The Salience of Masculinity in 1960 Presidential Campaign Rhetoric

Joshua Ferno
Elon University

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Abstract

The presidential election of 1960 occurred as the United States approached the height of a period of cultural anxiety referred to as the “masculinity crisis.” During this time, the masculinity of young American men became a point of concern as questions were raised about their perceived weakness relative to those in the east. This study explores the potential impact of that cultural context on the outcome of the narrowly-won 1960 election. Using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count software, standardized “masculinity quotients” from each candidate were compared using gendered linguistic standards established by Newman et al. (2008) and a formula to
quantify linguistic masculinity derived from Slatcher et al. (2007). Results reveal that Kennedy’s rhetoric was significantly more masculine in linguistic style than Nixon’s, indicating that voters’ appraisals of the candidates were likely influenced by their perceptions of the men’s masculinity, which may have affected the election’s outcome.

Introduction

The presidential election of 1960 brought about a major augmentation to the landscape of American politics at a unique juncture in the country’s history. From the unprecedented nature of John F. Kennedy’s victory as the first Roman Catholic and youngest elected U.S. president, to the utilization of television as a new medium of broadcasting debates, the race between JFK and
Richard Nixon played host to a significant shift in the culture of American political identity. Given that neither Kennedy nor Nixon was an incumbent commander-in-chief in 1960, the process of evaluating each man’s *presidential* candidacy (Nixon was already prominent as VP) relied heavily upon the public’s appraisal of personality characteristics during the campaigning process.

A key component of the collective American identity that rose to the forefront of many discussions during this Cold War period was masculinity. Concerns about the perceived decline of hegemonically masculine traits among males of the up-and-coming generation grew parallel to the generalized fear of the encroachment of communism upon the United States. The media capitalized on this anxiety, as television shows like *The Flabby American* brought attention to the issue and millions of help-books, pamphlets, magazine articles, and educational videos were distributed to instruct parents and children alike on how to improve their sedentary lifestyles for the good of the country.\(^\text{104}\) Perhaps the most crucial item of discussion during this heightened period of gendered physical awareness was the public release of statistics granting legitimacy to fears of the unthinkable inferiority of western bodies. A number of major news outlets publicized that nearly one-third of Vietnam draftees called up between 1950 and 1957 were deemed “unfit for combat” and sent home, and that 57.9% of American children failed to meet minimum standards on the Kraus-Weber physical fitness test while only 8.9% of European youth failed to do so.\(^\text{105}\) These facts, and the insecurity that accompanied their publication, formed the basis of what historians and sociologists have dubbed “the American masculinity crisis” - a period of


reckoning for the superiority complex the country clung to so fiercely in the face of communist opposition in the Cold War.

Kennedy and Nixon’s race for the presidency happened to play out as tensions rose to their peak in the American masculinity crisis, as measured by the large volume of references to it in the media. Therefore, it stands to reason that on a conscious or subconscious level, the American electorate was not simply considering policy stances and past experience when appraising the nominees, but also which man would serve as a more powerful role model for the young men of America who appeared to be in desperate need of a classically masculine figure to rally around.

Literature Review

There is no shortage of academic interest in studying the social construction of gender. Erving Goffman initiated the push for greater study on the subject when he adapted the theatrical term “dramaturgy” in 1959 to the field of sociology in one of the field’s most seminal works - *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. The dramaturgical, or social constructivist, theory presented there has become the basis of modern progressive thought regarding the practice of labeling people on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, etc., as it declares that such classifications exist only as a result of socially ascribed norms to which people feel inclined to conform for the sake of social acceptance rather than as reflections of individuals’ natural predispositions. In keeping with this principle, scholars have operationalized the concept of gender in a wide variety of ways to examine how different individuals go about expressing

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gender-associated traits, as well as how definitions of masculinity and femininity differ across
cultural contexts. 108 Although politicians’ performance of gender has been covered to some
degree by past researchers, a large majority of the published works on the topic lean more toward
speculative, narrative approaches rather than adhering to a concrete method of analysis, making
many previously drawn conclusions somewhat shaky. 109 Furthermore, there has not been a single
quantitative study published on masculinity in the campaign rhetoric of the 1960 election,
leaving a gap in the body of research that can be filled using recently developed linguistic
analysis tools.

