than those who saw first the mini-documentary and then the interview. Respondents in the former group were more likely than those in the latter group to agree that the program "presented both sides of the controversy," was "more informative than judgmental," and "represented responsible journalism."

Even those who viewed the interview, with and without the mini-documentary, were affected by their expectations. Judging from responses to open-ended questions and to particular questions assessing the behavior of the participants, those who viewed the encounter as congruent with the responsibility of the press to "find out the facts" supported Rather's methods; their expectations were not violated so dramatically. On the other hand, some viewers reacted negatively to Rather because they felt he "lost control" or appeared to "go too far," confirming earlier findings (Kaid, Singleton, & Davis, 1977) that viewer evaluations of journalists are lessened when the journalist takes a critical, less objective stance.

Viewer expectations about content and presentation may have been related to evaluations of the participants. The 14½-minute uninterrupted segment may have violated what viewers usually see as a television news story. The entire 9-minute interview was comprised of alternating three basic camera shots: (1) close-up of Bush (21 shots totalling 5:37 minutes), (2) medium close-up of Rather (25 shots totalling 2:30 minutes), and (3) over-the-shoulder shot of Rather (14 shots totalling 1 minute).⁶ This represents a major lack of variety for news programs which increasingly try to

match fast-paced entertainment programming in the presentation of news stories. Such variation from normal news story structure might have contributed to viewer feelings of surprise and to the negative evaluations of Rather, upon whom the structural violations of the newscast were most likely to rebound.

Additional explanations of the intense viewer responses may lie in the nature of the controversial exchange itself. An examination of the transcript of the encounter reveals several violations of conversational norms. Neither Bush nor Rather make much effort to utilize common techniques of politeness or face-saving; Bush and Rather structure their conversation in accusation-counteraccusation sequences, with little regard for mutually supportive statements. They also constantly violate turn-taking norms, overlapping each other an amazing 57 times in only 9 minutes.

The unusual nature of the talk patterns in this exchange is also marked by the excessive amount of meta-talk; that is, both participants talk frequently about the *process* of their talk. For example, on eight occasions Bush complains that he is not getting a chance to assert his own agenda, while Rather admonishes Bush for his insistence on a live interview and for setting "the rules for this talk." Such preoccupation with process may have contributed to the postevent characterization of the exchange as non-substantive, and to the strong viewer reactions to the Bush-Rather encounter in the experiment reported here. It certainly may be one reason that viewers felt tense, uncomfortable, and surprised.

Despite the concentration here on violation of viewer expectations about media formats and talk patterns, another explanation for some of the results should not go unconsidered. It is possible that viewers reacted positively to Bush and negatively to Rather simply because Bush accomplished what he and his advisers set out to accomplish. One indication of this may be apparent in the strong association between viewer surprise and positive posttest reaction to Bush. Perhaps viewers were surprised, not by the unusual media format or by the atypical conversation patterns, but by the unveiling of a strong, combative George Bush who could never again be called a wimp.

Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations to this study must be noted. First, the timing was not ideal since several weeks passed between the actual event and the experimental treatments. Second, although few members of the sample reported viewership of the original event, many more had undoubtedly heard, read, or talked about it. This study provided no way of measuring the potential

effect of such supplemental communication. Third, the setting in which the respondents viewed the encounter (in a classroom with other students) created an unrealistic environment. Although this artificiality might be expected to heighten effects in some aspects of the study, it may actually have dampened emotional reactions which might be expected to be stronger in the intimacy of a home viewing environment. Finally, student samples are always a problem in studies such as this. However, although college students of today may be less experienced politically, they should be no less sophisticated than an older generation in judging television encounters.

Overall, these results confirm that a successful attack can be blunted by a rebuttal. Such findings are very much in keeping with the research discussed earlier on negative advertising and lend increased weight to the notion that politicians can and should defend themselves in the public media arena. They may be particularly successful if a defense/rebuttal can arouse the sympathy of the audience at the same time. Future research might also focus on cognitive outcomes of intense encounters. Such work could prove fruitful in light of Bennett and Edelman's (1985) suggestion that news narratives which depart from stock formulas might stimulate audience interactions with the content and thus produce learning.

Further detailed analysis of the text of the encounter is also needed to determine specific talk patterns and perhaps to compare it with other media interviews. Such research can provide answers to theoretical concerns about argumentation sequences and media-conversation pattern relationships and may yield obvious pragmatic advice for media professionals and politicians as well.

Notes

¹Possible violations of viewer expectations regarding normal conversational exchange patterns were of concern. However, since the research literature does not suggest how such expectations may be generalized to mass communication settings, no specific hypotheses were tested here. Other ways in which viewer expectations might have been violated in the exchange were considered in the analysis. In communication exchanges, participants have expectations about simple norms such as politeness, turn-taking, and interruptions. With the exception of certain positive outcomes from violations of non-verbal behavior terms (Burgoon & Hale, 1988), receivers generally expect certain rules to be followed in communication, and the violation of these expectations can have important consequences on persuasion outcomes (Reardon, 1981).

²Each group was compared according to sex, age, and partisan affiliation. Table 3 displays these comparisons: Only age showed any group distinction and, while statistically significant, the differences are small in absolute terms. There is no reason to believe the results were affected in any way.

Table 3

	Mini-Docum. & Interview	Mini-Docum Only	Interview Only	Control
Sex ^a				
Male	53.5%	53.3%	57.5%	58.5%
Female	46.5	46.7	42.5	41.5
Age ^b	21.8	20.5	20.6	23.4
Pol. Party ^c				
Democrat	39.5%	24.4%	27.3%	34.1%
Republican	53.4	60.0	51.5	48.8
Indep. or Other	7.0	15.6	21.2	17.1
^a $\chi^2(3, N = 162) = .37, n.s.$ ^b Anova produced $F(3, 158) = 3.885 p < .05.$ ^c $\chi^2(6, N = 162) = 5.27, n.s.$				

³The 12 items used on the semantic differential scale were: qualified-unqualified, sophisticated-unsophisticated, honest-dishonest, believable-unbelievable, successful-unsuccessful, attractive-unattractive, friendly-unfriendly, sincere-insincere, calm-excitable, aggressive-unaggressive, strong-weak, active-inactive.

⁴Only 11.0% of all the respondents in the experiment reported having seen the encounter on CBS at the time it originally aired, and these respondents exhibited no significant differences from other respondents.

⁵No attempt was made to create a single emotional response scale because the response items seemed more interesting when considered individually, and they did not seem to represent any uniform or meaningful interrelationships.

⁶The only exceptions to these three camera shots were a brief establishing shot of Bush at his desk as the interview began and a zoom in to a close-up of Bush as the responses got under way.

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