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POLITICAL SATIRE AND POLITICAL INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AMONG
MILLENNIALS

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

May, 2018

POLITICAL SATIRE AND POLITICAL INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AMONG
MILLENNIALS

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POLITICAL SATIRE AND POLITICAL INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AMONG MILLENNIALS

An Abstract of the Thesis by
M.R. Tims

The proposed quantitative research will examine the shift in news seeking habits from traditional sources to new, nontraditional media outlets by Millennials (Generation Y) in the modern American society using the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The focus of the study is on the use of the late night comedy and satirical news sources as primary information seeking channels for news dissemination between the ages of 18 to 29. Participants will consist of a minimum of 100 students who attend a Midwestern university with a student body of approximately 7,500 students. Participants will be chosen using a convenience sampling method and will be asked to complete an anonymous survey. The proposed research will call to attention the methods that are frequently used by Millennials to obtain information regarding their source of attaining political gratifications.

Keywords: Millennial, Political Satire, Comedy, Uses and Gratifications Theory

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout its evolution, mass media have played a critical role in the dissemination of political information, be it factual or fictitious. The 2016 election season brought to light a series of changes within the cycle of political information dissemination. These changes illustrate a movement from traditional media networks to that of new, innovative and nontraditional formats. For example through the use of social media which former President Barack Obama used Twitter as a platform to help promote his campaign (*"Devumi"*, 2018). With the rise in social media and internet usage, information can be accessed in real-time at the click of a button. In our current political climate, there is a noticeably large shift in audience media preferences within American society. A 2015 study conducted by Elite Daily, a popular online hub for Millennials and the Millennial Research Core (MRC), indicates that Millennials, those who are born between the years 1977 and 1999 in the current age of 18 to 41 are trending towards fewer traditional media outlets such as network news (e.g. CBS, NBC or ABC), cable news (e.g. FOX, CNN or MSNBC) and printed media (e.g. The New York Times, USA Today, Newsweek) which resulted in an accumulative total of 10 percent usage. Instead, Millennials are opting toward new media sources such as online news sources (e.g. BuzzFeed News, The Hill, The Drudge Report) or late night programs that are satirical comedy in genre (PM, 2016). This is quite the opposite of the formerly sizeable Baby Boomer generation, which is now outnumbered by the Gen Y Millennials (Fry, 2016). For the purposes of this research, a Millennial is considered to be anyone born between the years of 1977 and 1999. They are named due to their proximity to the new millennium as well

being the first generation being raised and evolving along with technology (Smith & Nichols, 2015). In the recent political cycle American society has witnessed a major push for candidates to make appearances on political satire programs such as Saturday Night Live or Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon to appeal to Millennial voters; a strategy which previously was only used cautiously and sparingly in the attempt to appeal to the candidates constituents.

The proposed research is designed to examine the shift of information seeking habits of political news content from traditional news channels to new, nontraditional media sources by Millennials. This study will examine the media consumption practices of the Millennial Generation using the Uses and Gratifications theory as the theoretical lens, and by doing so will help explain how political satire content impacts political knowledge, attitudes or beliefs.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand the scope of the study, a review of core literature discussing the areas are described in the following section. The literature review will (1) summarize first the theoretical lens of Media Uses and Gratifications theory, (2) provide a historical account of the evolution of media outlets, (3) define and describe political comedy and (4) a summary of extant literature documenting how political satire has become a tool for hard news dissemination will be provided.

Theoretical Framework

Since 2013 there has been a rapid development of worldwide technology and today 3.2 billion people have internet access, while 4.2 billion individuals globally watch television regularly and portable mobile (i.e. handheld). Technology ownership has increased by 25 percent (Ahonen, 2011, Davidson, 2015, Poushter, 2016). As a result access to digital media content has increased and Millennial audiences have been using it to satisfy their personal information sufficiency needs at a quicker pace than ever recorded.

In American society, citizens consume 11 or more hours of media and technology daily according to a 2017 report published by Business Insider (Frank, 2017). For the purpose of this paper, the definition of the term media is the medium that facilitates the dissemination of ideas and concepts between message sender and receivers in both digital and print formats. In 1959 Elihu Katz began arguing that audiences are active participants in media consumption and may explain why some audience members use media outlets to engage in specific types of information seeking behaviors in order to satisfy their needs. This theory is formally known as Media Uses

and Gratifications Theory, and argues that media consumers pick and choose how they use the media to meet a variety of needs which differs from consumer to consumer (Hanson, 2015).

Previous literature has found media content satisfies a variety of needs including self-favoring information. Lev-On (2011), states that media can be used as an escape from reality, or even cognitive functions like learning or understanding. This type of content reinforces current political beliefs similar to an echo chamber (Lamarre, Landreville, & Beam, 2009). Katz began his work on the theory in the late 1950s when the media landscape was heavily saturated with traditional media content such as newspapers, radio, magazines, movies and television. Rather than questioning the effect that media has on the audiences, questioned the effect that consumers had on the media. Katz based uses and gratifications theory on five pillars that: (1) people consume media for specific needs that are unique to the user, (2) individuals actively pursue media to gratify their needs, (3) media is constantly competing for audience time and attention, (4) the effect that mass media has on users is subjective and contextual and (5) that users are accurate when determining and reporting their media use (Griffin & Ledbetter, 2015).

The theory's use to study media can be traced back to the study of television news programs done by Lasswell in his 1948 approach to the "conceptualization of the functions of communication" which are surveillance, correlation and social transmission (Palmgreen, Wenner & Rayburn, 1980, pg. 167). Palmgreen, Wenner and Rayburn argue that most forms of mass communication theory can be connected back to Lasswell's original observations. However, formal use of the theory within political communication was first seen in 1969 in a study conducted by Blumler and McQuail examined why individuals view politically charged broadcasts within the British general election of 1964 (Holbert, Lambe, Dudo & Carlton, 2007). Elizabeth Perse (1994), elaborates that the Uses and Gratifications theory is audience based and when applied to political media, it allows for the examination of "how people use media influences the gratifications they receive from exposure (pg. 296)" to these mediums. This study brought forth the concept of political media gratifications or what needs are to be met when

viewing political satire media (e.g. to keep up with the main issues of the day, to see what a political candidate is like or for the entertainment provided by an election race). McLeod and Becker (1974) introduced an adaptation of the Political Media Gratifications Scale which has since been used to gauge political gratifications of all demographics. Perse (1994) has identified three main research purposes: (1) to validate gratifications measures, (2) to test the distinction between gratification sought (GS) and obtained, and (3) to test the transactional model (incorporating media exposure and GS) of political effects.

Additional literature studying media gratifications of Millennials suggests a multitude of possible gratifications. Kilian, Hennigs and Langner (2012) argue four motives for media use. The first motive found informational uses. This includes tasks such as quick access to "immediate surroundings", society or world, seeking advisement on various practical matters, curiosity as well as to learn (pg. 114). Integration and social interaction also related to curiosity is used to discover information about others, give individuals a sense of belonging, be a replacement for real-life friendship as well as to maintain connectiveness. Next personal identity which can pertain to learning about yourself or reinforcing established personal values. The last motive discussed is entertainment (pg. 116). LaMarre, Landreville and Beam (2009) found similar results in their study of political gratifications sought when consuming political satire media. They found much like Kilian et. al, that individuals interpret the messages sent through political satire programs to reinforce pre-established values. A 2007 study conducted by Holbert, Lambe, Dudo, A.D. and Carlton studied the political gratifications associated with entertainment-based political media (e.g. The Daily Show). The experiment compared national television news gratifications and those sought from The Daily Show. Results showed that political gratifications sought were significantly reduced when watching political satire media (pg. 28).

Media Uses and Gratifications Theory will be used in this study to (1) examine why millennial individuals consume political media, (2) what types of political mediums they seek out

and (3) provide a comparison of their relationship between traditional media sources new, nontraditional media.

Evolution of Mass Media

Media is a broad term that is all encompassing term which refers to the conglomerate of mediums that facilitate the dissemination of ideas and concepts between message sender and receivers in both print and digital formats and American's have been consuming it in mass volumes for longer than one might realize. It began with the grandfather of traditional media: print media. Gutenberg, a German inventor, is credited with the invention of the printing press in the mid 1400s with the first printed text being the Bible published in 1455 (Hanson, 2015). Due to the increasing size of press runs and the invention of movable type, by the 1500s book prices fell and their rate of production increased dramatically thus publishing became a profitable industry. During this time many notable books came to print; Canterbury Tales by Chaucer being one of them (Pratte, 2008).