The Expression of Masculinity

Research has shed light on the more nuanced aspects of gender’s social construction that
go beyond conventional wisdom, indicating that while there are numerous ways to perform
gender, they are viewed as either more or less desirable depending on the cultural context. A
study by Wetherell and Edley produced a model of the psychological processes that accompany
the outward expression of masculinity, including the hegemonic conformist they refer to as the
“celebrated and exalted hero.” This model was that sought by the anxious American population
in the election of 1960, as it stands for the very tenets of hardened American masculinity that

108 Rosemary Ricciardelli et al., "Investigating Hegemonic Masculinity: Portrayals of Masculinity in Men’s Lifestyle
33-41; Yue Tan et al., "The Construction of Masculinity: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Men’s Lifestyle Magazine
Advertisements." Sex Roles 69 no. 5-6 (2013): 237-49.
109 Emma Cannon, "US and Venezuelan Presidential Masculinities in the First Decade of the ‘war on Terror’"
Image of Presidents As Sporting Figures: A Public Relations Perspective." SAGE Open 2, no. 3 (2012); Mysha R.
Whorley and Michael E. Addis. "Ten Years of Psychological Research on Men and Masculinity in the United States:
appeared to have begun eroding. The high levels of interpersonal variability in how masculinity is expressed and perceived is mirrored in media studies of how masculinity is expressed in men’s lifestyle magazines, which emphasize how the general priorities of a group or subgroup (in this case, the American electorate) shape its perceptions of appropriate performance of gender, supporting the assertion that 1960 U.S. citizens would have responded most positively to an example of hegemonic masculinity rather than an equally masculine candidate who performs gender in a non-conformist way. A similar study on lifestyle magazines by Tan et al. solidifies this conclusion in its clear indication that the desired masculine archetype is dependent upon cultural - and therefore, historical - context.

Masculinity and Perceived Leadership Capability

A large body of scholarly research has found a strong correlation between the performance of masculinity and perceptions of effective leadership. Virginia E. Schein summed up the prevailing stereotype with her 1996 article, “Think Manager - Think Male,” in which she concluded that “successful middle managers possess characteristics, attitudes and temperaments more commonly ascribed to men” based on responses to a 92-item index questionnaire. This trend was observed consistently across cultures in Japan, China, Germany, Great Britain and the United States, typically with a stronger presence among male respondents than females.

Another study conducted by Lord et al. used meta-analysis to assess leadership emergence

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among a gender-diverse pool of subjects using six scaled categories, including a measure of masculinity which was defined as aggressive, decisive, and/or unemotional behavior. Results indicated that these masculine traits were positively associated with positive perceptions of leadership capabilities. These findings were later called into question by Epitropaki and Martin, who used a similar set of scales to determine the desired qualities of a prototypical leader. Contrary to the findings of prior research, their results indicated that the expression of masculinity in leadership appeared to be closely related to that of tyranny, both of which made up their concluded model of the anti-prototypical leader. This anomalous finding may be indicative of changing U.S. paradigms of gender, but more likely is a result of the characterization of masculinity within the study’s questionnaire, which intentionally separates the trait from those of strength, dedication, and charisma - traits often thought of as the more favorable aspects of a masculine personality - which were found to be very desirable in leaders.

Masculinity and Perceptions of Effective Governance

Lord et al. makes the important distinction that masculinity has not been empirically tied to above-average performance in leadership roles, but rather with the expectation of quality performance, which supports the notion that it would play an important role with undecided voters, particularly within the historical context of the American masculinity crisis.

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by Smith, Paul, and Paul corroborates this assertion of the importance of masculinity particularly for presidents in a 2007 study exploring disparities in attitudes toward voting for women for federal-level legislative seats versus voting for a woman in a presidential election. They found that while respondents responded similarly to identical credentials assigned to simulated male and female candidates for a Senate seat, the same test produced significantly different results when replicated with simulated presidential candidates. The results showed that the male-named candidate presented was consistently scored higher on a scale of presidential potential, whereas the female or androgynous-named candidates were more likely to be regarded as “very unskilled.”

One could predict that these results would be even more protracted in 1960, given the documented shift in public opinion toward a more egalitarian view of female candidacy for president as evidenced by a study of mid-19th century Gallup polls by Ferree and General Social Survey data.

