The Impact of Events on Bush Approval: A Time-Series Analysis Using 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey Data

By

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Political scientists generally reject the idea that discrete events like tactical campaign strategies or widely-covered media events exert any meaningful influence upon mass public opinion. In teasing out the forces that affect presidential approval, social scientists have traditionally looked to factors like demographic characteristics and economic indicators for explanations of change.

Communication scholars, on the other hand, have been more open to the idea that political information – whether in the form of political debates, live news broadcasts, or other high-profile media events – may have meaningful effects on presidential approval. More recently, time-series analysis has made it possible to statistically test for the effects such events.

Communications research on public opinion formation argues that elites such as politicians and journalists – i.e. people who control and disseminate information – exert a dominant influence on mass opinion. Several studies have established that in many situations, public opinion tends to fall in line with new political information provided by elites (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987; Page, Shapiro, and Dempsey, 1987; Fan, 1988; Zaller, 1992).

Zaller argues that political information almost always originates in elite conversations that are subsequently disseminated through the mass media. The mass public then uses that information to form political attitudes and opinions. But most members of the mass public, instead of bringing a stable cognitive framework to answering questions on public opinion surveys, tend to base their survey responses on the considerations that are top of mind, or, for any reason, most immediately salient to them.

The idea that elites generally lead mass opinion provides support for the hypothesis that campaign events or media events can meaningfully affect public opinion. But Zaller argues that while new political information (including campaign-related events) might matter, the attitude change is usually the result of accumulated events rather than a single "conversion experience" (Zaller, 1989).

Other communications scholars, however, have sought to show that discrete media events can and do suddenly affect public opinion in important ways. Katz and Dayan argue that media events – they define them as high-profile, pre-planned, historic events that are broadcast live to massive audiences – can alter political attitudes and affect political participation

(Katz,1992). The funeral of John Kennedy, the first moon walk, the Olympic Games, and Watergate are examples that they argue have had such effects.

Another way in which media events might affect public opinion is through setting an agenda for public debate. An event might direct public attention to a given issue or set of issues. A large demonstration or protest, for example, might focus the public eye on, say, a military operation overseas. As a result, the public might use that issue as the chief criterion in deciding for whom to vote for president. If the president held a high-powered economic summit to discuss ideas for improving the economy, then the voters might make the economy the criterion on which they choose their candidate.

Other research suggests that, in addition to high-profile media events, campaign events or campaign-related news events might affect public opinion. Working with data on presidential primaries, Bartels (1988) and Popkin (1991) have both shown that campaign events and new information about candidates leads to substantial changes in the criteria voters use to judge candidates, and in effect, to changes in their relative evaluations of primary candidates.

More recently, Johnston et. al actually used a rolling cross-sectional survey to test for the effects of campaign events on public opinion. The analysis draws upon data collected during the 1988 Canadian federal election campaign from the 1988 Canadian National Election Survey (CNES), and the results of the survey provide evidence for the impact of political campaigns, especially of televised debates and media coverage of other events. The survey, however, has a relatively limited sample size and Johnston "smoothes" the data into 5-day moving averages to conduct the analysis.

The NAES data from 2000 improves upon the CNES by conducting tens of thousands of interviews (as opposed to a few thousand). And it provides data to more accurately pinpoint the effects of media events on public opinion. First, Kenski looked at average "feeling thermometer" evaluations for the vice presidential candidates – Sen. Joseph Lieberman and then-candidate Dick Cheney. The data show a shift in Cheney's favorability around the time of the debate that held relatively steady for the duration of the campaign (Kenski, 2004a).

The NAES data also allow for a more nuanced view of the effects of the presidential debates in the 2000 election. While the conventional wisdom held that the first televised debate between Al Gore and George W. Bush was a pivotal moment in the campaign that caused people to question Gore's honesty, the data show that the number of people who described Gore as

"honest" was on decline two weeks before the debate (Kenski, 2004b). While we cannot say the first debate had no effect on his honesty rating, it sheds some doubt on the idea that the debate was a pivotal moment for Gore on that issue.

All of this research suggests events can affect presidential approval In particular, we show that regression techniques can be used to decompose a time-series into long and short-term components that can be studied in combination with events.

