

WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT  
*Political Advertising Analysis*



# Television Advertising in 2012

WMP Directors: Erika Franklin Fowler,  
Michael M. Franz & Travis N. Ridout





# Brought to you by:



Thanks also to:





# Kantar Media/CMAG Frequency Data

CREATIVE	MARKET	STATION	AFFILIATE	AIRDATE	AIRTIME	PROGRAM
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/15/2010	00:03:30	INSIDER WKND
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/11/2010	23:56:27	ABC NEWS NIGHTLINE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/13/2010	00:03:10	ABC NEWS NIGHTLINE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/14/2010	00:04:14	ABC NEWS NIGHTLINE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/14/2010	19:48:28	WHEEL OF FORTUNE WKND
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/13/2010	13:40:01	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/12/2010	13:24:00	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTIC	FOX	08/11/2010	13:22:00	WHO WANTS/MILLIONAIRE
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WCCT	CW	08/15/2010	01:40:41	FOX 61 NEWS AT TEN
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/13/2010	05:20:04	GOOD MORNING CONCT 5A
USSEN/CT MCMAHON BACK TO WO...	HARTFORD	WTNH	ABC	08/12/2010	05:53:31	GOOD MORNING CONCT 530A



**2012**  
WESLEYAN MEDIA

**AcademiClip.**  
Today's Media Research



# WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT 2012

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## LOGIN

USER NAME

PASSWORD

Log In

**Online Coding Tool**



REPORT PROBLEM

HOUSE/AL01 BONNER STOOD UP TO OBAMA

Notes from Supervisor:

Page 2 Page 3 Page 4 Issues Complete Coding

Are the any of the following issues are mentioned in this ad? (Check all that apply)

*Economic Policy*

- ☐ Taxes
- ☐ Deficit/Budget/Debt
- ☐ Government Spending
- ☐ Recession/Economic Stimulus
- ☐ Minimum Wage
- ☐ Farming (friend of)
- ☐ Business (friend of)
- ☐ Union (friend of)
- ☐ Employment/Jobs
- ☐ Poverty
- ☐ Trade/Globalization
- ☐ Housing/Sub-prime Mortgages
- ☐ Economic disparity/income inequality

*Social Issues*

- ☐ Abortion
- ☐ Homosexuality/Gay & Lesbian Rights
- ☐ Moral/Family/Religious Values
- ☐ Tobacco
- ☐ Affirmative Action
- ☐ Gambling
- ☐ Assisted Suicide/Euthanasia
- ☐ Gun Control
- ☐ Civil Liberties/Privacy
- ☐ Race Relations/Civil Rights

*Foreign/Defense Policy*

- ☐ Military (generic reference)
- ☐ Foreign Policy (generic reference)
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Foreign Aid
- ☐ Nuclear Proliferation
- ☐ China
- ☐ Middle East
- ☐ Iran
- ☐ Afghanistan/War in Afghanistan
- ☐ September, 11th
- ☐ Terror/Terrorism/Terrorist
- ☐ Iraq/War in Iraq
- ☐ Israel

*Social Welfare Issues*

- ☐ Education/Schools
- ☐ Lottery for Education
- ☐ Child Care
- ☐ Health Care (not prescription drugs)
- ☐ Prescription Drugs
- ☐ Medicare
- ☐ Social Security
- ☐ Welfare
- ☐ Women's Health

*Other*





# Data We Collect

- Sponsor (candidate, party, interest group)
- Tone (positive, negative, contrast)
- Issue themes, personal traits/adjectives & policy vs. personality balance of spot
- Major politician mentions & tone
- Mentions of party affiliation, magic words, etc.
- Emotional appeals, music, voiceovers

**WESLEYAN MEDIA PROJECT**  
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**TRENDS IN  
VOLUME, COST, AND SPONSORSHIP**



# Volume and Cost of Ads in 2012

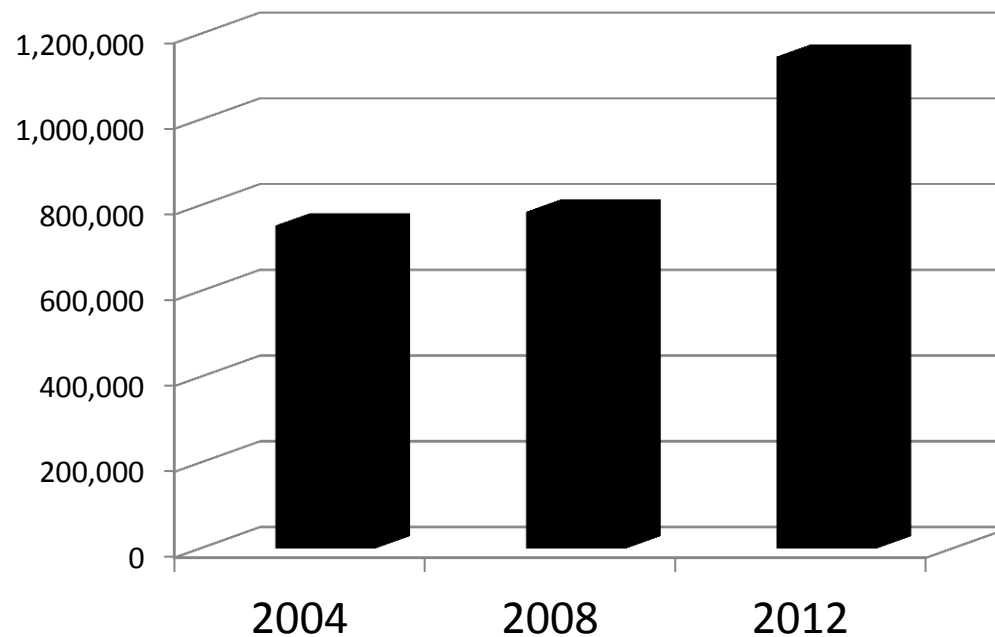
Race	Ad Airings	Est. Cost
House	685,787	\$443,105,900
Senate	952,135	\$558,121,120
President	1,431,939	\$950,436,980
All federal	3,042,861	\$1,923,754,550

*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads



# Ads in Presidential Race (6/1 to Election Day)

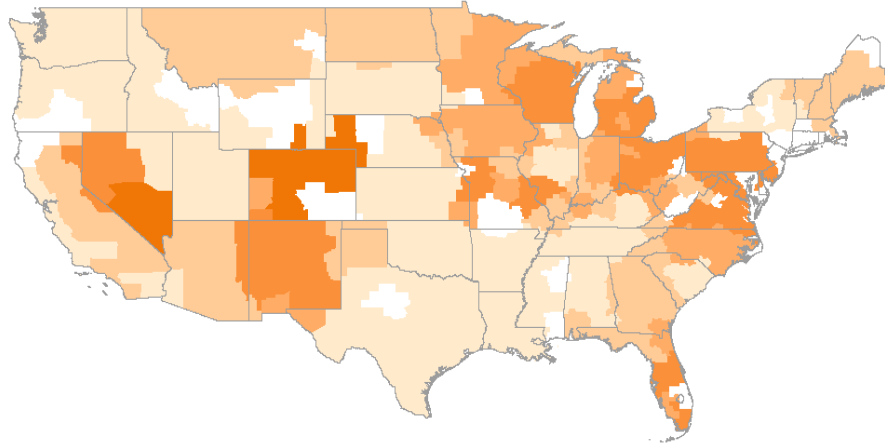


*Source:* Wisconsin Advertising Project and Wesleyan Media Project;  
Kantar Media/CMAG data

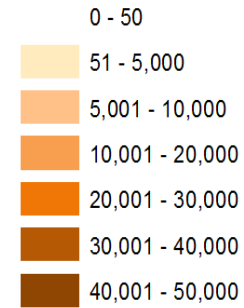
*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads

## Total Presidential Ad Airings (June 1 - Election Day)

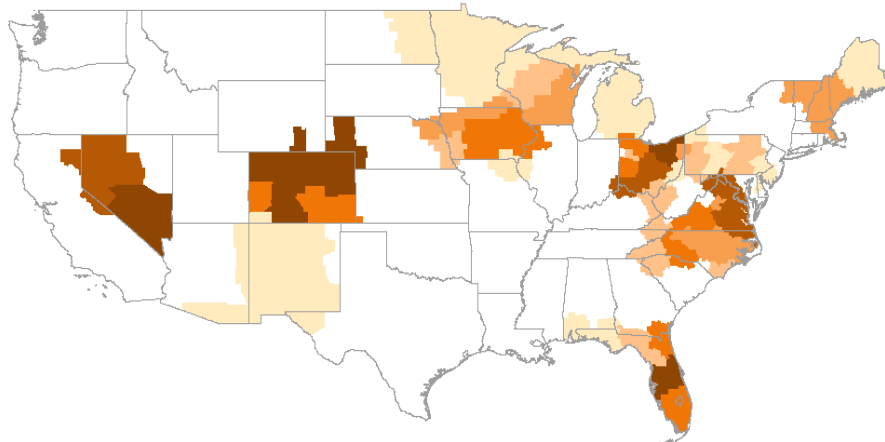
2008



### Ads Aired



2012



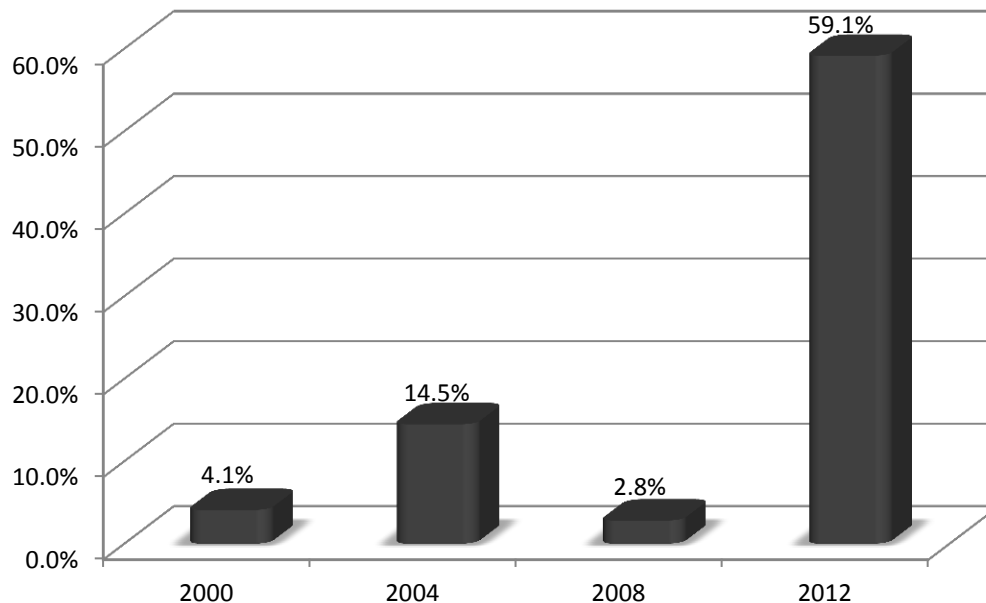
Wesleyan Media Project  
December 10, 2012  
Source: Kantar Media/CMAG