The historical context of the 1960 election is especially important when considering the potential competitive edge for the presidential candidate who was perceived as more masculine. As the forces of communism moved closer to home with Fidel Castro’s rise to power in Cuba in 1959, anxiety built over the potential for nuclear or armed conflict with the new Soviet auxiliary. The perceived threat of terror provided a basis for American citizens to hold such a preference for a more masculine presidential candidate, as is substantiated by the findings of Rosenwasser and Dean in 1989. Their study on perceptions of gender in relation to the political office.

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concluded that a major reason cited by those preferring a male over a female president (who made up the vast majority of respondents) is the perceived superior ability to handle terrorism.\textsuperscript{119}

The increased threat of such an attack from Cuba, then, would have heightened the perceived need for a more masculine (therefore, perceived as capable) figure in charge. The prevalence of the masculinity crisis that characterized this time also points to the need for a strong masculine example for the country, as is asserted by the work of Jeffrey Montez de Oca, which provides greater perspective on the extent to which the masculinity crisis was perpetuated within the media. Coding newspaper and magazine articles to identify references to the crisis, he found that it was referenced both explicitly and indirectly in both forms of writing, meaning that citizens received consistent reminders of the deficient masculinity of the country, likely reaffirming their resolve to elect a president that could alleviate it.\textsuperscript{120}

\textit{Linguistic Analysis of Masculinity in Political Rhetoric}

Studies have empirically evaluated the presence of such expression in political rhetoric, both in terms of how candidates express gender in their campaign advertisements as well as how politicians speak about terrorism. The former study, conducted by Kahn in 1993, centered on content analysis of campaign advertisements for senatorial races in the 1980s. Its results indicated that masculinity is consistently a strong theme across advertisements for men and women, and that attacking the opposing candidate was more typical of female candidates, perhaps suggesting that the quiet confidence inherent in not doing so is an important aspect of a

\textsuperscript{119} Lindsey M. Rosenwasser and Norma G. Dean, "Gender Role and Political Office" \textit{Psychology of Women Quarterly} 13 no.1 (1989): 77-85.

candidate's masculinity. The latter study, conducted by De Castella and McGarty in 2011, focused specifically on political speeches on terrorism and enemies characterized as the ideological “other”. Although its content sample is limited to post-9/11 rhetoric, the relevance of its focus to studies on the Cold War is evident. The findings reflect that fear-mongering and eliciting anger from audiences are used at different rates among executives, but that such themes are very prevalent in rhetoric on the subject, which can be attributed to the desire for a strong, aggressive (hegemonically masculine) leader when confronted with terrorism and threats to a national identity, at least as perceived by those in office. Coe et al. took a more focused approach to analyzing surface-level trends in political rhetoric following 9/11, coding public addresses for elements such as “discursive control” and “strength masculinity” and reporting results similar to those of De Castella and McGarty.

Aside from the overt themes analyzed in political rhetoric, a more comprehensive method has developed that allows researchers to determine, on a very subtle level, how closely one’s speech aligns with a given gender identity and apply it to political discourse. A comprehensive analysis of over 14,000 samples of text was analyzed by Newman et al. using a computerized language processor known as Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software to reveal gendered differences in expression patterns on the level of frequency of each part of speech, average word and sentence length, and frequency of referral to different themes and feelings.

This baseline allows future researchers to apply the findings and the software to specific contexts, like that of an election, to determine how closely an individual adheres to his or her gender in terms of language use. Slatcher et al. did just that when analyzing the presidential and vice-presidential candidates from the 2004 election between Bush/Cheney and Gore/Edwards, applying the LIWC program to quantify several variables in each’s rhetoric by devising simple formulas from LIWC output to produce quotients for each candidate representing qualities like cognitive complexity, depression, and femininity.\(^{125}\)

Findings indicated that Edwards and Cheney were the most and least feminine candidates, respectively, and that Bush and Kerry did not differ significantly, although Bush did receive a slightly higher score for femininity. These findings cannot be construed as a major indicator of masculine linguistic style as a perennial mark of winning candidates, but they would not discredit such a hypothesis. More importantly, they allow for an altered replication of the methodology (to quantify masculinity rather than femininity) to be performed on other elections, which would be expected to have different results given the essential nature of the cultural and historical context surrounding the perceived salience of masculinity.

