



NEW YORK CHAPTER
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

2007

WARREN J. MITOFSKY STUDENT PAPER AWARD

Presented to

JEFF TESSIN

**“Cues Given, Cues Received: How Candidates Use Shortcuts
When Voters Need Them Most”**



While there has been increasing research on how voters use information shortcut and cues – “heuristics” – as they form and change their opinions, we know less about how political candidates capitalize on how they can create cues to influence the public and gain the support of voters.

This highly original paper theorizes about how candidates develop and use cues as part of their strategy of campaign communication, especially to gain the support of less attentive and less politically attuned voters.

Using newly available and extensive television advertising data that can be mapped geographically on congressional districts, along with newly available public opinion survey data with samples large enough for analysis at the district level for the 2000 United States congressional elections, the author shows that candidates efficiently use political cues to attempt to sway less attuned and sophisticated voters.

The candidates are able to weigh tradeoffs involving scarce resources and competitive campaign environments to target voters most in need of short-cuts to deal with information costs in casting their votes.

This is path-breaking research and NYAAPOR is pleased to honor this award-winning paper.