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# Interest Group Activity Skyrockets in Presidential Primaries



*Source:* Wisconsin Advertising Project and Wesleyan Media Project;  
Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads



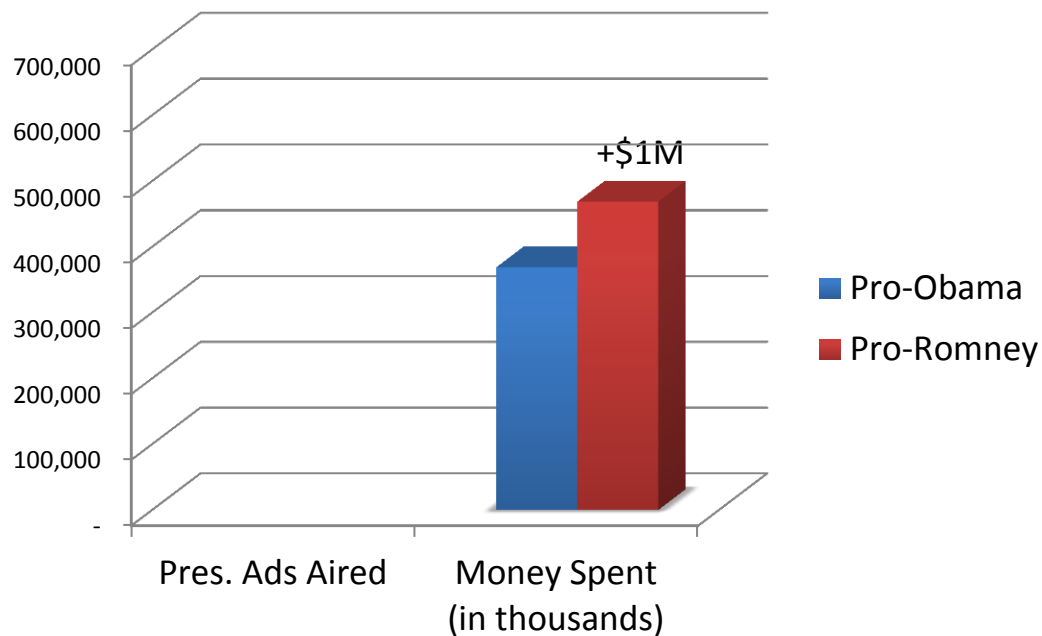
# Top Advertisers in General Election

Barack Obama	511,513
Mitt Romney	207,984
American Crossroads	81,553
Restore Our Future, Inc.	62,557
Crossroads GPS	61,610
Priorities USA Action	58,990
Americans for Prosperity	40,465
RNC	35,825
RNC & Romney	33,456
Americans for Job Security	10,410
American Future Fund	7,438
DNC & Obama	7,210