Current Study

The current study seeks to build upon the existing scholarly discourse on the association between masculinity and perceptions of leadership and political capability by testing its applicability to real-life voting behavior in the context of the 1960 presidential election. Using the gender-separated results of Newman et al.’s LIWC analysis of over 14,000 text samples as a

baseline for how masculinity is expressed through language, this study will provide a new, quantitative take on a substantial body of academic work focused on the social construction of gender and lend credit to the practical significance of studies on the matter. \(^\text{126}\)

The public’s prioritization of masculinity, produced by the unique social climate created by the masculinity crisis in the U.S. at that time, creates the ideal setting for this type of historical audit. So high a premium was likely never placed on masculinity to justify a potential conclusion of such factors as those measured in this study to be capable of influencing an election outcome. While there is no clear way of estimating how much voters’ decisions relied upon appraisals of masculinity, Kennedy’s narrow win in the popular vote by just over 112,000 votes indicates that any number of secondary factors could have swung the election. Thus, a significantly higher level of embodiment of hegemonically masculine linguistic traits from Kennedy could be construed as a swing-factor that helped him win the presidency. The research hypothesis tested in this study asserts that John Kennedy’s campaign rhetoric exhibited higher levels of masculinity than that of Nixon’s, therefore lending him more credibility as a solid masculine figure to guide the country and helping him to win the election. It will also explore whether the linguistic traits of each candidate were consistent across debates and speeches, as the extemporaneous and competitive nature of debate relative to pre-written, rehearsed nature of speeches would likely produce significant differences.

**Methodology**

To evaluate the masculinity of each candidate’s campaign rhetoric, transcripts of debates

\(^{126}\) Matthew L. Newman, Carla J. Groom, Lori D. Handelman, and James W. Pennebaker, ”Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples,” *Discourse Processes* 45, no. 3 (2008): 211-36.
and speeches from each were systematically processed using a computer-based linguistic analysis program. Transcribed text for the four major presidential debates were retrieved from an online database maintained by the Commission on Presidential Debates, and transcripts of campaign speeches were drawn from the archives of the American Presidency Project (APP) hosted by the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Debate texts were cut to remove speech by other parties and sorted to group statements by the candidate that made them. The candidates’ samples were then processed separately through the linguistic analysis program. Of the campaign speech texts available in the APP archives, those selected were chosen because they contained at least 5 mentions of the USSR and/or communism - topics that would have been the most closely scrutinized for masculine presentation by viewers of the time due to the insecure state of the U.S. in the midst of the masculinity crisis. Speeches were chosen at random from the database and screened to verify that they met minimum requirements until five such examples were found from each candidate. The speech transcripts were then combined into two separate files, each containing the five speeches from a single candidate, and processed separately through the linguistic analysis program.

**Chosen Speeches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John F. Kennedy</th>
<th>Richard Nixon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Speech by Senator John F. Kennedy, Democratic Rally, George Washington High School Stadium, Alexandria, VA  
August 24, 1960 | Speech of Vice President Richard M. Nixon, Waikiki Shell, Honolulu, HI  
August 4, 1960 |
| Speech of Senator John F. Kennedy, VFW Convention, Detroit, MI  
August 26, 1960 | Speech by the Vice President, National Guard Armory, Rockford, IL  
September 22, 1960 |
| Statewide TV Speech of Senator John F. Kennedy, Zembo Mosque Temple, Harrisburg, PA | Speech by the Vice President Before the Association of Business Economists, Vanderbilt Auditorium, New York University, New York, |
The texts were analyzed using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software program developed by Dr. James Pennebaker. The settings of the program were adjusted to evaluate the transcripts for a specific set of variables based on those used in an equation developed for a similar study conducted on rhetoric in the 2004 presidential election.\textsuperscript{127} Based on standardized, gendered means for over 80 linguistic dimensions established by the findings of a 2008 study, researchers were able to operationalize femininity in rhetoric and measure it using LIWC output.\textsuperscript{128}