Precursors to the newspaper, broadsides and newsletters became popular due to audience demand for political information around the late 1400's to the 1600s. These single side printings contained information similar to modern newspapers. They typically covered topics from news and entertainment to editorials. Following this period there came a rapid production of newspapers in European nations. Considered to be one of the primary news conglomerates', the German house of Fugger stationed reporters at various locations throughout Europe and would send correspondence back to Germany covering a variety of subjects such as business news, political intelligence or current events news (Pratte, 2008). However, printing did not come to America until the late 1600s after the colonization of the country.

This era is commonly referred to as the Colonial Press (1690 to 1765). The first newspaper to come out of this era was a weekly publishing founded by Benjamin Harris called "Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick". Shortly followed by the "Boston News-Letter" edited by John Campbell (Copeland, 2008). Progress to the 1800s in American society

and daily newspapers became popular due to the invention of the Penny Press which allowed for faster production of print media (Buchholz & Thompson, 2008). Originally targeting the elite, newspapers contained a range of community news such as political documents or shipping information. This revolution in American journalism allowed for inexpensive printing costs and mass production which made news accessible to the average American (Hanson 2015). During this time, nearly 1,200 newspapers were printing daily publications. Most famous of many were the New York Sun published by Benjamin Day and a Federalist publication founded by Alexander Hamilton the Evening Post (Buchholz & Thompson, 2008).

Due to the speed of the manufacturing of printing technology, The 1700s also brought magazines into American culture ("The history of printing", 2012). These publications were often regurgitating information from newspapers, due to the lack of copyright laws. The first periodical to formally call itself a magazine was The Gentleman's Magazine in 1731 which focused on "elegant writing, amusement, and instruction via miscellaneous content that included the literary, political, biographical, and critical" (Riley, 2008).

The nineteenth century ushered in a new era of media with the development of electronic telegraphy. Because it was the first form of rapid information dissemination, it quickly took hold in society because it was not hampered by time and was available instantaneously (Benjamin, 2008). This technology advanced and led to the inception of radio. Though many dispute who is the inventor of the radio, many credit Nathan B. Stubblefield. Although he did not use the electromagnetic wave radio of our modern society, he used an induction system to broadcast speech and music around Murray, Kentucky in 1890 (Benjamin, 2008). During, this time period Marconi made the first trans-Atlantic telegraph successfully. Therefore, not only could content distributors broadcast instantaneously to local audiences but worldwide as well. Radio broadcasting began in the 1920s and the first political broadcast was made in the same year covering the Harding-Cox presidential race. This spurred radio broadcasting networks such as the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) founded by RCA, Colombia Broadcasting System (CBS)

and eventually American Broadcasting Companies (ABC) after NBC had to sell one of its networks (Hyde, 2008). These broadcast networks put political news and information into living rooms across the United States.

Radio is often credited as the father of what we now know as "on-the-scene" news reporting (Hyde, 2008). Of the time, a front runner in the industry was WGN Chicago. This station broadcast the controversial "Tennessee Monkey Trial" in which a J.T. Scopes, a high school biology teacher taught his students evolution. Soon the technology was assimilated into American society and spread rapidly. Henceforth, many special occasions were broadcast such as the funeral of President Harding in 1923 as well as former president Wilson shortly following in 1924. President Franklin Roosevelt also broadcast what he called his "Fireside Chats" wherein he would discuss the issues of the Great Depression and help him appeal to the average American. The aim of his broadcast was to build trust, confidence and show empathy during the difficult time in the economic downturn. The 1920s was the first decade in which the presidential race outcomes had been transmitted to the public via radio. Calvin Coolidge's inaugural speech reached a record breaking 23 million Americans which during this time demonstrated the reach of the then "new" technology ("Harding Becomes First President", n.d.).

Visual Radio, or television of the modern world, was a product of Philo T. Farnsworth with which revolutionized how we receive visual information and ushered in yet again another new era of broadcasting (Hanson, 2015). Farnsworth fought media giant RCA for the patent of the television and unlike many other inventors he was successful. He first hypothesized about the invention in high school which would later be to his benefit in the monumental court case (Benjamin, 2008). However, the television was formally introduced to the world at the World's Fair in 1939 by David Sarnoff (Kalan, n.d.). Due to the freezing of licenses by the FCC in 1948, this limited many American's early adopters of cable services. Many turned to CATV which gave consumers antennas that connected to their local stations. This was problematic when the freeze was lifted and a large proportion of Americans used this system in 1980s. However, cable

television grew to be very competitive during the span of 1975 to the early 1990s. This prompted the Cable Communication Act of 1993 which prevented local broadcasters from being dropped to make room on expanding cable services (Hyde, 2008). After this the development of cable news organizations such as CNN, FOX or MSNBC became prominent in the news cycle.

A technology revolution again occurred in the 1990s with the development of the internet. Society saw the rise of home computers and the use of the world wide web. This brought with it a concern and fear of the "millennial bug" or the Y2K scare. Because of computer programming, computers had issues computing dates later the December 31, 1999. This caused a nation-wide scare that led many to panic. Cause of the bug was faulty programming during the writing of programs in the 1960s where the coding for the year was represented by only two digits. Therefore, mass concern was shown because programmers did not know if the systems would read 00 as 2000 or 1900. Because of this, many thought daily programmed activities would be affected and cause mass chaos for the financial industry by miscalculating loan interest and like investments (Society, 2012). This crisis has effected the relationship that society has with technology and online information dissemination.

In its' infancy, nearly 61.2% of Americans reported using the internet (Hinton, Baliga, Feng, Ayre & Tucker 2011). The rapid utilization and advancement of the internet led to online platforms that allowed for interconnectivity between users, message senders and receivers, regardless of geographic location; also known modernly as social media which is defined as Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) further categorize social media into six areas which include blogs, social networking sites, virtual social worlds, collaborative projects, communities and virtual game worlds. Many of which are classified under the user-generated material category (UGMs); meaning that in the trend towards newer media, users create and send their own messages and easily and rapidly disseminate their own content. Shearer and Gottfried (2017) of the Pew Research Center state in their social media platform study that two-thirds of Americans had reported receiving news information from social media.

Fake News

Recent political media has popularized the buzz term of “fake news” to describe the dissemination of perceived misinformation. Burshtein (2017) formally defines the term as “a fictitious report relating to current events which is fabricated, and often titled misleadingly, with the deliberate purpose of deceiving users and motivating them to disseminate the report,” (pg. 398). This buzz term is relatively new but the concept is deeply rooted within history with origins dating back to the pre-printing era (Burkhardt, 2017). It derives from the need for power. Those who can be message creators or senders have the power over others who were the message receivers in ancient hierarchical civilizations (e.g. pharaohs, emperors, etc.). Knowledge was power to those at the top of those hierarchies (Burkhardt, 2017). Dating back to 554 A.D., fake news was used to discredit a prominent emperor, Justinian. The head historian of Justinian, Procopius Caesarea, published a treatise after the emperor had passed in which he discredited the emperor and his wife. Because the emperor was dead, he could not refute the wild claims or verify the information. (Burkhardt, 2017). The Greeks also used fake news in the form of white propaganda to advice new ideology into society to persuade individuals to adopt the information in the form of orations or in the writings of their plays which credits the source truthfully and grey propaganda which conceals the author or sponsor of the media and advances an ideology of the sender but would be difficult to adopt if a direct statement were made. (New American Nation, n.d. ,The Story of Propaganda, n.d.).

Post-print era allowed for quicker dissemination of information and refutation of that information. Information written in broadsides, newspapers and cartoons were subject to spread fake news due to lack of journalistic integrity (Soll, Kruse & Robinson, 2016). The Protestant Reformation, a tumultuous religious, social and political revolution against the Catholic church, produced notable fake news stories (History.com Staff, 2009). The Italian case involving the alleged murder of a Christian child was reported by a Franciscan preacher and claims that a

Jewish community was to blame. Due to the unverified spread of information, 15 Jews were convicted and believed guilty and then burned at stake. (Soll, Kruse & Robinson, 2016). Fake news also was shown in white propaganda. Spain was documented to have used propaganda and fake news as a persuasion tactic to help keep moral high after the Spanish Armada had lost a battle to Brittan near Azores. After the war concluded, writer and politician Sir Walter Raleigh commented on the “slanderous” Spanish pamphlets and other writings used to cover their loss (The Story of Propaganda, n.d.).