Source: Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data



# Money Isn't Everything

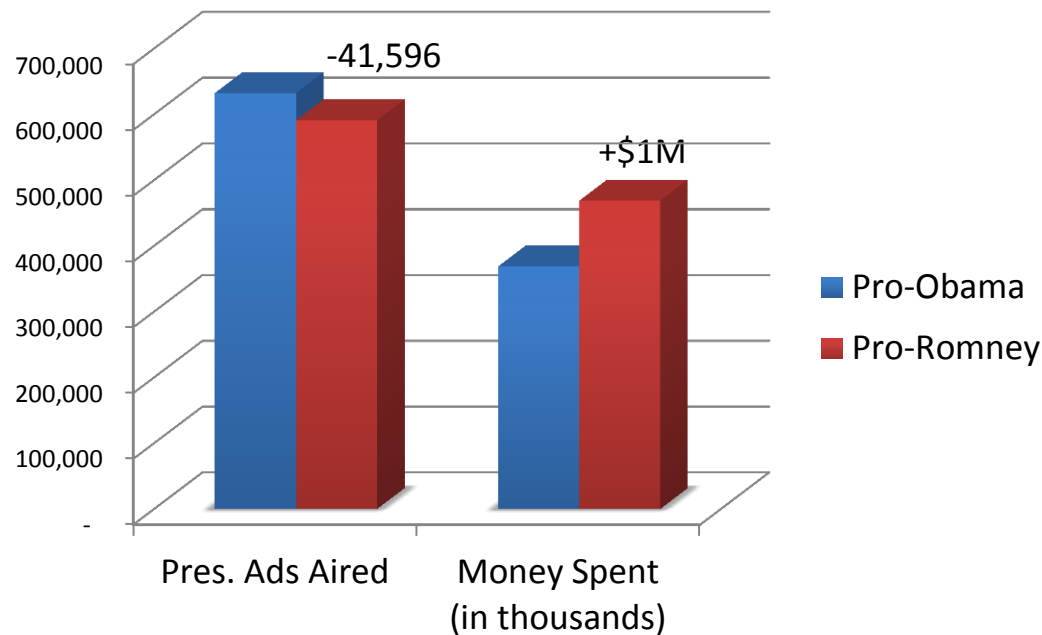


*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads



# Money Isn't Everything



*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads

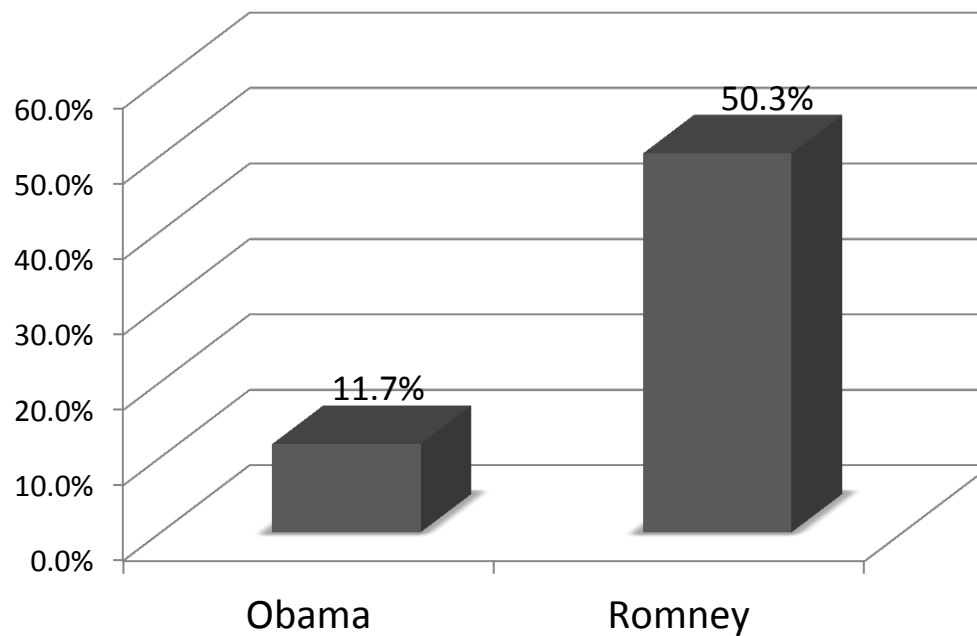


# Money Isn't Everything

- Differences between:
  - Candidates vs. Interest Groups
  - Obama vs. Romney



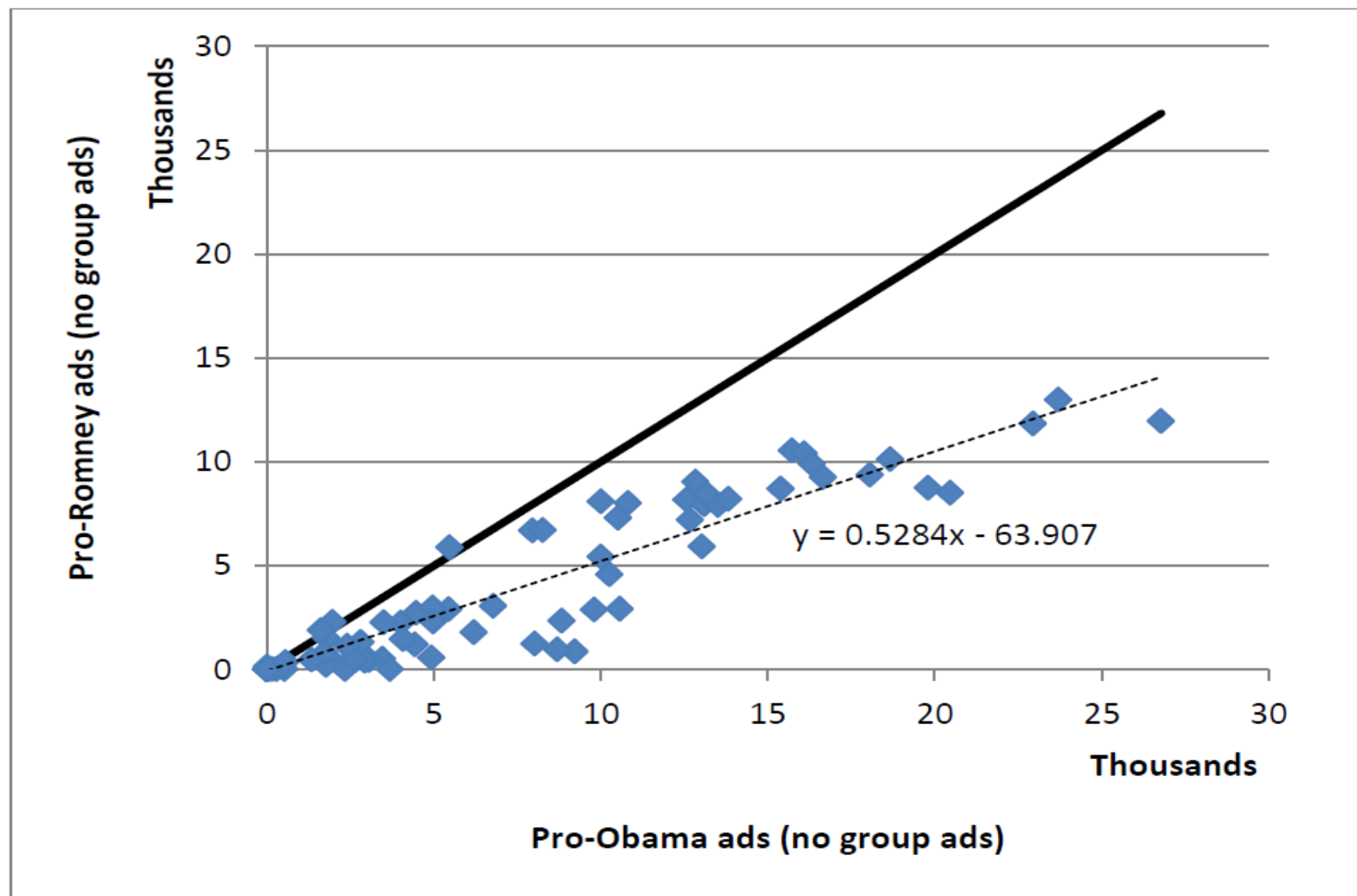
# Romney More Reliant on Groups



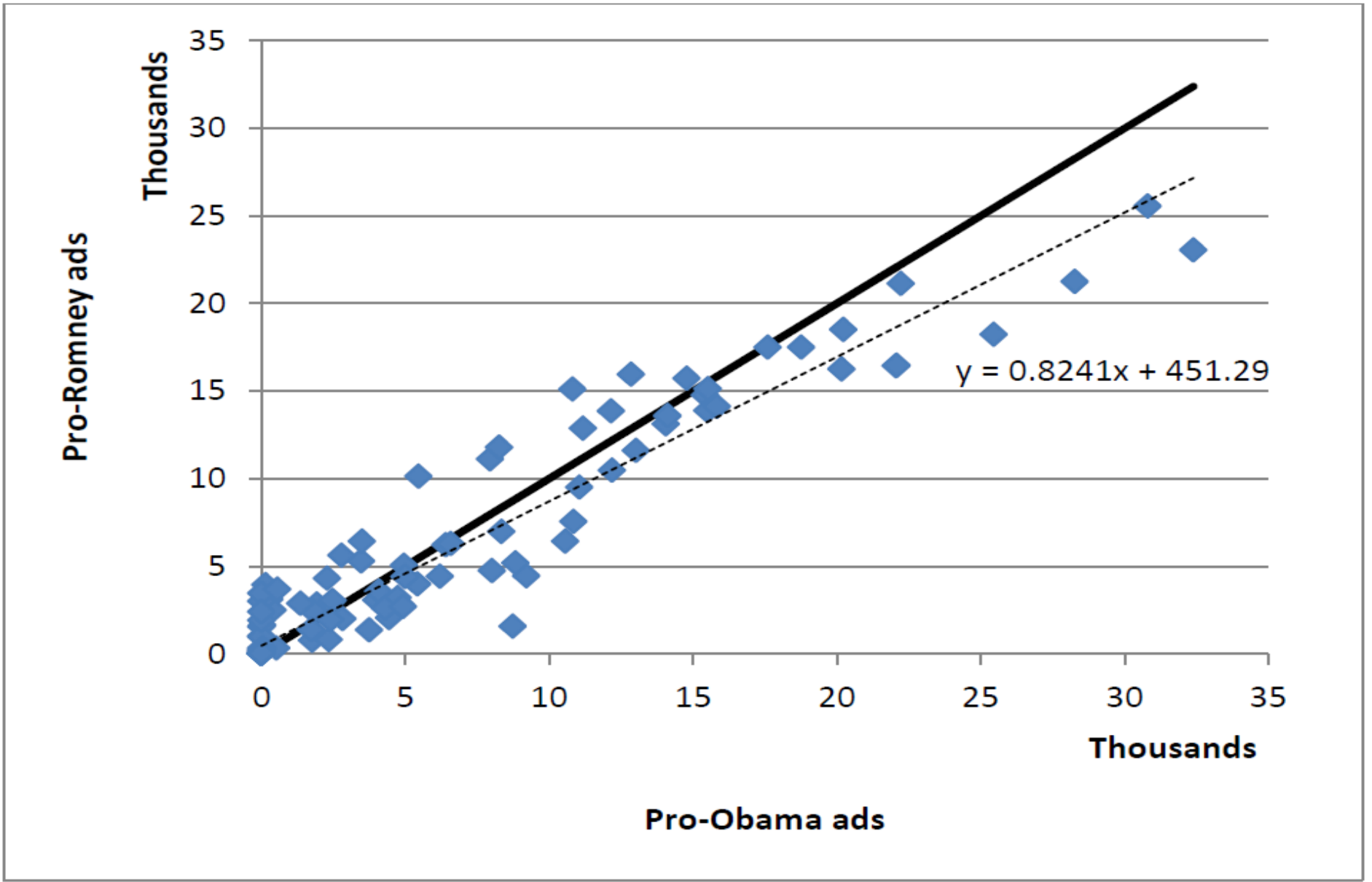
*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads

**Figure 6—Obama and Romney Ads, Excluding Interest Groups**



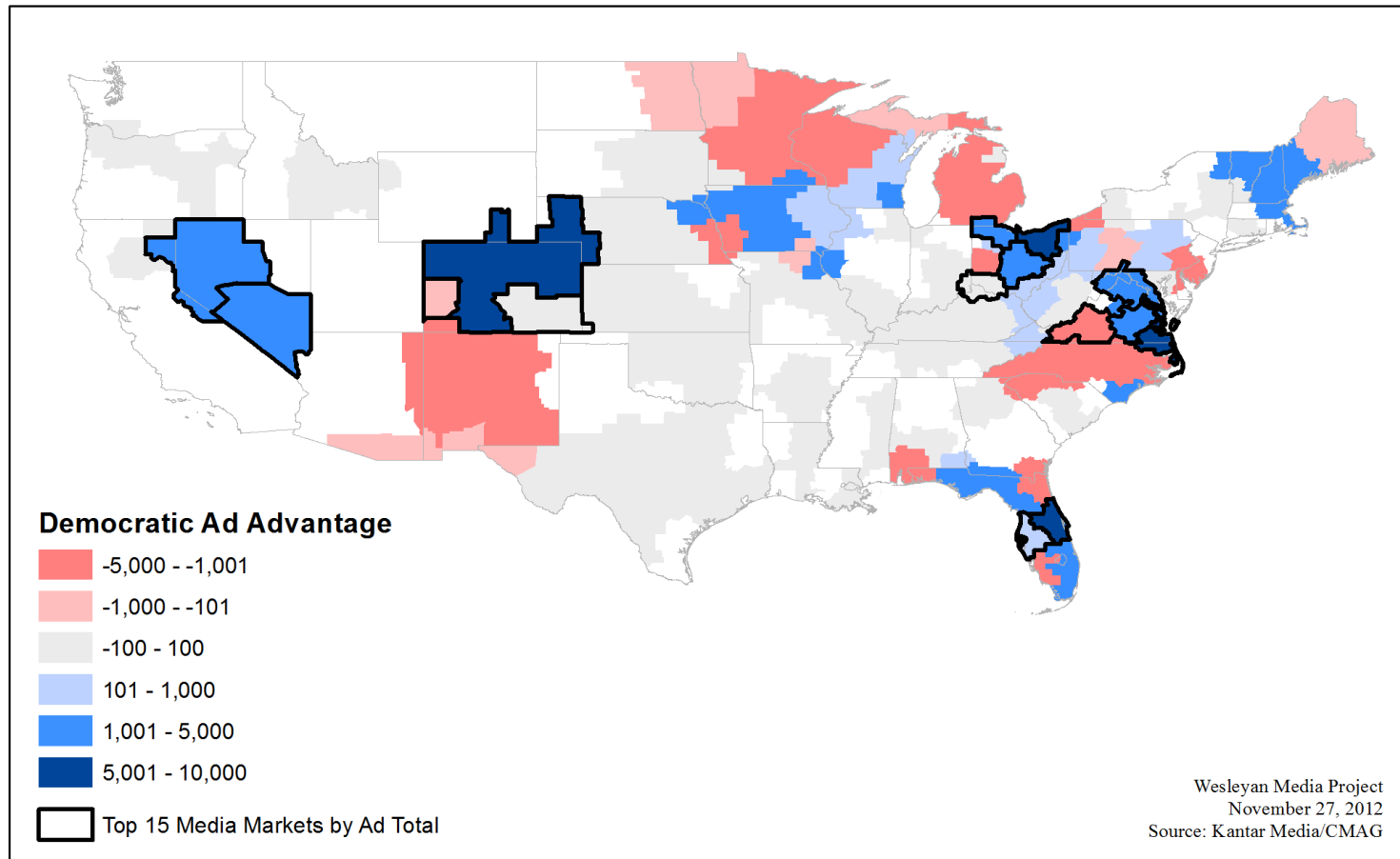
**Figure 6—Obama and Romney Ads, Including Interest Groups**