Research Overview

Over the course of the past 6 months, we have seen some variation in George W. Bush's job performance. The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES04), a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, is seeking to understand such variation. NAES04 has been in the field nightly since October 7, 2003 and will continue to be in the field every day through election day, 2004. Using a rolling cross-sectional sample design, NAES04 averages between 100 and 300 national RDD interviews per evening.   This research examines the time period between November 17, 2003, when daily sample size began to climb above 200 cases and March 8, 2004 when, as planned in our methodology, daily sample size consistently began dropping below 200 cases.

For this research, we have conducted a time-series analysis of George W. Bush's presidential approval rating from November 17, 2003 through March 8, 2004 to determine the effect of events on approval.   Several "major" events took place during that time period—many having to do with the war in Iraq, the war on terrorism, the Democratic presidential primary, Bush's State of the Union address, and his stance on a same-sex marriage amendment.

We first decided to undertake this research following Bush's surprise Thanksgiving trip to Baghdad to have dinner with the troops at the Baghdad airport. In our daily cross-section during that time, we saw an immediate rise in his overall approval rating. However, this rise was not sustained over time. After more time passed, it became clear that the rise we observed by examining only a short time period surrounding the surprise visit was part of a longer-term upward trend that was not attributable to the visit. After controlling for this trend, the rise we observed was no longer even statistically reliable.

This experience prompted us to examine in more detail the potential for alternative explanations for short-term changes in presidential approval. This paper is an examination of how events can affect presidential job performance both in terms of longer-term trends and short-term impacts.

In conducting this analysis, we looked at the following approval measures: Overall presidential approval; Approval of Bush's handling of the economy; and Approval of Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq[1].

Methodology

Sample Design

This research is based on data from NAES04, a rolling cross-section telephone survey that has been in the field continuously from October 7, 2003 and will continue beyond Election Day, November 2, 2004. Eligible respondents are at least 18 years of age but are not restricted as to citizenship or voting ability. As stated earlier, the dates for analysis are November 17, 2003 through March 8, 2004. NAES04 conducted no interviewing on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. The total number of days in this sample period is 108, with the removal of the non-interviewing days. The total number of interviews included in this sampling period is 20,439. The mean number of daily interviews is 189.25 (TABLE 1). See Appendix I for the complete breakout of the number of interviews by day.

Table 1: Days in the field, completes, and mean number of interviews

November 17, 2003 through March 8, 2004	
Number of days in the sampling period	108
Total number of Interviews	20,439
Mean number of daily interviews	189.25

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[1] --Do you approve of disapprove the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?   (4 point) IF APPROVE: Is that approve strongly or approve somewhat? IF DISAPPROVE: Is that disapprove strongly or disapprove somewhat?
--Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the nation's economy? (2 point)
--Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq? (2 point)

Reasoning Behind the Analytical Period

Chart 1 illustrates the NAES04 daily interviewing pattern. Day 1 represents 10/07/03; Day 42 represent 11/17/03; Day 149 represents 3/8/04. It is during the period between Day 42 and Day 149 when NAES04 was collecting roughly 200 national RCS interviews daily. There is a slight drop-off period from about day 89 (1/8/04) through day 108 (1/27/04). During this time NAES04 was conducting a separate survey among New Hampshire residents leading up to the January 27, 2004 New Hampshire primary. The result was an average nightly national RCS sample of 153 during those 20 days. After Day 149 (3/8/04), daily interviewing dropped off below 100 in a planned reduction after Kerry became the "presumptive" democratic nominee for president. Including the data from that point forward would introduce heterogeneity into the random component of the time series and violate the assumptions of our analysis (Romer, et al., 2003). Hence, we restricted our analysis to the 108 days of the survey period that had roughly comparable levels of daily interview rates.