The 19th century brought the term yellow journalism to American society and is credited as the “fake news” of that century. The term comes from the sensationalism used in writing found in The New York World and The New York Journal and reportedly the yellow ink that was used in the publications. Owners Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hurst were each attempting to out do the other and would circulate stories with sensationalist propaganda and “outright factual errors” (“Yellow Journalism, ” para. 3). Another popular fake news story was the Great Moon Hoax of 1835, wherein stories detailing the discovery of life on the moon was released by the New York Sun. The author wrote the articles as satire but many believed the claims and later the Sun had to admit that the story was a hoax. (“The Great Moon Hoax, n.d.”).

More modernly fake news in the form of propaganda has been used as political persuasion especially during times of war within society and called a device of war (Kingsburg, 2010). World War I brought a surge of anti-German propaganda in the United States. Even things as small as stamps were used to remind Americans to “Remember Always, Not German” (All That’s Interesting, 2018). During World War II many American and British institutions such as The Morale Operations Branch which used what is known as black propaganda to combat the Nazi’s. Black propaganda is when a publishing institution conceals their real identity claiming to be from one side of conflict but really being from the opposition. This allows them to lend credibility to sources which are usually not (“Moral Operation Branch”,2013).

Again with the advancement of technology allowing information dissemination to yet again become easier, a new way for fake news to be spread. Within the political sphere, the development of social media has allowed false news stories to rapidly be spread with wide reaches. Allcott and Gentzkow (2017), conducted a study taking fake political news stories published three months before the 2016 presidential election. They gathered a total of 156 articles released from BuzzFeed and PolitiFact and ran them through Snopes, a known fake news source. Of the 156 articles collected 152 of them were found on Snopes. Though the selection of articles posted was not standardized articles could have been omitted. However, demonstrates a substantial amount of established “fake news” stories.

Political Satire

Blurring lines of traditional and non-traditional channels of legitimate news with satirical angles has led to an increased interest in the effects of this type of political satire is a derivative of satire whose literary parent is comedy. Satire is defined as literary tool operationalized to critique lunacy or corruption be it individually or on a mass society through the use of humor, irony, exaggeration or ridicule that is meant to improve humanity by scrutinizing its frailties and absurdities (Singh, 2012 pg. 65). The same article also states satire is a form of "constructive social criticism, using wit as a weapon and as a tool to draw attention to both particular and wider issues in society" (Singh, 2012 pg. 68) Satire has been a part of society for longer than one may think. It has roots that run deeper than Shakespeare and Chaucer. Gilbert Highet, a satire scholar, traces satire back to the Roman empire and was referred to as *satura* and it can be broken into three forms; monolog, parody and narrative. It has been shown in what is called "old comedy" dating back to mid-fourth century (K &W, 2008). Professor Mark Damon of University of Utah states that comedy can be seen in the Greek writer, Homer's work like *The Odessey* (2012). He also writes that Euripides satyr piece *The Cyclops* is another example of early satyr. Aristophanes, a Greek dramatist, is often credited as the father of political satire. He criticized leaders of Athens for their involvement in the Peloponnesian War (Poremba, 2008).

Commonly associated with comedy and satire are literary works by Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare. Chaucer was a poet from the twelfth century who is best known for his *Canterbury Tales*. These tales were a satirical look on the three estates of Medieval society: the Church, Nobility and the Peasantry. The compilation of work focuses on how each of these factions fail to meet their societal expectations or fulfill their roles in society (L, n.d.). Shakespeare, an infamous writer during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, has exhibited the use of satire in his many comedies such as, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, or *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (History, 2011). More modern satirist, Jonathan Swift created literary works such as *Gulliver's Travels* or *A Modest Proposal*. Of his written work, he wrote high moral satire of humans and the human condition and Swift was known to compare humans to animals and often expressed his disdain for them (Ashbrook, 2014; Damrosch, 2014).

Political satire was first seen in the United States as a form of rebellion or commentary on the British rule. Political cartoons were made popular by Benjamin Franklin in 1753. He produced what is called "Join or Die"; a cartoon meant to satirize the colonies featuring a snake chopped into pieces symbolizing that together, the snake (representing the colonies) would survive but as singular units they would perish (PBS, n.d.). Political cartoons were preferred by audiences with low literacy rates. (Poremba, 2008). In the nineteenth century Thomas Nast, a popular cartoonist for *Harper's Weekly*, created the what we know as the political party symbols of the Republican elephant and the Democrat donkey (Poremba, 2008). Cartoons have also helped determine some political jargon such as "gerrymandering". Speel in an article (2008) states that the term was "coined when a political cartoonist in Boston named Elkanah Tisdale added a salamander's feet and head to a map of an oddly-shaped legislative district in Massachusetts drawn to benefit the party of Governor Elbridge Gerry in 1812 (Proemba, 2008)". Abraham Lincoln was also a popular target for cartoonist during the Civil War because of his controversial stance on slavery (Political Cartoons of The Civil War).

In the twentieth century, Americans were introduced to the likes of Will Rogers, a vaudevillian actor who often expressed his distaste for industrial technology and corporate capitalism. Many Americans turned to Rogers' writings in the *Saturday Evening Post* in the 1910s and 1920s to feel that they were not alone ("Will Rogers", 2015). Also prominent was George Orwell's 1945 "Animal Farm" or Aldous Huxley's 1932 *A Brave New World* both of which are satirical commentary on society's foibles of the time (Day, 2011).

Political satire has been a staple of American late night television culture since the first presidential satire piece attributed to Vaughn Meader, who impersonated John F. Kennedy on his album (Gray, Jones, & Thompson, 2009). Meader's success however was cut short due to JFK's subsequent assassination in 1963. Following this Rich Little, a popular comedian who is known for his uncanny impressions, often did presidential impersonations of JFK, Nixon, Carter, Reagan among others, while interestingly maintaining he was not a political satirist ("CSPAN", 2007, Gary, et. al, 2009). Then shows such as *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* and *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* became popular in American society in the 1960s (Gray, et. al). *Smothers Brothers* was short lived because CBS producers did not believe "hassling performers over politics was not worth the networks time", (Gray, et. al. 2009, pg. 22). NBC's *Laugh-In* however managed an appearance by President Nixon only two weeks before the 1968 election. Many networks were leery to invest in this type of media content fearing that the humor would potentially offend viewers and eventually cost them money in pulled advertisements.

Regardless of previous concerns the most well known origination of political satire premiered in 1975 on NBC's *Saturday Night Live* with Chevy Chase portraying then President Gerald Ford. Cast members both future and past have continued the tradition such as Dan Aykroyd (Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter), Darrell Hammond (Bill Clinton and Al Gore), Amy Poehler (Hillary Clinton), Tina Fey (Sarah Palin), Dana Carvey (H.W. Bush), Alec Baldwin (Donald Trump), Melissa McCarthy (Sean Spicer) and others would later represent political figures. Many political figures have hosted the popular show including Hillary Clinton and Donald

Trump. SNL's skit-style emphasizes the characters as people more so than leaders. Jones (2009), commented on the effect this style of content has on American constituents that "these portrayals of human foibles, not sketches that suggest some inherent weakness in the person as a leader, weaknesses that viewers should consider before selecting him as president," (pg.43). Ronald Lee, a political rhetoric scholar, argues that appearances on these shows, in many cases, helps the candidate. He states that "candidates' most important qualification for office are not matters of administrative experience, legislative proposals, or foreign policy initiatives, but their ability to mirror the feeling of the electorate," (Jones, 2009, pg. 43). Other political satire programs include Last Week Tonight with John Oliver's 3 million viewers, The Late Show with Stephen Colbert with 3.19 million viewers, The Daily Show with Trevor Noah with 1.69 million viewers, Jimmy Kimmel Live! with 2.2 million nightly viewers, The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon which has 3.17 million nightly viewers, and more (Champ, n.d.; "Comedy Central", 2017, Huddleston Jr., 2017; Klein, 2016).