# Obama Edge in Key Markets

Partisan Ad Advantage in Presidential Race (6/1/12 - 11/6/12)





# Difference in Ad Placements

**Table 3. Presidential Ads Placements by Program Type**

Pro-Obama Ads		Pro-Romney Ads	
Newscast (Local Only)	32.1%	Newscast (Local Only)	45.1%
Talk	18.5%	News Forum/Interview	12.8%
News Forum/Interview	10.8%	Talk	12.8%
Reality	7.1%	Game Show	6.2%
Situation Comedy	7.1%	Situation Comedy	3.7%
Game Show	6.0%	Entertainment Magazine	3.6%
Entertainment Magazine	3.6%	Reality	2.8%
Drama/Adventure	2.8%	Drama/Adventure	2.2%
Soap Opera	2.5%	Soap Opera	1.8%
Newscast(Cable/Network Only)	1.4%	Newscast(Cable/Network Only)	1.4%
Police/Suspense/Mystery	1.3%	News Magazine	1.2%
News Magazine	1.2%	Police/Suspense/Mystery	1.0%



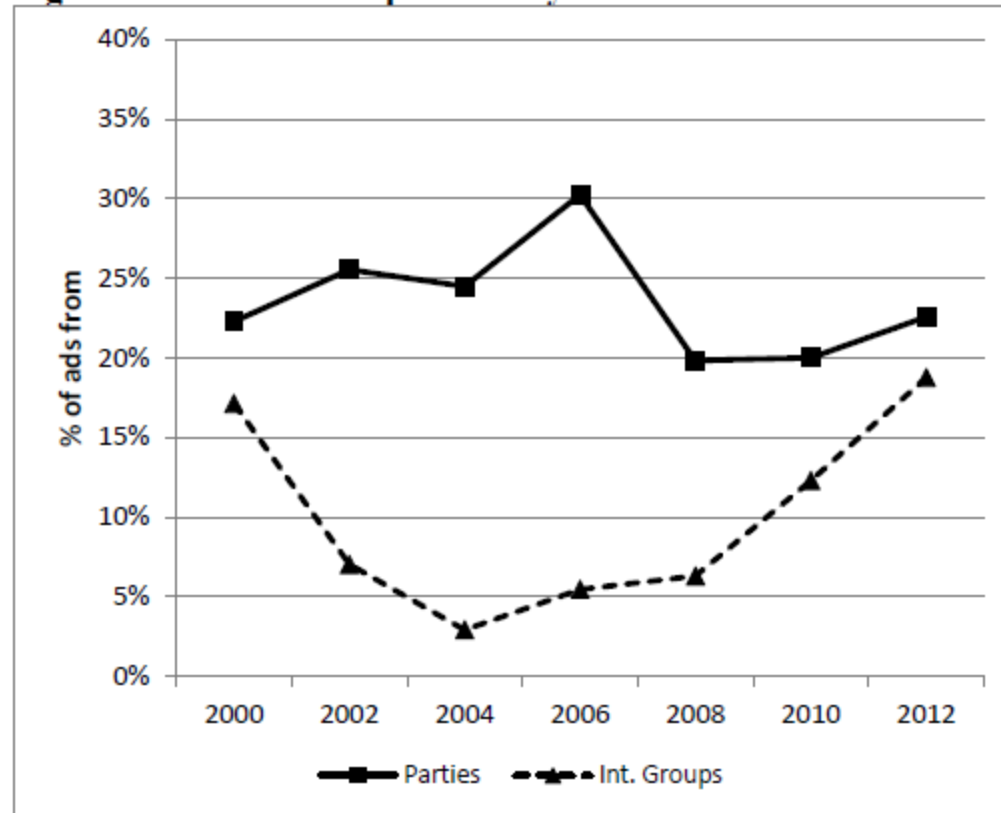
# Money Isn't Everything

- Differences between:
  - Candidates vs. Interest Groups in ad prices
  - Obama vs. Romney in placements and strategy
- Strategy going forward?



# Interest Groups vs. Party Advertising

Figure 2—Interest Group and Party Ads in House Races

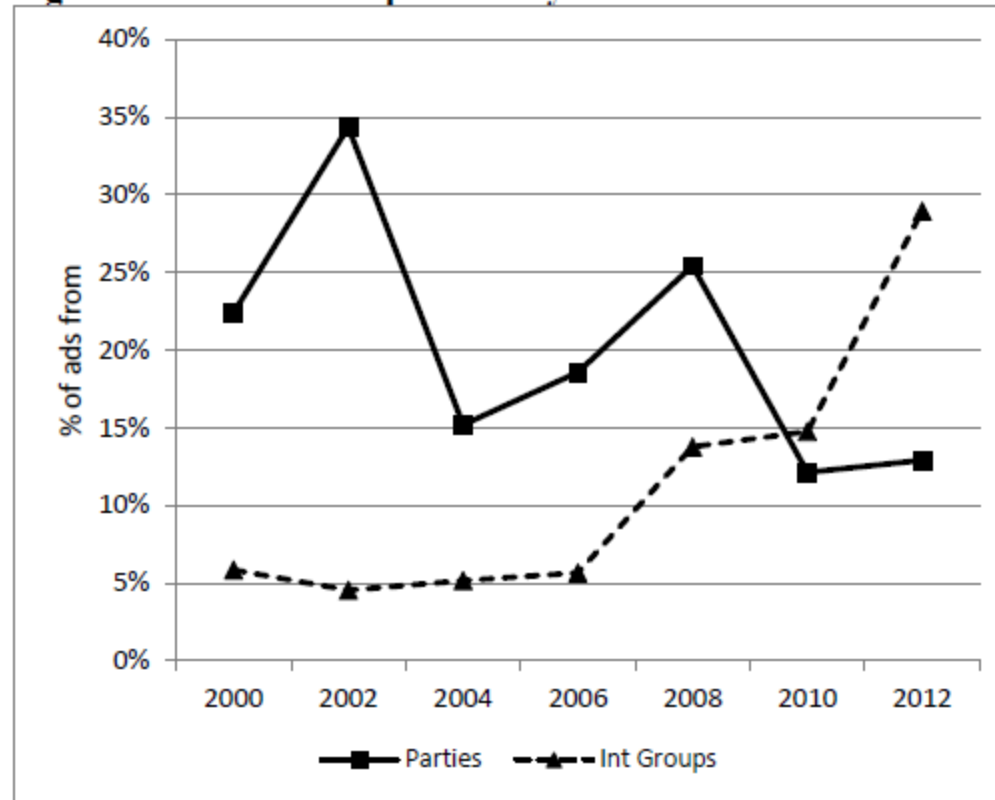


Source: Wisconsin Advertising Project and Wesleyan Media Project



# Interest Groups vs. Party Advertising

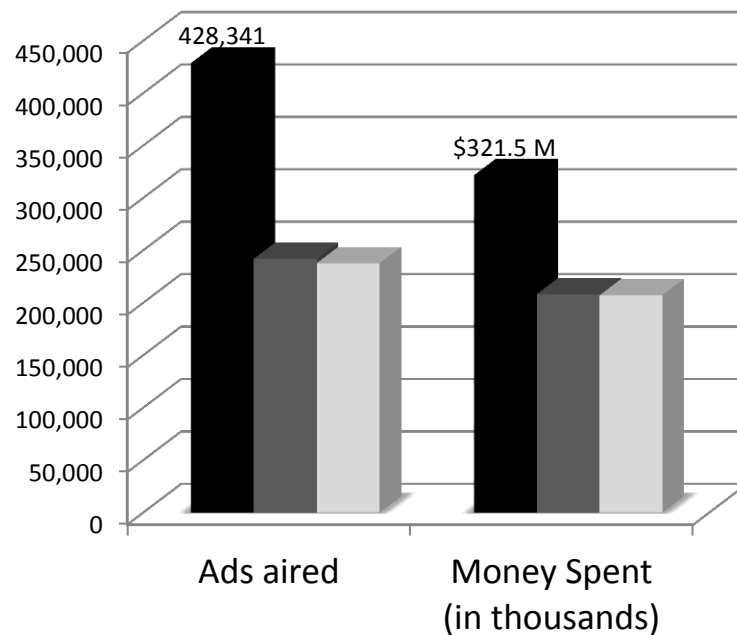
Figure 3—Interest Group and Party Ads in Senate Races



Source: Wisconsin Advertising Project and Wesleyan Media Project



# Interest Group Transparency



  
Center for  
Responsive Politics  
OpenSecrets.org

■ Dark money  
■ Partial disclosure  
■ Full disclosure

*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project & Center for Responsive Politics

*Note:* All federal local broadcast and national cable ads (2011-2012)