Output scores from candidates’ rhetoric were converted to z-scores, which measure the number of standard deviations above or below a given mean, and compared to the mean found for the general male population to evaluate each candidate’s level of divergence from the population norm within the linguistic dimensions. Each candidate’s score, henceforth referred to as his “masculinity quotient,” was calculated using this formula:

\[
\text{Masculinity quotient} = \text{zsixl} + \text{zneg} + \text{zar} + \text{zpreps} + \text{z} + \text{zmoney} + \text{znumbers} - \text{zother} - \text{zposfeel}
\]

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{LIWC Variable Name} & \textbf{Meaning/Example} \\
\hline
\end{tabular}


\textsuperscript{128} Matthew L. Newman et al., "Gender Differences in Language Use: An Analysis of 14,000 Text Samples." \textit{Discourse Processes} 45, no. 3 (2008): 211-36.
The formula was created by negating the values in the previously mentioned femininity equation for which Cronbach’s alpha score, a statistical measure of internal reliability used with multivariate analysis, was .89 (.65 is the generally accepted minimum score for a reliable scale). Because the variables used to determine femininity were chosen simply for the large discrepancy between the mean values for males and females, this method of negating them is methodologically sound because of the relative, two-way (gender binary) nature of the data.

Based on previous scholarship establishing the link between performance of masculinity and the perception of effective leadership coupled with the social context of the U.S. masculinity crisis nearing its peak in 1960, one could logically hypothesize that Kennedy’s victory in the 1960 election can be (at least) partially explained by his greater embodiment of hegemonically masculine linguistic traits relative to those of Nixon in their public debates and campaign speeches. Higher levels of masculinity would have been well-received by the public given the increasing anxiety over proliferation of media attention on the masculinity crisis at the time and
would have resulted in more favorable appraisals of Kennedy not only as a president, but as a
more powerful force to combat the softness that threatened the integrity of the United States.

**Analysis**

LIWC analysis of the four presidential debates and each candidate’s five chosen speeches
revealed a number of similarities and significant differences between the linguistic styles of
Kennedy and Nixon. It also revealed multiple areas in which *both* candidates diverted very
strongly from the established population mean. Swear words were omitted from analysis when it
was confirmed that neither candidate used one in any of the selected transcripts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Male Population Mean (SD)</th>
<th>All Nixon Text (z)</th>
<th>All Kennedy Text (z)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sixltr</td>
<td>15.25 (5.91)</td>
<td>19.32 (.68)</td>
<td>19.80 (.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negate</td>
<td>1.72 (1.17)</td>
<td>1.62 (-.09)</td>
<td>1.63 (-.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>article</td>
<td>6.70 (2.94)</td>
<td>8.05 (.46)</td>
<td>9.01 (.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preps</td>
<td>12.88 (2.64)</td>
<td>14.91 (.77)</td>
<td>14.30 (.54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swear</td>
<td>.17 (.44)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money</td>
<td>.29 (.49)</td>
<td>1.35 (2.16)</td>
<td>1.39 (2.24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numbers</td>
<td>1.59 (1.55)</td>
<td>1.49 (-.06)</td>
<td>2.80 (.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>2.74 (3.01)</td>
<td>.94 (-.60)</td>
<td>.87 (-.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posfeel</td>
<td>.51 (.65)</td>
<td>3.26 (4.23)</td>
<td>3.04 (3.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity Quotient:</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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As shown in Table 1, the candidates scored very similarly in their use of negating words, “other” words, and mentions of money. The LIWC program found that Kennedy used articles at a higher rate than Nixon, an indication of greater linguistic masculinity. Nixon’s greater volume in use of prepositions, however, counters that difference as such is also a trait of masculine speech. The overall masculinity quotient difference can be largely attributed to discrepancies in the use of words with six or more letters, mentions of numbers, and allusions to positive feelings, all of which gave him a comparative advantage in regards to the embodiment of hegemonically male linguistic traits (“posfeel” is subtracted in the MQ equation, meaning that Kennedy’s lower score in that metric contributed to his higher MQ). The large disparity between the overall masculinity quotients lends support to the research hypothesis, as such a significant difference very likely would have been perceptible to the public as they appraised the personality characteristics of each candidate, with a high priority placed on impressions of their masculinity.