Evolution of Comedy as a Genre of News Dissemination

Late night programming has experienced a rapid increase in its media prominence in the news cycle. Shows such as SNL , which began in 1975 at the end of the Vietnam War, were revolutionary with incorporating the use of satire while reporting actual news. At a time when Americans were in an uproar over an unpopular war, and many tragic and unfathomable acts of cruelty were witnessed, this method of dissemination provided the nation with a more palatable news alternative. Segments such as SNL's "Weekend Update" recaps the previous weeks major news stories interwoven with jokes, innuendos, and comedic twists (Reinheld, 2006). Recently, Lorne Michaels, creator and producer of the show, and his writers and actors have covered the controversial 2016 presidential election in season 42 and consistently and all of the episodes have been politically charged. Alec Baldwin, SNL alum, has accepted a recurring role portraying President Donald Trump, veteran cast member Kate McKinnon portrays Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and Larry Davis is cast as Bernie Sanders. The show truly reflected the

fears, sorrows, and emotions of many American people, as Donald Trump beat out Hillary Clinton in the 2016 U.S. presidential race. The November 12th, 2016 episode opened by Kate McKinnon as Hillary emotionally singing while playing Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" on the piano.

Saturday Night Live has also produced other influential satirist such as Jimmy Fallon and Seth Meyers. Fallon took over hosting The Tonight Show from Jay Leno in February of 2014 in which he frequently uses his opening monologue to satirize political discourse ("The Tonight Show", 2018). The show, according to Variety Magazine has a staggering 3.173 million viewers at its peak. Seth Meyers is the current host of NBC's Late Night taking over the position from Jimmy Fallon in 2014 ("The Late Show", 2018). Since the 2016 presidential election, Meyers weekly segment entitled "A Closer Look" has made headlines across the nation for his sharp-tongued takes on political actions especially of those done by the Trump Administration. The Late Show has a growing reach of 1.58 million viewers (Maglio, 2016).

Another prominent program to note is The Daily Show with Trevor Noah. Noah, along with former host John Stewart popularized the show which began in 1996 with Craig Kilborn hosting and segments like his opening bit in which he discuss the prominent headlines of the day. During Kilborn's stint on the show, it garnered 357,000 nightly viewers (Smith, 2017). The mock-news style program then switched hands and comedian John Stewart hosted from 1999 to 2015. Stewart kept the same humor and antics and introduced a more hard hitting line of humor. For example, his first joke on the show was poking fun at then President Bill Clinton's impeachment process. Since then the show has switched hands yet again to Trevor Noah who has continued the same style of broadcast with his own biting humor.

This show also produced a slew of other well-known political satirists, the most notable being Stephen Colbert who was a correspondent for the show from 1997 to 2005 (Smith, 2017), Samantha Bee who spent twelve years as a correspondent (Levin, 2016) and John Oliver who wrote and was a correspondent for the show from 2006 to 2013 (Weisman, 2013). Colbert went

left the show to host his self-entitled political satire program *The Colbert Report* and now hosts *The Late Show* which has an average reach of 3.195 million individuals and has steadily increased since Trump's election in 2016 (Otterson, 2016). Bee left the show to host *Full Frontal* with Samantha Bee in which she uses her experience from her time spent at *The Daily Show* to give a female perspective to the political satire scene which has proved to be popular. Her show has a reported 1.6 million viewers and is also continuing to grow in popularity according to Oriana Schwindt of *Variety Magazine* (2017). Lastly, John Oliver departed from the show to host his own weekly production of *Last Week Tonight* which has an average viewing of 4.1 million (Klein, 2016). ¹Oliver is different from the other shows because he is not an American citizen. He is from the United Kingdom and has also had a prominent comedy career there before making himself known in the American comedy circuit.

Political satire has pushed the boundaries of the First Amendment; the right to free speech. The 1988 court case *Hustler Magazine vs. Falwell* 1988 upheld an individual's right to political satire. Flynt, who was the editor of *Hustler* magazine, went to print with a cartoon featuring a televangelist Jerry Falwell making love to his mother in an outhouse. Falwell found the cartoon offensive and accused Flynt of libel. Originally, the court ruled in Falwell's favor but once taken to the Supreme Court, they ruled in favor of Flynt citing the First Amendment protection for freedom of speech concerning public figures (Flynt, 2007). Political satire had found a loop hole within the amendment. The cartoon and parody in general is deemed to be opinion based and according to Smolla (1988) "opinion is absolutely immune from liability regardless of how outrageous, indecorous, or mean-spirited, and regardless of what name is given to the legal cause of action under which it is prosecuted" (pg. 425). However the ruling has met

¹ These numbers include television views only. Online views are not included in the figures.

some criticism Petersen, (2007) states that this form of freedom of expression as a "liberal fantasy" and a "fetishistic over-investment in speech and expressive freedom" (pg. 378).

Due to the growing variety of political satire programming conducting a media usage and gratifications study will help to better comprehend the impact these portrayals have on Millennial political knowledge and gratifications.

Research Questions

Previous research has found satirical sources, when used as primary sources of news information, are an important source of news information (Feldman, 2013). Previous political media usage studies have been conducted on the Millennial generation. Results argue that Millennials or what Kilian, Hennigs and Langner (2012) call the "Net Generation" or "digital natives" adapt to new media more comprehensively in comparison to other generations (pg.114). This is a possible reason for the rapid spread of new media. Therefore, research conducted will be of importance to the field of political communication due to the power that the Millennial generation has to incite change within society within the technological sector and even language (Deal, Altman & Rogelberg, 2010). This research question seeks to determine (1) do Millennials use political satire media as an information supplement and (2) what gratifications are being sought or why are they using political satire to supplement specific political gratifications.

Therefore the below research question is proposed:

RQ1: What political gratifications do Millennials seek out when consuming political satire programs?

Studies show that trusted news information types vary across all political affiliations (PM, 2014). Thus, regardless of which political party a Millennial identifies with, their trusted sources of information will come from various news sources across the media channels.

Therefore, the second research question proposed is the following:

RQ2: Do Millennials perceive political satire news to be a credible source of news information dissemination?

The American Press Institute (Pm, 2016) states that individuals who identify with liberal political views are most likely to use shows such as *The Colbert Report* as a trusted information channels. *RQ2* seeks to determine if the political satire sources that Millennials use are being perceived as trusted forms of news information. The political label "liberal" is commonly associated with the democratic platform and political satire. The Pew Research Center (PRC), that 42% Millennials are of democratic affiliation more so than any other party affiliation and also identify themselves as liberals (Suls & Kiley, 2016). Therefore, the final research question is proposed:

RQ3: Does political party affiliation influence the perceived credibility of political satire news sources?

The PRC (2014) researched *The Colbert Report* and news seeking habits of Americans. The study concluded that "young men" between the ages of 18-29, are more than twice as likely to receive their political information from the program as well as *The Daily Show* than their female counterparts (Gottfried & Anderson, 2014) Other studies also report that males are more apt to show stronger interest in political news than women (PM, 2016). Due to these previous findings hypothesis one is proposed

HP1) Males will consume significantly more political satire media content than their female counterparts.

Education level is an important factor of informed decision making process. Many studies agree that the Millennial generation, which comprises 28.7% of the U.S. population, is the most educated generation. Yet, there are still a large portion who are not (Raphelson, 2014). Brussino, Medrano, Leonardo, Sorribas, Patricia, Rabbia & Hugo (2011) states in her research that "education and the level of intelligence effect cognitive abilities, which are essential for people to become politically informed," (pg. 184). As a result the below hypothesis is offered.

HP2: Those with advanced degrees will report consuming higher amounts of political satire media content, compared to those with less education.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This investigation employs the use of an online survey distributed via Communication Research Lab using Qualtrics Software to a convenience sample promoted through social media and a general education speech communication course of which the researcher teaches.

Participants were emerging adults born between 1977 and 1999 undergraduate college students recruited from introductory communication courses from a Midwestern university in the state of Kansas within the U.S. as well as voluntary individuals who learned of the survey via the learning management system, Canvas. Social media was utilized to attract other generation demographics outside those of traditional college students. Data collection required one phase across a four day period beginning April 8th and ending April 11th conducted over the month of April and received approval through the Institutional Review Board on March 28th. Participants were told they were participating in a Media Uses Study. A total of 234 respondents participated in the study. Of the sample size approximately 40 percent ($n=70$) of participants were male and 60 percent ($n=99$) were female.