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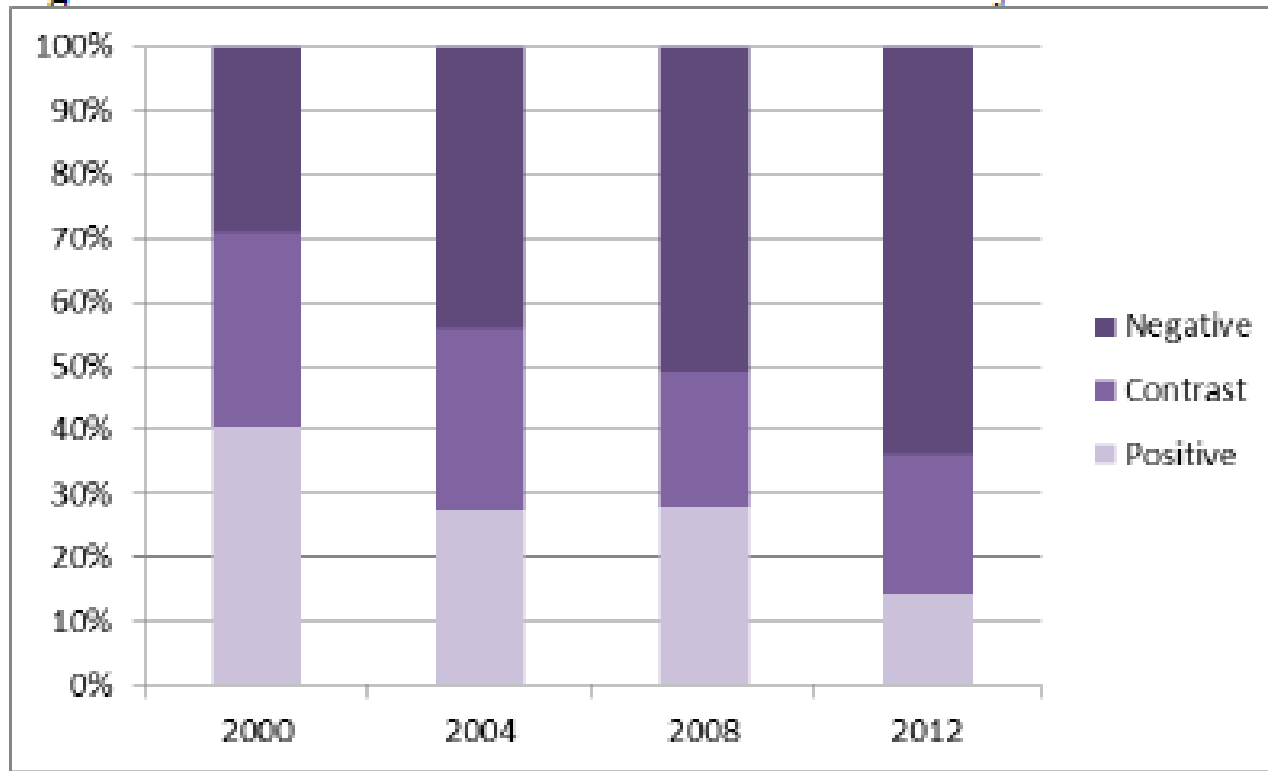
# Television Advertising in 2012

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# Negativity Trend Over Time

**Figure 7. Tone of Presidential General Election Ads by Year**

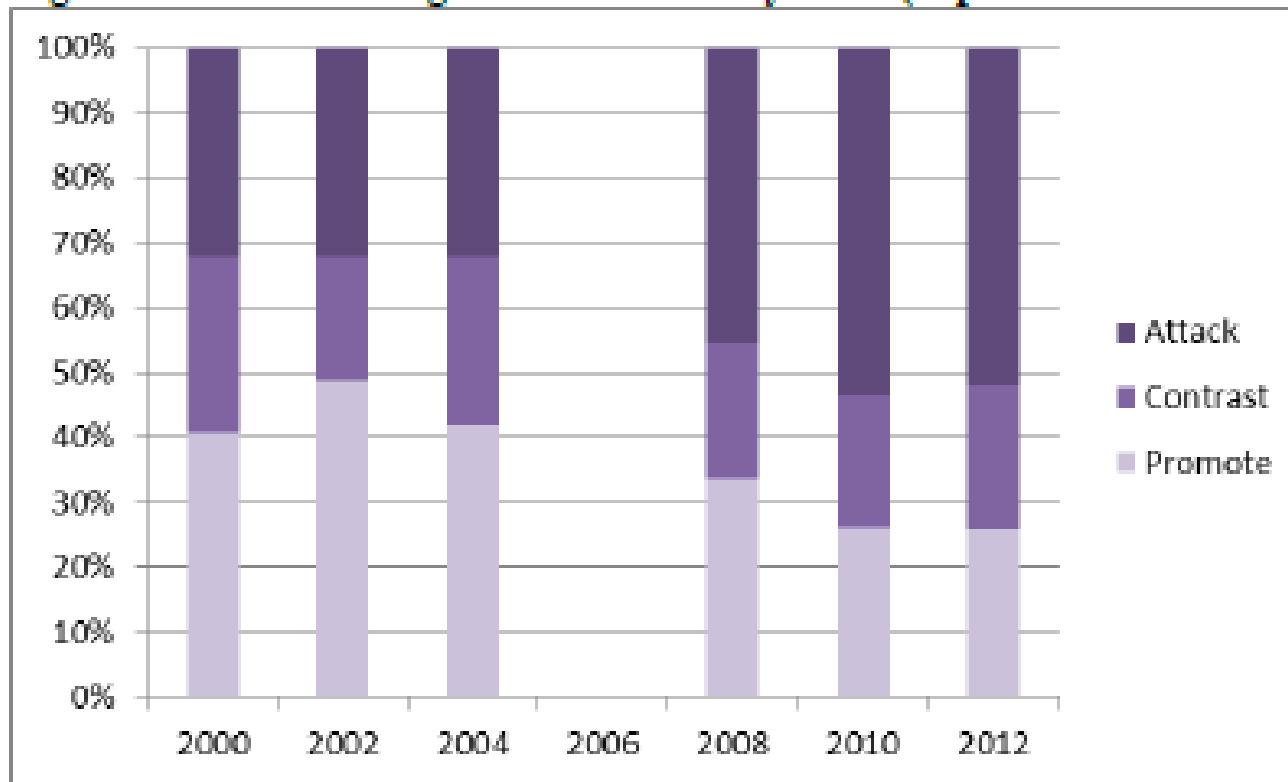


Note: Data from 2000, 2004 and 2008 come from the Wisconsin Advertising Project. Data from 2012 come from the Wesleyan Media Project.



# Negativity Trend Over Time

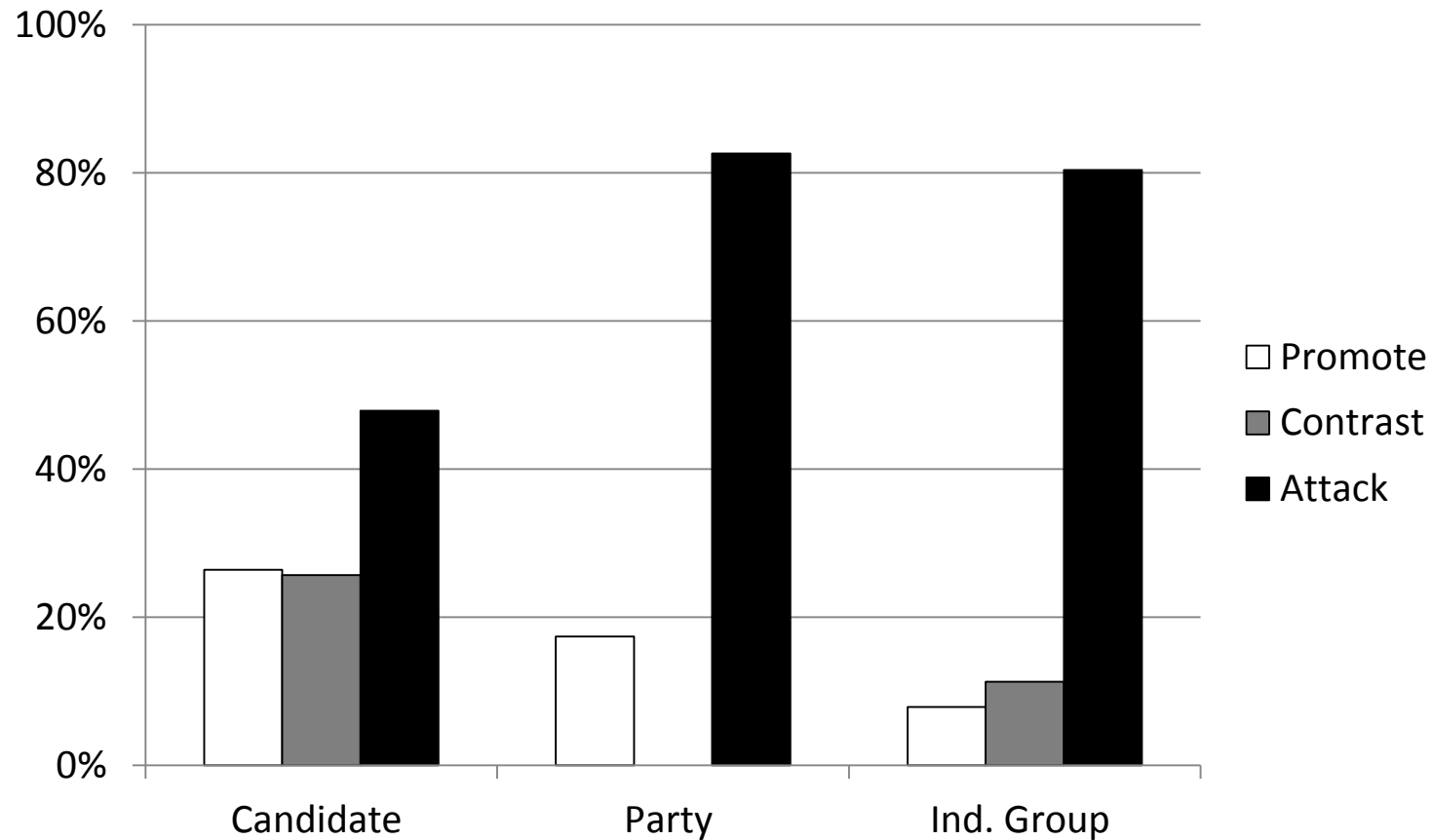
**Figure 8. Tone of Congressional Races by Year (September 1 to Election Day)**



Note: Data from 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2008 come from the Wisconsin Advertising Project. Data from 2010 and 2012 come from the Wesleyan Media Project. Data from 2006 are unavailable.