One thought-provoking feature of the data in Table 1 is the very large break from the established male population means for both candidates regarding mentions of money, and the even greater disparity seen in the allusions to positive feelings in their rhetoric. While the former could likely be accounted for in consideration of the content at hand - discussion of the economy, cost of war efforts, and other such money-centric topics would naturally be more pertinent to campaign speeches and debates than to normal conversation - the latter is, perhaps, less commonsense in its explanation. The variable “posfeel”, which both candidates scored highest on in z-score measurements, is negatively associated with masculinity. In addition to that, Nixon and Kennedy both scored in the range of four standard deviations removed from the mean. Statistically speaking, that would place both candidates above the 99th percentile in terms of
positive feeling word usage.

There are a few simple factors that could account for the remarkably high rates of positive feeling word usage in these instances. On one hand, it may be reflective of a specific message the candidates were trying to convey in their word choice. Positive feelings words may have been chosen strategically when discussing expectations for their own presidency or their qualifications in order to frame them in an appealing light for audiences. There is also a potential element of control embedded in the intentional use of such words, in the sense that the speakers could be attempting to convey an ability to produce positive results, but a close reading of the texts for the context of such words would be necessary to support that.

Aside from the possibility of the context and the intentions associated with the texts being responsible for the enigmatically high “posfeel” rates, the cause could potentially stem from a limitation of the method used. There is a possibility that the previous research used as a base male population mean to compare the candidate means against is not perfect for this study, given that it may not be reflective of the pervasive linguistic trends of males in 1960, but trend toward reflecting more recent ones. However, it seems highly unlikely that such a discrepancy between time periods would only be so visibly pronounced in only a single variable. All explanations are worth consideration for such a highly irregular value, though, and more discussion on the potential limitations of LIWC measurement in this study can be found in the conclusion.

Differences in Speeches and Debates

The results become more varied and complex when the speech and debate transcripts are processed separately. Debates were found to be overwhelmingly more masculine in linguistic style than speeches based on the specific metrics analyzed by the LIWC program in accordance
with the prior scholarship. While this finding adds an interesting degree of nuance to the results of this study, it does not detract in any way from support lent to the research hypothesis asserting that Kennedy’s greater exemplification of masculine norms aided his campaign because he scored significantly higher in both categories.

Table 2.
Means, Z-scores, and Masculinity Quotients for all Texts, Separated by Debates and Speeches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Male Population Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Nixon Debates (z)</th>
<th>Nixon Speeches (z)</th>
<th>Kennedy Debates (z)</th>
<th>Kennedy Speeches (z)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sixltr</td>
<td>15.25 (5.91)</td>
<td>19.43 (.71)</td>
<td>19.23 (.67)</td>
<td>19.81 (.77)</td>
<td>19.77 (.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negate</td>
<td>1.72 (1.17)</td>
<td>1.71 (-.01)</td>
<td>1.54 (-.15)</td>
<td>1.49 (-.20)</td>
<td>1.85 (.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>article</td>
<td>6.70 (2.94)</td>
<td>7.97 (.43)</td>
<td>8.11 (.48)</td>
<td>9.10 (.81)</td>
<td>8.87 (.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preps</td>
<td>12.88 (2.64)</td>
<td>14.67 (.68)</td>
<td>15.10 (.84)</td>
<td>14.01 (.43)</td>
<td>14.75 (.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swear</td>
<td>-.17 (.44)</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>θ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money</td>
<td>.29 (.49)</td>
<td>1.37 (2.20)</td>
<td>1.33 (2.12)</td>
<td>1.83 (3.14)</td>
<td>.70 (.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numbers</td>
<td>1.59 (1.55)</td>
<td>1.68 (.06)</td>
<td>1.33 (-.17)</td>
<td>3.15 (1.01)</td>
<td>2.24 (.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>2.74 (3.01)</td>
<td>.78 (-.65)</td>
<td>1.08 (-.55)</td>
<td>.70 (-.67)</td>
<td>1.15 (-.53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posfeel</td>
<td>.51 (.65)</td>
<td>2.59 (3.20)</td>
<td>3.80 (5.06)</td>
<td>2.92 (3.71)</td>
<td>3.23 (4.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MQ:</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>-.72</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One could take a number of angles to explain potential causes of the stark discrepancy between the linguistic qualities of campaign speeches and debates. One such explanation could simply be found in the origins, so to speak, of each type of rhetoric. Whereas debates are more extemporaneous and unrehearsed in their nature, campaign speeches are pre-written, oftentimes

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not by those delivering them. Essentially, this discrepancy could potentially have little to do with Nixon and Kennedy, themselves, but rather the staffers or groups of staffers that penned their campaign speeches. While both nominees scored below the population average in terms of the masculinity quotient associated with their selected campaign speeches, Nixon was rated significantly lower in this measure (-.72.) than Kennedy (-.06).