Procedures

The single phase data collection process utilized a survey that was segregated into four sections. (1) measures basic demographic information and assessed participants initial political affiliations and values, (2) measures total time spent using various media mediums, (3) identifies specific media types accessed to attain political information as well as gauge source credibility and (4) measures the political gratifications sought through watching political satire.

Categorical Variables

Demographics. To assess *HP1* and *HP2*, participants were asked a series of six questions to discern sex to satisfy variables needed in *HP1*, age as to categorize them into generations, education, political affiliation and political beliefs.

Political Identification. To gauge political gratifications like those in *RQ1*, participants were asked to indicate their political beliefs or behaviors on a five-item, multiple choice question employing adjectives or descriptive statements such as liberal, liberal but willing to make compromises, neutral, conservative but willing to make compromises and conservative. This scale, based on the ANES Public Opinion and Political Behavior scale, has been widely used in national election studies beginning in 1972 and has retained its consistency in the current study as well (“*ANES*”, 2012).

Political Media Consumption. To assess the various types of mediums of media participants use to attain political information to answer *HP2*, participants were asked to select political satire programs that they use or have used to obtain political news information from an 9-item multiple choice, multiple answer question and were asked to select all that applied. Items included *Saturday Night Live*, *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*, *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*, *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*, *The Late Show with Seth Meyers*, *Real Time with Bill Maher*, *The Opposition with Jordan Klepper*, *Full Frontal with Samantha Bee* and a write option was provided.

Dependent Variables

Criterion variables include credibility, trustworthiness and expertise of the various mediums as well as political media gratifications.

Credibility. To measure source credibility in *RQ2* as well as in *RQ3*, a 15 item, 5-point semantic differential scale of adjective or adjective statement opposites was used. Including, *fair/unfair*, *biased/unbiased*, *tells whole story/does not tell whole story*, *invades/respects peoples privacy*, *watches/does not watch after peoples best interest*, *concerned/unconcerned about the*

community's well-being, doe/does not separate fact from opinion, trustworthy/untrustworthy, concerned/unconcerned about public interest, factual/opinionated and well/poorly trained reporters. This scale has demonstrated good internal consistency in past research (McCroskey, Jenson & Valencia, 1973) and demonstrated consistency in the current study as well ($\alpha=.75$).

Political media gratifications. To gauge political media gratifications sought when watching political satire, an eight item, 5-point Likert scale was used which asked participants for motivations or perceived potential gratifications of watching political satire. The scale posed the question "I watch political satire news because...", and evaluated responses to the following statements: "*to judge what political leaders are like;*" "*to see what the candidate would do if elected;*" "*to keep up with the main issues of the day;*" "*to help make up my mind on how to vote in an election;*" "*to judge who is likely to win an election race;*" "*to enjoy the excitement of the election race;*" "*to remind me of my candidates strong points.*" This scale has a stronger than average interitem correlation in past research, as was the case in the current study (McLeod & Becker, 1981) ($M=23.88$, $SD=6.79$, $\alpha=.89$).

Media Consumption. To gauge total media consumption of various mediums such as political satire news, a nine-item, categorical scale was used to determine which types of media used as well as time spent on those mediums specifically used to consume political satire media. The scale used a lead-in statement of "on a typical day about how much time do you..." then respondents were given the questions of "*spend online*", "*use a computer for more than being in online? (i.e. word processing or other programs)*", "*spend e-mailing*", "*spend online messaging or chatting online*", "*spend social networking or using social media*", "*spend texting*", "*spend videogaming*", "*spend listening to music*" ($\alpha=.89$).

These variables of political identification, political media consumption, source credibility, political media gratifications and media consumption will effectively allow for thorough testing of all research questions and hypotheses. Scales used will yield accurate results outlined in statistical detail within the report of findings

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF FINDINGS

In order to test the previous research questions and hypotheses, a series of quantitative tests were computed. The sample demographic consisted of 38.3% males ($n=90$) and 60.8% females ($n=144$). Of that sample, 7.2% were born between the years 1946 and 1964, 7.2% between the years 1965, 1967 and 85.1% were born between 1977 and 1999, and .4% was born between the year 2000 and present which was not used in the data sample. Of the ethnicities reported, 1.7% of participants were of American Indian or an Alaskan Native, 5.1% was Asian or Asian American, 4.7% were Black or African American, .9% was Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander, 78.2% were White or Caucasian, Hispanic's or Latino's made up 6% of the sample and 3.4% of respondents were Multi-Cultural. Education levels of the sample size included .4% attained some high school, 9.8% were high school graduates, 58.1% had some college, 1.7% were trade/technical/vocationally trained, 19.2% were college graduates, 2.6% had completed some post graduate work and 8.1% had a post graduate degree. Respondents registered party affiliation was 34.5% Democratic, 34.5% Republican, 4.7% Libertarian, .9% Socialist, 20.3% Independent, and 5.2% identified as "Other".

RQI sought to measure the political gratifications that Millennial audiences seek from political satire programs, a frequency was conducted to figure each question of the eight-item political gratifications scale. It indicated that participants were neutral in most factors when asked about why they watch political satire news. The following is a breakdown of the statements and statistics of the scale: I watch political satire news... To judge what political leaders are like

($M=2.81$, $SD=1.10$) 36% of respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement, 34.6% felt *neutral* and 26.1% of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to see what a candidate would do if elected ($M=2.97$, $SD=1.12$) 33.3% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 29.8% were *neutral*, 36.9% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to keep up with the main issues of the day ($M=3.29$, $SD= 1.13$), 40.9% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 32.9% were *neutral*, 26.2% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to help make up your mind on how to vote in an election ($M=2.72$, $SD=1.71$) 21.8% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 30.2% were *neutral*, 48% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to judge who is likely to win an election race ($M=2.73$, $SD= 1.08$) 40% *strongly agreed* or *agreed*, 36.4% were *neutral*, 23.6% *disagree* or *strongly disagreed*; to enjoy the excitement of an election race ($M=3.13$, $SD=1.11$) 25.8% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 35.1% were *neutral*, 39.1% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to remind me of my candidate's strong points ($M=2.93$, $SD=1.09$) 32.4% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 34.2% were *neutral*, 33.3% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; to use as ammunition in an argument with others ($M=3.30$, $SD=1.13$) 20.9% *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, 29.4% were *neutral* and 47.3% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*.

Table 1. Millennial Political Gratifications

| | | n | % | Valid % | Cumulative % | |
|---|----------|-------------------|-----|---------|--------------|------|
| I watch political satire news to judge what political leaders are like. | Mean | Strongly Agree | 35 | 14.8 | 15.6 | 15.6 |
| | 2.81 | Agree | 46 | 19.4 | 20.4 | 36 |
| | | Neutral | 82 | 34.6 | 36.4 | 72.4 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 51 | 21.5 | 22.7 | 95.1 |
| | 1.10 | Strongly Disagree | 11 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 100 |
| | | Total | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire news see what a candidate would do if elected. | Mean | Strongly Agree | 28 | 11.8 | 12.4 | 12.4 |
| | 2.97 | Agree | 47 | 19.8 | 20.9 | 33.3 |
| | | Neutral | 67 | 28.3 | 29.8 | 63.1 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 70 | 29.5 | 31.1 | 94.2 |
| | 1.12 | Strongly Disagree | 13 | 5.5 | 5.8 | 100 |
| | | Total | 225 | 94.4 | 100 | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to help me make up my mind on how to vote in an election. | Mean | Strongly Agree | 45 | 19 | 20 | 20 |
| | 2.72 | Agree | 47 | 19.8 | 20.9 | 40.9 |
| | | Neutral | 74 | 31.2 | 32.9 | 73.8 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 45 | 19 | 20 | 93.8 |
| | 1.71 | Strongly Disagree | 14 | 5.9 | 6.2 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to keep up with the main issues of the day | Mean | Strongly Agree | 22 | 9.3 | 9.8 | 9.8 |
| | 3.29 | Agree | 27 | 11.4 | 12 | 21.8 |
| | | Neutral | 68 | 28.7 | 30.2 | 52 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 79 | 33.3 | 35.1 | 87.1 |
| | 1.13 | Strongly Disagree | 29 | 12.2 | 12.9 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to judge who is likely to win an election race. | Mean | Strongly Agree | 34 | 14.3 | 15.1 | 15.1 |
| | 2.73 | Agree | 56 | 23.6 | 24.9 | 40 |
| | | Neutral | 82 | 34.6 | 36.4 | 76.4 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 42 | 17.7 | 18.7 | 95.1 |
| | 1.08 | Strongly Disagree | 11 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to enjoy the excitement of an election race | Mean | Strongly Agree | 23 | 9.7 | 10.2 | 10.2 |
| | 3.13 | Agree | 35 | 14.8 | 15.6 | 25.8 |
| | | Neutral | 79 | 33.3 | 35.1 | 60.9 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 66 | 27.8 | 29.3 | 90.2 |
| | 1.11 | Strongly Disagree | 22 | 9.3 | 9.8 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.4 | 100 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to remind me of my candidates strong points | Mean | Strongly Agree | 29 | 12.2 | 12.9 | 12.9 |
| | 2.93 | Agree | 44 | 18.6 | 19.6 | 32.4 |
| | | Neutral | 77 | 32.5 | 34.2 | 66.7 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 63 | 26.6 | 28 | 94.7 |
| | 1.09 | Strongly Disagree | 12 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | | |
| | | | | | | |
| I watch political satire to use as ammunition in an argument with others | Mean | Strongly Agree | 23 | 9.7 | 10.2 | 10.2 |
| | 3.30 | Agree | 24 | 10.1 | 10.7 | 20.9 |
| | | Neutral | 67 | 28.3 | 29.4 | 50.7 |
| | St. Dev. | Disagree | 84 | 35.4 | 37.3 | 88 |
| | 1.13 | Strongly Disagree | 27 | 11.4 | 10 | 100 |
| Total | | 225 | 94.9 | 100 | | |