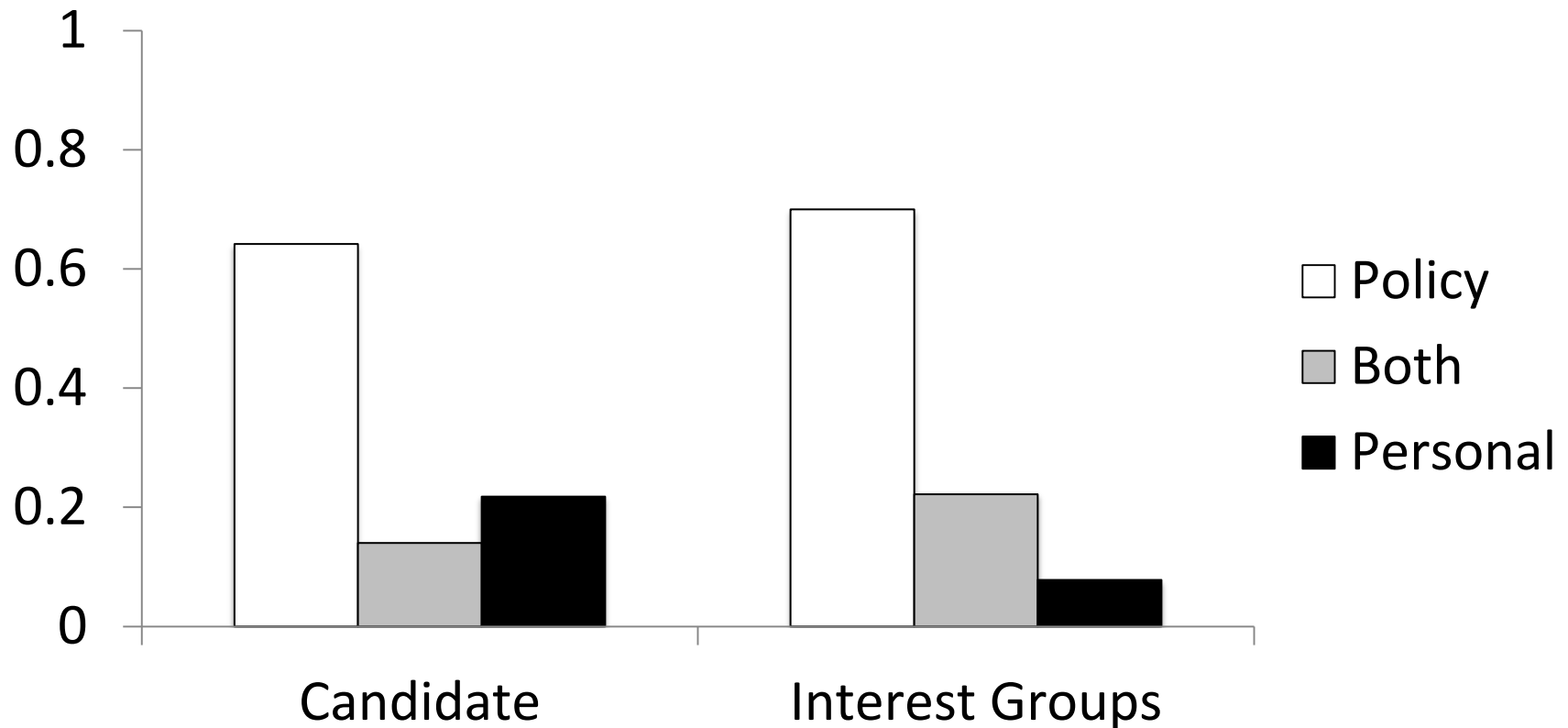


# Parties, Groups More Negative



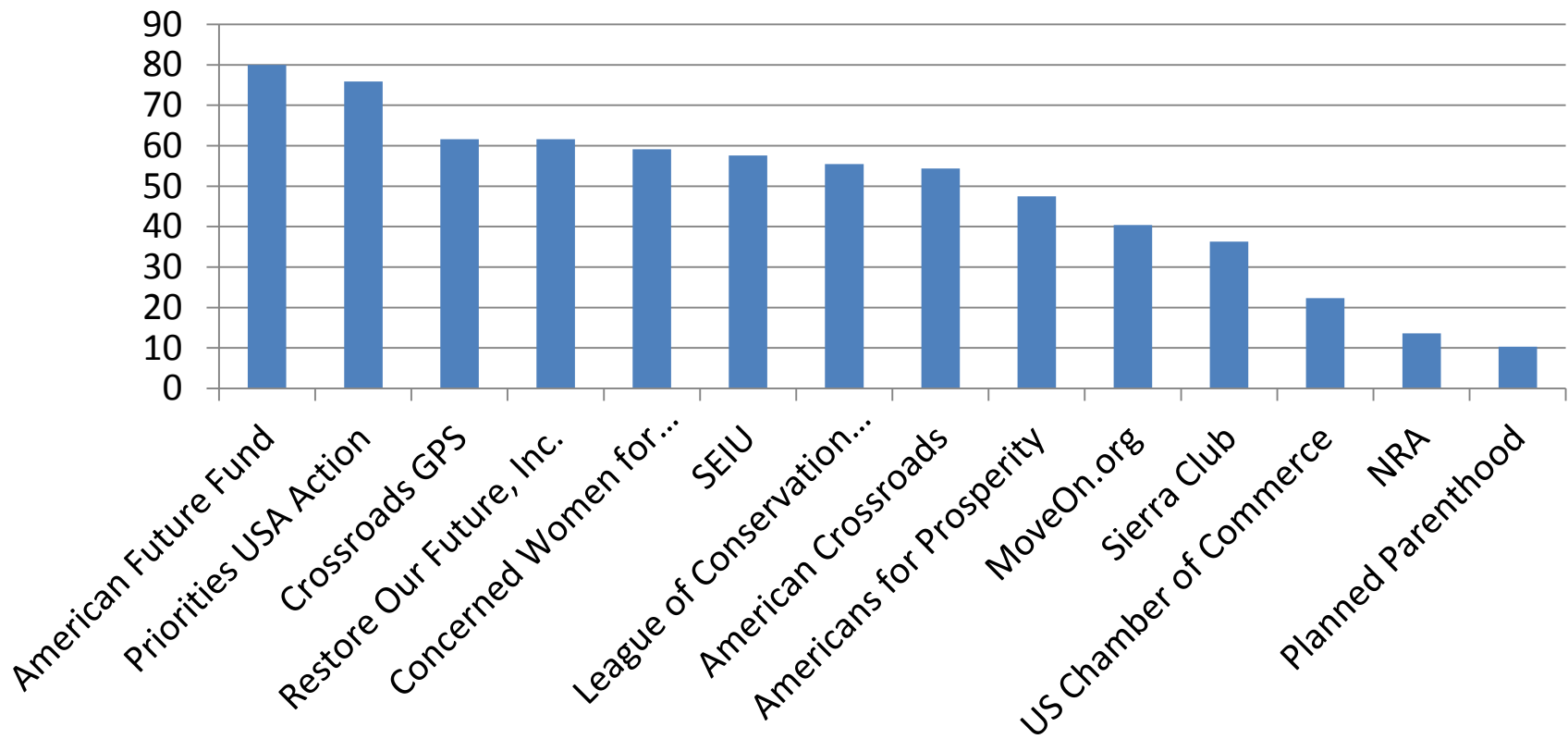


# Candidates & IGs Policy Focused





# Percentage Who Have **Not** Heard Of...





**Table 6. Top Issues in the Presidential General Election Campaign (April 11 – Election Day)**

<b>Pro-Obama Ads</b>		<b>Pro-Romney Ads</b>	
Taxes	43.8%	Jobs	73.5%
Jobs	41.5%	Deficit	53.1%
Education	21.4%	Gov't Spending	25.4%
Deficit	16.3%	Taxes	23.5%
Health care	12.4%	Recession/Econ Stimulus	17.2%
Medicare	11.5%	Health care	15.9%
Women's Health	10.2%	Business	8.4%
Trade	8.6%	China	7.7%
Economic disparity	8.0%	Energy Policy	7.1%
Abortion	7.7%	Trade	7.0%
Business	6.5%	Welfare	6.0%
Housing	6.5%	Medicare	3.4%
Energy Policy	6.3%	Housing	2.5%
Recession/Econ Stimulus	6.2%	Gov't Regulations	2.4%
Gov't Regulations	5.7%	Economic disparity	1.2%