While it is unclear who oversaw speechwriting for Nixon’s 1960 campaign, there is historical context to support that Ted Sorensen would have been largely responsible for writing and approving Kennedy’s. Sorensen, a close friend and advisor to Kennedy who served on the Executive Committee of the National Security Council during the Cuban Missile Crisis, was best known as the President’s primary speechwriter. It can logically be concluded, then, that all campaign speeches would have crossed his desk for editing and approval even if they were not personally written by him. Because the background of Nixon’s speeches is unclear in this respect, it does leave open the possibility that the very low relative masculinity quotient of his speeches relative to his own debate rhetoric and all of Kennedy’s texts could be accounted for by significant female influence over the writing of his speeches.

In any event, differences within the debate texts are likely more important to outcome of the election (and as an extension, this study) for several key reasons.

1. Debates are viewed by much larger audiences than campaign speeches.

The national audience afforded by television and radio broadcasts allowed for the four presidential debates to reach much further to capture public attention than campaign speeches conducted in school gymnasiums and armories. While some of the latter may have been

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broadcasted to audiences greater than just those physically in attendance, they still would not have come anywhere close to the 60.4-66.4 million viewers that tuned in to watch the televised debates.\textsuperscript{132} Therefore, the above-average masculinity levels in the debates, and the discrepancy between them that appears to have given Kennedy a significant edge, are more valuable and telling with regards to the purpose of this study.

2. Debate listeners were more likely to be truly undecided voters than those attending campaign events.

Campaign events including the types of rhetorical speeches pertinent to this study were likely attended by voters with a particularly high level of interest/support for the speaking candidate, whereas the four presidential debates would have been viewed by citizens with allegiances across the entire political spectrum. While some speeches do not necessarily fit this conclusion, such as Nixon’s speech to the Association of Business Economists, the majority of them were not geared toward a politically-diverse group. Rather, they were open for attendance to interested members of the public, which would likely have been mainly comprised of supporters. Therefore, the masculinity quotients associated with debates would be more meaningful because the debates were more likely to reach undecided voters who could have been swayed by differing levels of masculinity.

As previously stated, some of the speeches made by either nominee on his campaign trail may have been broadcast to larger audiences. However, as that information is not available in the database from which the speeches analyzed here were selected, its potential implications must be noted only as possibilities.

3. The nature of debate is more conducive to the type of critical personality appraisal (esp. of masculinity) voters would base decisions on.

In addition to the higher likelihood of impressionable voters viewing debates relative to campaign speeches and higher overall viewership, one could also contend that the nature of debate is more likely to produce the comparative evaluation of candidates’ masculinity than witnessing one-sided speech. The presidential debates in question allow for direct comparison of candidates. Not only is this significant because the manifest purpose of debate is to compare candidates, but also because the subtle nature of the linguistic differences this study evaluates would likely play a larger role in candidate appraisal when viewers are exposed to it in the back-and-forth banter of debates than in the completely separate listening sessions characteristic of campaign speeches.

On a related note, the competitive spirit of debate could also elicit a greater amount of attention from viewers to the masculinity of each candidate. Because audiences often try to determine a “winner” of each presidential debate, 1960 viewers would have been actively looking for qualities that gave either candidate an edge. With the masculinity crisis hanging overhead at the time, audiences would have been looking for indicators of masculinity and may have keyed in on the candidates’ differing exemplification of hegemonically masculine traits in their speaking patterns.

Discussion

Overall, the results clearly indicate that John F. Kennedy displayed much higher rates of masculine linguistic traits than Richard Nixon in the rhetoric associated with the 1960
presidential election. This comparative advantage was found to be consistent when debate texts were processed through the LIWC program separately and when entered as a single body of text. This supports the research hypothesis claiming that Kennedy’s victory in the election could be partially attributed to his relatively greater embodiment of masculinity through his rhetoric. The disparity in masculinity quotients was found to be very significant between the nominees. Given that the margin of victory for Kennedy was so slim (app. 112,000 votes), one can argue that his masculinity was well-received by Americans, who placed a high premium on that quality during the Cold War masculinity crisis, and gave him a more favorable appraisal from undecided voters, assisting in his victory.