Note: Higher mean scores show stronger indication of the gratification. An 8-item, 5-pt. Likert scale was used to determine political gratifications.

In order to more fully understand *RQ2* which measures the overall perceived credibility of political satire news $F(2,215)=3.64, p<.05, partial\ eta^2=.96$. Further review of the mean scores indicated that Millennials report higher source credibility of political satire news sources ($M=2.93, SD=.59$) compared to their counterparts the Baby Boomers (1946-1964) ($M=3.18, SD=.77$) and Generation X (1965-1976) ($M=3.34, SD=.72$).

Table 2. Media Credibility

| | Mean | St. Dev. |
|-----------|------|----------|
| 1946-1964 | 3.18 | .77 |
| 1965-1976 | 3.34 | .72 |
| 1977-1999 | 2.93 | .62 |

Note: Lower numbers indicate a more positive perception of source credibility of the generations listed. A 15 item, 5-point semantic differential scale of adjective or adjective statement opposites was used to determine credibility. $F(2,215)=3.64, p<.05, partial\ eta^2 = .96$

RQ3 seeks to determine if party affiliation influences the credibility and expertise of satirical news sources. To assess the *RQ*, a between subject univariate analysis of variance was conducted to compare the effect of registered party affiliation had on the perceived level of credibility and expertise of satirical news sources with credibility as the dependent variable and party affiliation as the fixed factor. The test revealed that there is a statistical significant difference between party affiliation and perceived level of credibility of political satire programming $F(5,214)=3.26, p<.01, partial\ eta^2 = .07$. Results presented in Table 3 below show that those who identify as Socialists ($M=2.75, SD=.00$) and Democrats ($M=2.75, SD=.56$) report the highest levels of perceived source credibility of satirical political commentators compared to Republicans ($M=3.13, SD=.70$), Independents ($M=3.08, SD=.42$), Libertarians ($M=2.92, SD=.93$), and those who identified as "Other" ($M=2.88, SD=.43$).

Table 3. Political Party Affiliation Effects on Political Satire Credibility

| | n | M | SD |
|--|---|---|----|
|--|---|---|----|

| | | | |
|---|----|------|-----|
| Democratic | 72 | 2.75 | .56 |
| Republican | 77 | 3.13 | .70 |
| Libertarian | 8 | 2.92 | .93 |
| Socialist | 44 | 2.75 | .00 |
| Independent | 2 | 3.08 | .42 |
| Other | 11 | 2.88 | .43 |
| Note: Higher numbers indicate a stronger perceived credibility of political satire programs; A 15 item, 5-point semantic differential scale of adjective or adjective statement opposites was used to determine credibility; $F(5,214)=3.26, p<.05, partial\ eta^2=.07$. | | | |

HP1 predicted that there would be a significant difference between males and females and their consumption of political satire. To examine the hypothesis, a univariate ANOVA was conducted with the dependent variable of total computed political satire consumption with the fixed variable of sex. Results presented in Table 4 below show that there is very little difference between men ($M=1.87, SD=1.83$) consumption of political satire media and women's ($M=1.83, SD=1.11$) total consumption of political satire media. This test determined that there was no statistical significant difference between men and women in their consumption of satire media $F(1,169)=.03 p=.85$.

Table 4. Sex and Satire Consumption Comparison

| | n | M | SD |
|---|-----|------|------|
| Male | 99 | 1.87 | 1.21 |
| Female | 144 | 1.83 | 1.11 |
| Note: Lower numbers indicate less total consumption between the sexes. A 9-item multiple choice, multiple answer question and were asked to select all that applied; $F(1,169)=.03 p>.05$. | | | |

HP2 argues that there will be a statistical significant difference between education level and use of satire media. To assess the hypothesis, a univariate ANOVA was ran with the dependent variable of total computed political satire consumption with the fixed variable of education level. Results shown in Table 5 below show that there is little to no difference between high school graduates ($M=1.76, SD=1.16$), those who have completed some college ($M=1.83, SD=1.10$), trade/technical/vocationally trained participants ($M=2.33, SD=1.15$), college graduates ($M=1.84, SD=1.15$), individuals who have some postgraduate work ($M=1.00, SD=.00$) and post

graduate degree holders ($M=2.24$, $SD=1.98$). This test does not support *HP2* and found no significant statistical difference between education level and use of political satire media $F(5,169)=.68$, $p=.63$.

Table 5. Education and Satire Consumption Scale

| | n | Mean | St. Dev. |
|--|----|------|----------|
| High School Graduate | 5 | 1.76 | 1.65 |
| Some College | 44 | 1.83 | 1.10 |
| Trade/Technical/Vocational Training | 2 | 2.33 | 1.15 |
| College Graduate | 5 | 1.84 | 1.15 |
| Some Postgraduate Work | 1 | 1.00 | 1.98 |
| Post Graduate Degree | 4 | 2.42 | 1.98 |
| Note: Lower numbers indicate less total consumption which was measured using a 9-item multiple choice, multiple answer question and were asked to select all that applied; $F(5,169)=.68$, $p>.05$ | | | |

This report of findings shows that most Millennials watch political satire media to help them decide how to vote in an election and for entertainment purposes like enjoying the excitement of the election. Also revealed, Millennials do not watch political satire media to keep up with the main issues of the day or to see who is likely to win the current election race. However, results did report that Millennials have a higher perceived source credibility of political satire media than both Generation X and the Baby Boomers. Democrats and socialists were found to have the highest source credibility of all the political party identifications while libertarians and those who selected "other" had the lowest source credibility. Data showed that men and women do not differ in total consumption of political satire media and education does not significantly affect political satire consumption.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research was conducted to further advance the political communication field study of millennials and political satire as well as further extend the knowledge of media political use and gratifications theory. To answer *RQ1* frequency tests were used to understand political gratifications sought by Millennials when viewing political satire media. Results show that there was no outstanding reason that millennials used political satire. However, analyses did detect trends indicating that millennial audiences watch political media to keep up with the day's main issue or to use as ammunition in an argument with others. Watching political satire media as a source of excitement during political races was the third most reported gratification. Therefore finding that Millennials trend towards Entertainment as a media consumption motive was an expected possible outcome from extant literature like that of Kilian, et.al. in a 2012 study. Probable causes of these findings are the current political social climate in the United States today. Many Millennials are arming themselves with knowledge and using it for intellectual combat through activism. The entertainment and excitement can be attributed to the state of our government and how it is portrayed within media. Our president is a former reality television star and is known for his erratic behavior which got him ratings and money. The more news outlets dramatize the news begins a cycle of them eventually receiving more money in advertising. They also found that the digital native generation of Millennials used for informational reasons which were also shown in the top three gratifications of this study as well. Another interesting finding

revealed in the results was that Millennials do not use political satire media to see what political leaders and figures are like. This is in direct conflict with extant literature of Jones (2009).