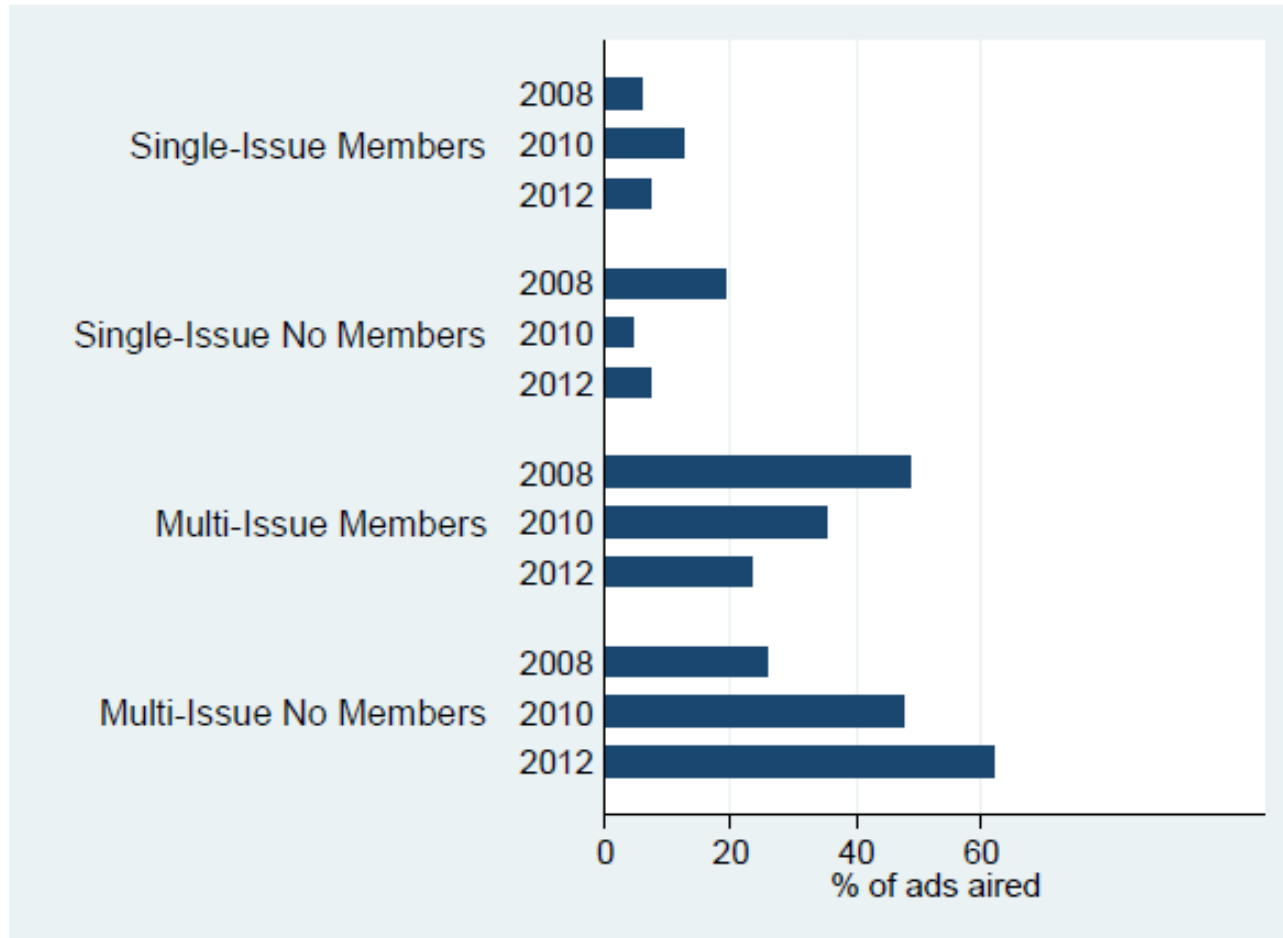


**Table 7. Top Issues in Races for U.S. Congress (June 1 – Election Day)**

<b>Democratic Ads</b>		<b>Republican Ads</b>	
Taxes	35.4%	Taxes	40.8%
Medicare	33.0%	Jobs	35.5%
Jobs	24.9%	Health care	29.1%
Social Security	17.8%	Deficit	24.5%
Deficit	13.4%	Gov't Spending	23.4%
Education	13.0%	Medicare	18.1%
Trade	8.5%	Business	14.2%
Health care	7.7%	Recession/Econ Stimulus	12.9%
Business	7.5%	Energy Policy	10.3%
Veterans	7.0%	Gov't Ethics	7.0%
Gov't Spending	6.4%	Gov't Regulations	4.5%
Women's Health	6.1%	China	4.1%
Gov't Ethics	5.7%	Social Security	4.0%
Local Issues	5.3%	Education	3.3%
Energy Policy	4.9%	Military	3.1%

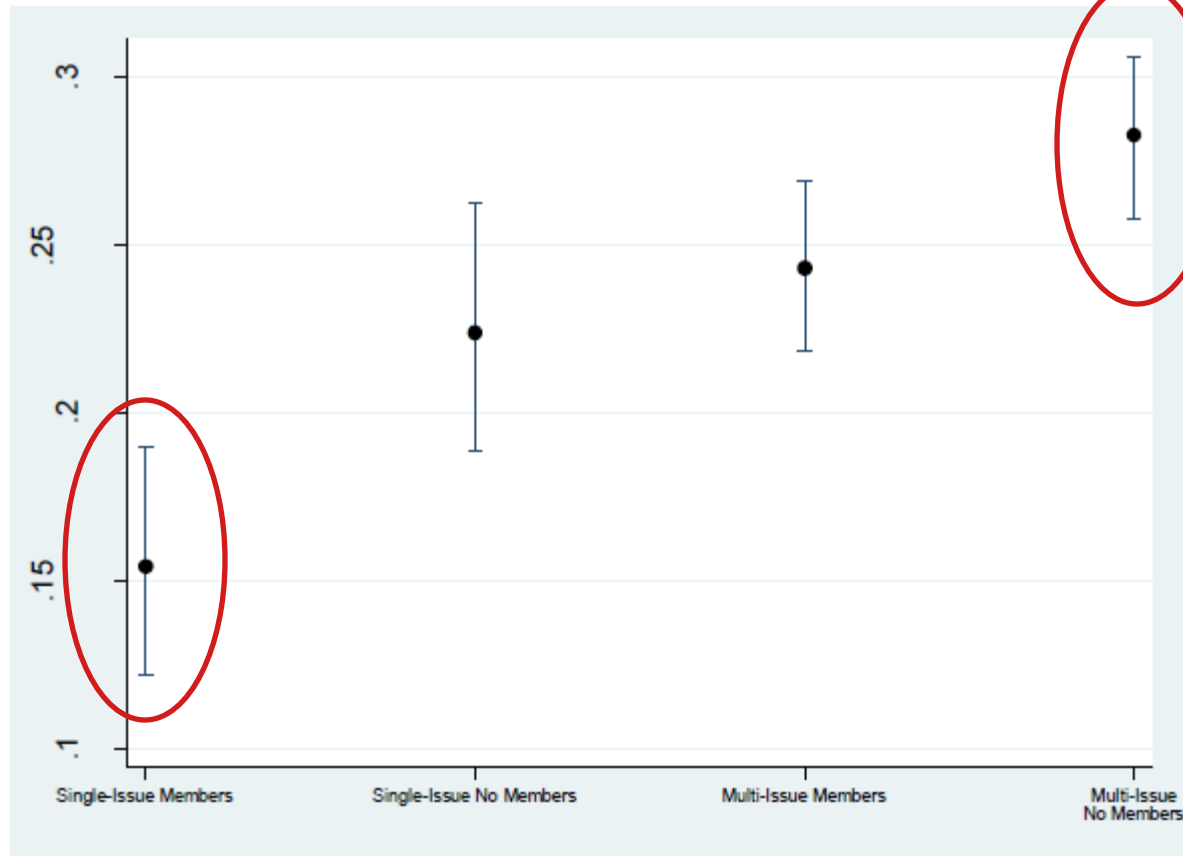


**Figure 2: Involvement of Interests Group by Type, 2008-2012**





**Figure 3: Predicted Convergence Score Based on Group Type**



NOTE: Figure holds candidate convergence and ad counts at their means, and estimates group convergence for a competitive, open seat race in 2012. The group is pro-Republican and the time frame is 3-4 weeks before the election.



# Top U.S. Senate Races by Volume

<b>Race</b>	<b>Airings</b>	<b>Est. Cost</b>	<b>% Airings by Groups</b>
Montana	110,471	12.8M	25.6
Wisconsin	73,981	32.2M	32.2
Ohio	58,358	43.1M	42.8
Virginia	52,708	47.2M	48.3
Missouri	50,266	25.6M	22.3
Nevada	49,559	29.5M	35.1
Massachusetts	48,740	37.7M	0.0
Indiana	47,781	32.2M	42.5
Florida	39,680	33.9M	35.9
Arizona	36,089	28.3M	19.2

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Figures cover June 1, 2012, through Election Day