The masculinity quotients of each candidate were not consistent across speeches and debates, as predicted by the secondary part of the research hypothesis. Speeches for both nominees scored significantly lower than their own debates, as well as below the population mean in terms of masculinity quotients. As discussed in the results section, this can be accounted for with several explanations. However, it does not affect the soundness of the conclusion to the primary research question as A) debates are logically more important to swaying voter opinion, especially within the context of this experiment, and B) Kennedy scored significantly higher than Nixon in masculinity quotient in the results presented in both Table 1 and Table 2.

**Conclusion**

The results of this study offer a great deal of suggestion that American voters in 1960 responded to variance in masculinity between candidates in their voting decisions. While these results are very encouraging, perhaps the greatest limitation in this study is its inability to
determine how much of the voting behavior in the election was related to differing appraisals of the candidates’ masculinity. A value similar to a statistical $R^2$ indicating that such differences explained a significant portion of the voting behavior in 1960 could lend a great deal of credibility to its conclusions, but no such measure is available for this particular context. As a result, the substantial body of work detailing the magnitude of the masculinity crisis at this time in U.S. history will have to suffice as assurance that such factors were heavily considered by the public, as a result of fears that younger generations were growing increasingly “soft” and susceptible to the subversive power of communism.

Additionally, there is little research empirically suggesting that humans are consistently capable of picking up on particular trends in subtle linguistic patterns, like those used in this study to quantify masculinity. Although the masculinity quotient formula laid out in the methodology is sound, as shown by the Cronbach’s alpha test, the fact that it is a reliable measure does not necessarily mean that people can perceive these subliminal differences. While this study followed the trend of past scholarly articles analyzing linguistic traits in similar manners and took this point for granted, research specifically dealing with that cognitive process would be helpful in determining how far research of this type can presume to go.

Aside from the limitations associated with the general topics of this research, its design also had a few notable limitations. One such limitation is the study’s limited focus on the candidate appraisals of undecided voters, and the underlying assumption that the closeness of the final election results equates to the outcome having been determined to where those initially undecided votes fell. Considering that Nixon was already prominent as Vice-President, along with citizens’ allegiances to their political parties, several fringe factors aside from masculinity
could have affected how citizens voted and decided the election outside of major factors such as policy stances and past experience.

There are also limitations inherent in using the LIWC software to process the transcripts. While the program serves the purpose of coding text infinitely faster than humans could, using it comes with the tradeoff of its blunt oversight or miscoding of certain words that may have multiple or alternative meanings based on context (i.e. “good” or “fine”). As previously stated, there is also the issue of measuring speech from 1960 against standards for the male population published in 2008. The 14,000 text samples combined to produce the gendered population means were gathered from samples used in 70 previous linguistic studies, and the time period(s) to which those samples pertain is unclear. While there is discussion about age as a potential conditioning factor of some linguistic traits that may apply to this issue, there is no clarity of protocol about how to control for it in other studies.

This research serves as a potential leaping-off point for future quantitative analyses on the cross-section of linguistics and public opinion - two independent academic areas of interest that have only seldom been considered as related variables. The possibilities of creating measurement scales using linguistic metrics are infinite, and this study could be replicated using other historical contexts in which a particular trait or value can be identified as particularly meaningful, as masculinity was in the 1960 United States, to analyze its interaction with public opinion and/or sociopolitical behavior. While the use of LIWC programming limits studies of this type to English-language text records, other linguistic processing engines could be

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substituted in its place to replicate such an experiment across cultures and lend credibility to the conclusions drawn in this study.

Work Cited


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**Jibraan Mansoor**

**Obligations of Law: A Theory and Justification of Civil Disobedience**

**Introduction**

Recently there has been a huge environmental and humanitarian cry about the growing climate changes and the implications of the same. Most of the politicians, legal institutions and individuals argue the need to prioritise environmental protection over other things. But when a group like Delta 5 resorts to civil disobedience to gain attention and highlight the issues with environmental laws, the same politicians and individuals demand the need for “law and order”;