The univariate ANOVA ran to test *RQ2* concluded that there was a statistical significant difference between the Baby Boomer, Generation X and Millennial generations and their perceived credibility level of political satire news. This finding has many social implications. It means that the largest voting demographic within the United States believes that satire is a credible form of news information which could prove to be problematic. Political satire does not have the obligation that most hard news outlets do to deeply root their content in facts to educate the public. The main goal of political satire content is to entertain individuals and provide what has evolved into infotainment. If they were to potentially report incorrectly, it would not violate the expectancy that society has placed on political satire which could lead to misinformation being spread. Knobloch-Westerwick, an Ohio State Professor, spoke of the importance of political satire in our modern society and stated in 2017 article that “satirical news matters” and that “it’s not just entertaining—it has real life impact on viewers”. Another potential cause of increased credibility could be how traditional news media is portrayed today with the rise of “fake news” and the popularization throughout mainstream media.

Findings in *RQ3* suggest that there was a significant statistical difference between political party and perceived credibility of political satire media. An additional ANOVA was conducted with split variables and discerned that Republican Millennials showed a higher perceived credibility rate than that of Democrats, Independents, or Socialists. This is interesting considering the current political climate and the buzz word of “fake news” that has been adopted into society from mainly Republican members of government including President Donald Trump. For example, President Trump tweeted that SNL conducted a “hit job” on him when they used Alec Baldwin to impersonate him in October of 2016 according to the New York Times. This is also contrary to a study done by the Pew Resource Center that shows liberals were most likely to trust political satire source, The Colbert Report (Gottfried & Anderson, 2014). It is also contrary

to findings that show one political media gratification sought is to strengthen pre-established political ideology in which most political satire does not do so for the Republican party (Kilian, et. al.). However, with the Cronbach's alpha score of .75 however this could be in part that the scale was made for traditional news sources and was adapted for the use of political satire in this study as well as the intended purpose. Potential scale items that could skew the reliability would be bias. Hard news would violate an expectancy if they were biased in their reporting unlike political satire programs where bias is anticipated. This is the same with other scale items such as fact and opinion. Political satire is expected to be rooted in opinion rather than fact, however there has been a shift demonstrated. Of the shows selected, all were skewed to the liberal side of politics. This could be attributed to the lack of conservative satire. This could be because those who generally lean conservative have different political gratifications than those who are of liberal thoughts. Meaning, that possibly conservatives will not value entertainment as much as liberals and therefore not have that type of programming on television or other mediums.

Test performed on HP1 did not reveal males and females differ in their consumption of political satire media. This finding is met with conflicting support of extant literature. A 2011 study suggested similar results. It stated that sex was not a determining factor in satire consumption (Hmielowski, Holbert & Lee). Then Anderson and Gottfried's research found, as stated in the review of literature, that men were two times more likely to receive their political information from The Daily Show than females. This finding was unexpected outcome due to support shown in previous literature (Anderson & Gottfried, 2014). This could potential be attributed to the disproportionate sample size between men ($n=99$) and women ($n=144$) which results in a 45 person discrepancy.

HP2 results did not show that education has a significant effect on how much an individual uses satirical news. This is contrary to previous literature which stated that education and intelligence were important factors for individuals to be politically informed (Brussino et.al., 2011). Therefore, it was assumed that the higher one's education, the more satirical news that

individual would consume unlike what the results for *HP2* revealed. Also because the sample size collected was predominantly comprised of Millennials, and literature that states Millennials are the most educated generation this conclusion was an unexpected finding (Raphelson, 2014). However, an additional unianova was ran with a split variable of those who have completed college ($n=11$) and those who have no college ($n=51$) and results found that had there been a more equal representation of college graduates and it concluded revealed that there were trends towards more political satire media usage

Research findings of these tests are of social importance to Millennial aged individuals to help better inform themselves and theoretical value to the research within the field of political communication studying political gratifications. This will help message senders to better target their ideal message receivers and allow for a greater adoption or retention of information. Specifically in the field of political communication, this research can be used to learn how to effectively use political satire to a political candidate's best interest.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include the use of a convenience sample. Had the survey been specifically distributed outside of the Department of Communication to other departments it could yield other results. For example, it would have been pertinent to distribute the survey to the Department of Political Science to upper level or capstone courses to ensure that participants were interested in political media and have more on an opinion than what the current sample shows. Neutral attitudes consistently made up over half of the measured variables with the lowest neutral score on the political gratifications scale being 67%. Also, this study was offered as extra credit opportunity within the general speech courses within the Department of Communication. Therefore, students could have rushed through the study to earn the easy points.

Gratifications tested for in the study were not exhaustive. Other media gratifications could have been tested for based on Rubin's (2009) typology of the eight motivations of media consumption. Our scales did not test for escapism which has proven to be a key finding in a 2006

study (Diddi, LaRose). They state that through a need to escape from daily routines young individuals are more prone to consume news media for that gratification.

Areas of Future Research

Future research to build upon the previous research could potentially be the perceived level of accuracy or realism that millennials have when viewing political satire news broadcasts such as the Daily Show with Trevor Noah. Possible research questions could be centered around perceived reality. An experiment could be conducted to yield data. One specific issue would be covered, then a clip from one hard news outlet, political satire or soft news outlet and a control video that has nothing do to with the research would be used to measure perceived reality or realism. You could also test for credibility between the two experiment groups. Also, I would like to conduct the same study but either nationally to have a more representative sample of United States voting population to compare the findings from region to region and to study the effect that geographical location has on political beliefs and how those translate into political gratifications. Additional research could also test perceived credibility of a male in comparison to a female satire program host. For example, clips reporting on the same issue covered on Full Frontal with Samantha Bee and The Late Show with Stephen Colbert would be played. Participants would be asked a series of questions to identify which they liked best, why, and the perceived credibility of each. I think this study would be socially relevant because there is a large gender gap on late night television. Before her self-entitled show got cancelled and moving to Netflix, Chelsea Handler was the only other female besides Bee on late night television. You can also do the same with race by incorporating Trevor Noah or Bassem Youssef. Other possible incorporations would be to add a political participation scale to see how it effects the variables tested for in this study.

Conclusion

The findings in this research have shown that Millennials have different perceived political gratifications when consuming political satire media mostly for entertainment rather than informative purposes. Majority of Millennials that reported political satire usage believe it to be a

credible source of political information. Sex or education level are not determinant factors in predicting an individual's satire consumption or usage. Results from the previous research will add to the field of political science and prove to be of social importance and help study shifts in political gratification behaviors in the emergent generations to come, provide additional applied research to the Uses and Gratifications Theory which applies the adaptation of the political media gratifications scale and lend itself to advancing knowledge to better tailor political messages to audiences and allow for more effective communication between candidate and constituent.

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APPENDIX

Political Satire: Millennial Study

Start of Block: Demographics

Q26 Political Satire Study

Informed Consent Form

Graduate Student, M.R. Tims, is conducting research for a thesis project. This study is regarding millennial audience and their political media habits and the use of political satire to meet those needs. This survey is named the Political Satire Study and consist of a 26 question questionnaire and will take around 15 minutes to complete. Participants must be 18 years of age or older to take part in the study. For any questions or additional information regarding the study, please contact Tims at 1-620-704-4879 or at mtims@gus.pittstate.edu.

This study has no foreseeable risks related to your involvement. There will be no collection of personally identifiable information that will later be tied to any participant's answers.

Participation in this study should offer no tangible short-term or long-term psychosocial risks, and there may or may not be a direct benefit if you take part. However, your participation may result in information that may help you in the future.

The records of this study will be kept private, there will be not information included that will make it possible to identify you as a participant. Research records will be stored securely and only be used by the researcher. To insure confidentiality, all findings will be presentned in aggregate form with no identifying information. Only the pricipale researcher will have access to the data stored in a password proceted folder on the hardrive of the investagator's computer until

completion of the study at which time all information will be disposed. There will be no compensation or medial treatment if injury occurs.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not result in penalty or loss of benefits of which you are other wise entitled. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits of which you are otherwise entitled. If participating for extra credit for a course, the study must be fully completed for the instructor to be notified.