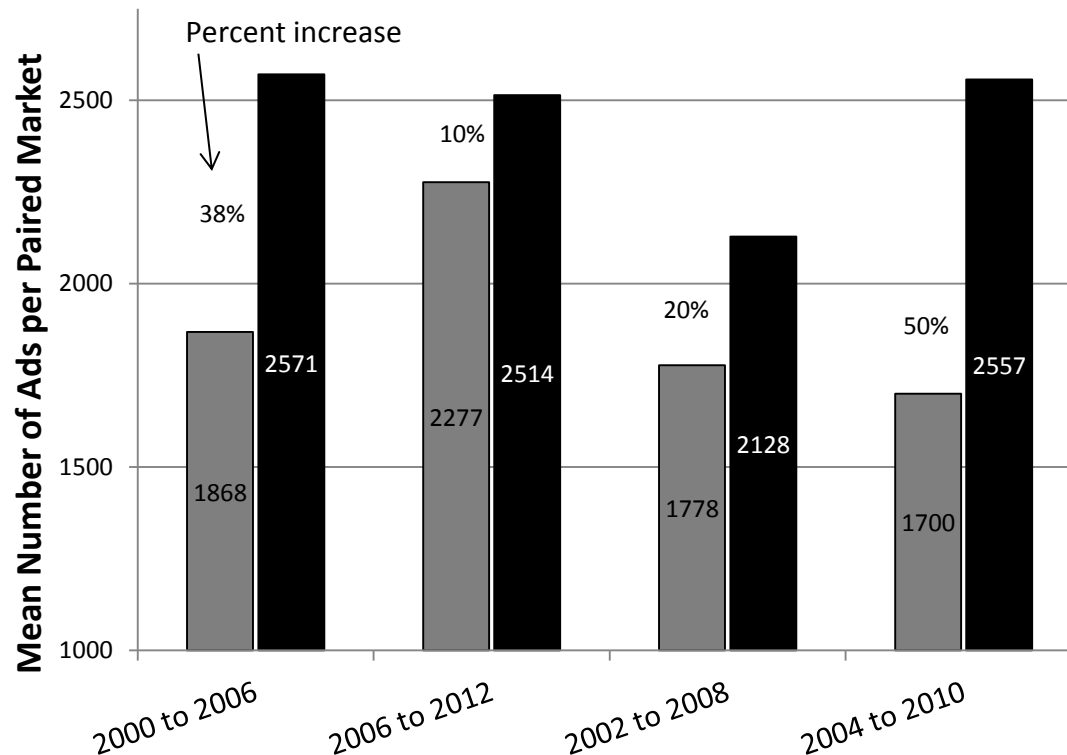
*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads



# Candidate Ads in Senate Races

(9/1 to Election Day)



Source: Wisconsin Advertising Project and Wesleyan Media Project

Note: Local broadcast and national cable ads



# Top U.S. House Races by Volume

Race	Airings	Est. Cost	% Airings by Groups
GA-12	27,762	10.8M	19.3
CA-24	16,193	3.0M	18.3
IL-17	15,804	6.9M	24.4
NY-21	14,264	5.3M	21.4
CA-52	13,273	11.1M	22.3
UT-04	12,912	7.1M	31.0
CA-36	12,710	3.0M	14.5
FL-18	12,646	10.4M	23.5
NY-27	12,336	5.7M	20.9
PA-12	12,078	12.3M	27.4

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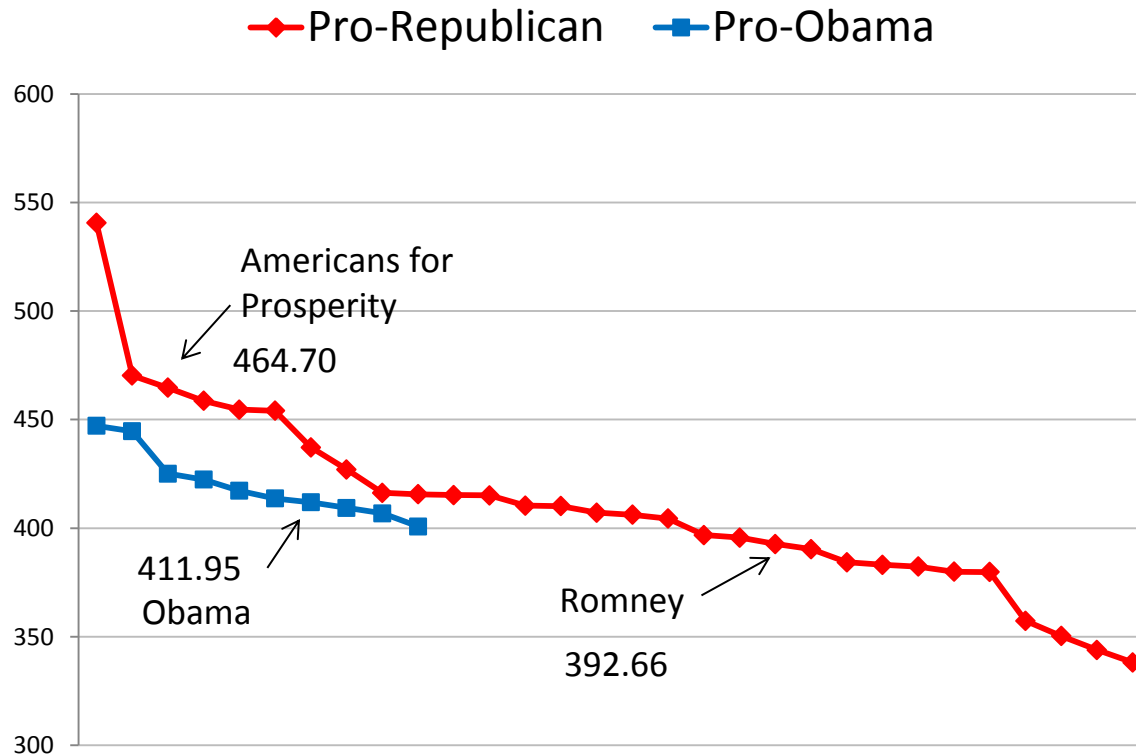
Figures cover June 1, 2012, through Election Day

*Source:* Wesleyan Media Project; Kantar Media/CMAG data

*Note:* Local broadcast and national cable ads

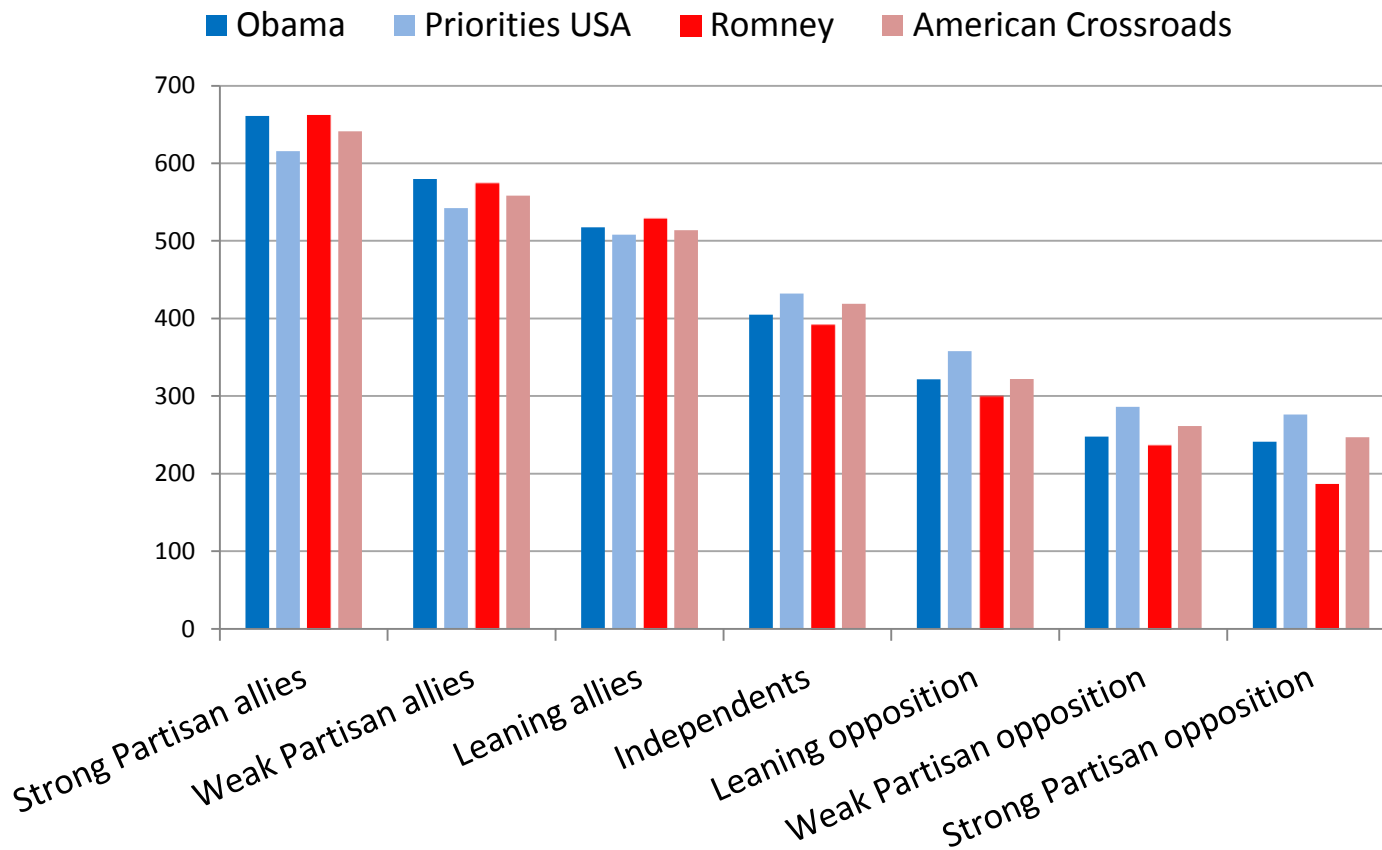


# Ad Scores by Sponsor





# Ad Scores by Affiliation





# Estimated Effect of Ads at County Level

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Effect of 1000 ads on Democratic county votes\*

	<b>all general</b>	<b>post-August</b>	<b>post-September</b>
2004	0.197%	0.381%	0.846%
2008	0.549	0.600	0.880
2012	0.124	0.332	0.371

Effect of 2SD shift in ads

2004	0.725	0.523	0.754
2008	1.493	1.362	1.320
2012	0.506	0.768	0.516

Effect across full range of measure

2004	2.488	2.812	3.668
2008	6.047	4.840	4.624
2012	1.731	2.685	2.016

---

\*All effects significant at  $p < .05$

From models of counties in non-battleground states. Control variables are not shown.

Dep. Var is Democratic candidate improvement over previous election in the county