Q1 Please select your sex

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (3)
- I prefer not to say (4)

Q2 What year were you born?

- 1946-1964 (1)
 - 1965-1976 (2)
 - 1977-1999 (3)
 - 2000- Present (4)
-

Q4 To which ethnicity do you most identify?

- American Indian or Alaska Native (1)
 - Asian or Asian American (2)
 - Black or African American (3)
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (4)
 - White or Caucasian (5)
 - Hispanic or Latino (6)
 - Multi-Cultural (7)
-

Q3 What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- Some High School (1)
 - High School Graduate (2)
 - Some College (3)
 - Trade/Technical/Vocational Training (4)
 - College Graduate (5)
 - Some Postgraduate Work (6)
 - Post Graduate Degree (7)
-

Q26 What is your registered political party affiliation

- Democratic (1)
 - Republican (2)
 - Libertarian (3)
 - Socialist (4)
 - Independent (5)
 - If other please identify (6) _____
-

Q27 How would you describe your political beliefs?

- Liberal (1)
- Fairly Liberal, but will make compromises (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Fairly Conservative, but will make compromises (4)
- Conservative (5)
- If other please describe (6) _____

Q27 On a typical day, about how much time do you..

| | 1-30 Minutes (1) | 30 Minutes- 1 Hour (2) | 1-2 Hours (3) | 2-3 Hours (4) | 4-5 Hours (5) | 6-8 Hours (6) | More than 8 Hours (7) | N/A (8) |
|--|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Spend online? (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Use a computer for more than being in online? (i.e. word processing or other programs) (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend e- mailing? (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend instant messaging or chatting online? (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend phone calling? (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Spend social networking or using social media? (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend texting? (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend video gaming? (8) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend listening to music? (9) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Spend watching television? (10) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q28 Of the time you previously reported above, how much of that was spent consuming (viewing, searching, watching, sharing) political satire media such as The Daily Show, A Closer Look with Seth Meyers or Last Week Tonight with John Oliver.

| | 1-30 Minutes (1) | 30 Minutes - 1 Hour (2) | 1-2 Hours (3) | 2-3 Hours (4) | 4-5 Hours (5) | 6-8 Hours (6) | More than 8 Hours (7) | N/A (8) |
|---|------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| While online? (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While emailing? (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While Instant messaging or chatting online? (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While phone calling? (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While social networking or using social media? (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While texting? (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While video gaming? (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| While listening to music? (8) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

While
watching
television? (9)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Traditional Media Credibility

Q21 Please select the following print media that you have used or currently use to obtain political news information. Please select all that apply

The Chicago Tribune (1)

The New York Times (2)

The Wall Street Journal (3)

New York Posts (4)

The Washington Post (5)

Newsday (6)

Los Angeles Times (7)

Newsweek (8)

Ft. Scott Tribune (9)

The Morning Sun (10)

USA Today (11)

I do not use print media (12)

If other please identify (13) _____





Q11 Think about the print news media you are most familiar with. Please select the number between each pair (of words and phrases with opposite meanings) that best represents how you feel about the print news media you have in mind.

Print news media...

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|
| Agree Strongly | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Disagree Strongly |
|-------------------|-------|---------|----------|----------------------|

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | |
| Is fair (Q11_1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unfair |
| Is biased (Q11_2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unbiased |
| Tells the whole story (Q11_3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Doesn't tell the whole story |
| Is accurate (Q11_4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is inaccurate |
| Invades people's privacy (Q11_5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Respects people's privacy |
| Does watch after readers interest (Q11_6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not watch after readers interests |
| In concerned about the community's well-being (Q11_7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is not concerned about the community's well being |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <p>Does separate fact and opinion (Q11_8)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <p>Does not separate fact and opinion</p> |
| <p>Can be trusted (Q11_9)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <p>Cannot be trusted</p> |
| <p>Is concerned about the public interest (Q11_10)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <p>Is concerned about making profit</p> |
| <p>Is factual (Q11_11)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <p>Is opinionated</p> |
| <p>Has well-trained reporters (Q11_12)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <p>Has poorly trained reporters</p> |

Q23 Please select the television news sources that you have used or currently use to obtain political news information. Please select all that apply.

FOX News (1)

NBC News (2)

MSNBC News (3)

CNN News (4)

ABC News (5)

CBS News (6)

If other please identify (7) _____

I do not use television media (8)

Q14

Think about the television news media you are most familiar with. Please select the number between each pair (of words and phrases with opposite meanings) that best represents how you feel about the television news media you have in mind.

Television news media...

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|-------|---------|----------|----------|
| | Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly |
| | Strongly | | | | Disagree |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | |
| Is fair (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unfair |
| Is biased (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unbiased |
| Tells the whole story (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not tell the whole story |
| Is accurate (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is inaccurate |
| Invades people's privacy (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Respects people's privacy |
| Does watch after the readers' interests (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not watch after the reader's interest |
| Is concerned about the community's well being (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is not concerned with the community's well being |

Does
separate fact
and opinion
(8)

Does not
separate fact
and opinion

Can be
trusted (9)

Cannot be
trusted

Is concerned
about the
public
interest (10)

Is concerned
with making
profit

Is factual
(11)

Is
opinionated

Has well
trained
reporters
(12)

Has poorly
trained
reporters

Q24 Please select the online news sources that you have used or currently use to obtain political news information. Please select all that apply.

The Huffington Post (1)

Gawker (2)

Upworthy (3)

Reddit (4)

BuzzFeed News (5)

If other please identify (6) _____

Breitbart (7)

Drudge Report (8)

The Hill (9)

Q15 Think about the online news media you are most familiar with. Please select the number between each pair (of words and phrases with opposite meanings) that best represents how you feel about the online news media you have in mind.

Online news media...

| | | | | |
|----------|-------|---------|----------|----------|
| Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly |
| Strongly | | | | Disagree |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | |
| Is fair (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unfair |
| Is biased (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unbiased |
| Tells the whole story (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not tell the whole story |
| Is accurate (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is inaccurate |
| Invades people's privacy (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Respects people's privacy |
| Does watch after reader's interests (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not watch after reader's interests |
| Is concerned about the community's well being (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is not concerned about the community's well being |
| Does separate fact and opinion (8) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not separate fact and opinion |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Can be trusted (9) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Cannot be trusted |
| Is concerned about the public interest (10) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is concerned about making profit |
| Is factual (11) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is opinionated |
| Has well trained reporters (12) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Has poorly trained reporters |

Q25 Please select the following political satire programs that have used or currently use to obtain political news information.

- Saturday Night Live (1)
- The Daily Show with Trevor Noah (2)
- Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (3)
- The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon (4)
- The Late Show with Seth Meyers (5)
- Real Time with Bill Maher (6)
- The Opposition with Jordan Klepper (7)
- If other please describe (8) _____
- Full Frontal with Samantha Bee (9)

Q16 Think about the satirical news media you are most familiar with. Please select the number between each pair (of words and phrases with opposite meanings) that best represents how you feel about the satirical news media you have in mind.

Satire news media...

Strongly
Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly
Disagree

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | |
| Is fair (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unfair |
| Is biased (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is unbiased |
| Tells the whole story (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not tell the whole story |
| Is accurate (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is inaccurate |
| Invades people's privacy (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Respects people's privacy |
| Does watch after readers' interests (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not watch after readers' interests |
| Is concerned about the community's well being (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is not concerned about the community's well being |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Does separate fact and opinion (8) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Does not separate fact and opinion |
| Can be trusted (9) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Cannot be trusted |
| Is concerned about the public interest (10) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is concerned about making profit |
| Is factual (11) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Is not factual |
| Has well trained reporters (12) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | Has poorly trained reporters |

Q18

Here is a list of statements that others have made when asked why they watch political satire television shows that feature political candidates. Please completing the following scale

I watch political satire news because...

| | Strongly Agree (1) | Agree (2) | Neutral (3) | Disagree (4) | Strongly Disagree (5) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| To judge what political leaders are like (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| To see what a candidate would do if elected (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| To keep up with the main issues of the day (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| To help keep up with the main issues of the day (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| To help make up my mind on how to vote in an election (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

To judge who
is likely to win
an election
race (6)

To enjoy the
excitement of
an election
race (7)

To remind me
of my
candidate's
strong points
(8)