Chart 1: Daily Interview Rate Varied
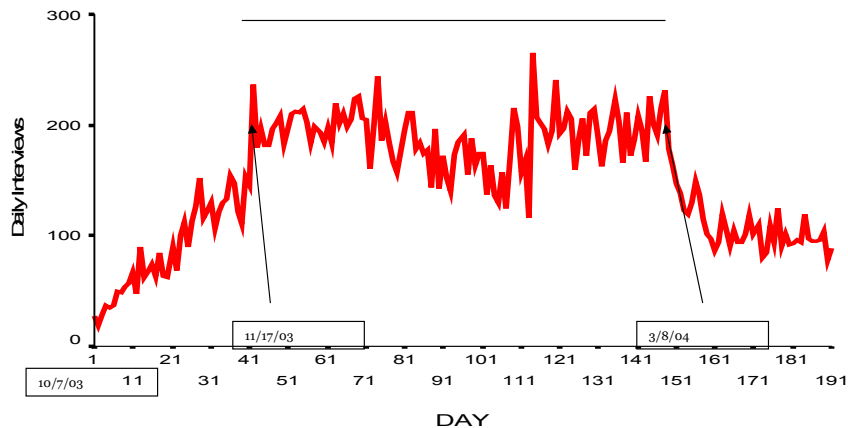
Rolling Cross Section

Respondents are selected for cross-section study samples via a two-stage process—Random Digit Dialing and random selection within household.[2] **Rolling cross-section sampling** is implemented by adding new randomly generated telephone numbers on a strict schedule to the pool of numbers interviewers are calling to attempt to complete a survey. On each day of fieldwork, a set count of new numbers is added, proportional to the desired count of interviews completed daily. The intention is to maximize the representativeness of any single day's interviewing sample by including those respondents who are easy to contact and those who are more difficult to contact. Consequently, the day on which a respondent is interviewed may for purposes of analysis be considered a random event. Each respondent was called back a

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[2]First, households were selected by randomly generating telephone numbers. Area code, exchange, and bank, representing the first eight digits of a ten-digit phone number, were randomly generated proportional to telephone company estimates of the count of residential numbers in each combination of area code, exchange, and bank. The last two digits of each phone number were generated entirely at random. Second, adult residents of a household were selected randomly based on a specific algorithm (See Romer, et al. 2004 for complete design).

maximum number of 18 times and refusal conversions were employed. In the chart below, each block represents one day of sample. For example on day 14, completes are composed of sample that has been in the field from 1 to 14 days.

Chart 2: Rolling Cross-Sectional Sampling
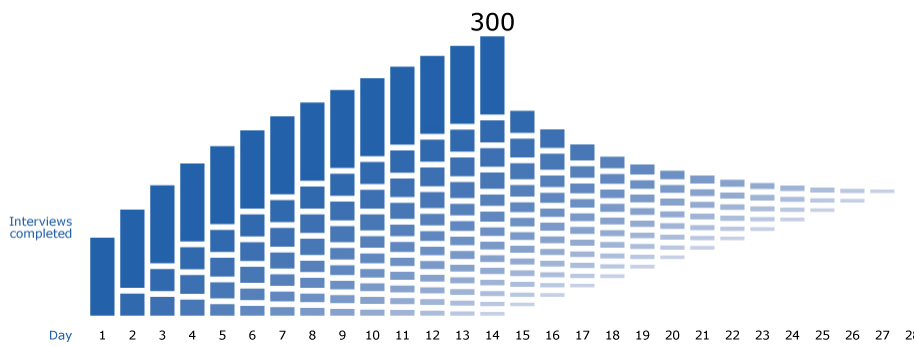
Time Series Analysis

Rolling cross sectional methodology facilitates time series analysis because each day's interviews can be assumed to be drawn from the same population of responses (see Romer, et al., 2003 for description of the assumptions underlying time series analysis of the NAES). The mean of these responses should exhibit some random variation but the underlying distribution should have a constant mean and variance. At the same time, there may be auto-correlation that produces short-term cycles in the series. However, these cycles also do not change the overall level of the series. When these sources of variation are controlled, it is possible to observe the influence of events as changes in the level of the series. As a result, the mean of each day's interviews conducted using the Rolling Cross-Sectional Design can be used to identify trends

and points of change in the public's reactions to political events that are not attributable to changes in sampling methodology or to random components of the daily series.

In the NAES, the daily series can be broken down into five components:

1) **Long-term trends that reflect the flow of events as they impact public opinion**. These trends can be modeled using nonlinear curve-fitting techniques that identify the cumulative effect of unfolding events rather than of any single event.   We identify this type of change in the present study by examining a period when Bush's presidential approval exhibited some marked changes.

2) **Long-term alterations in trends brought about by important events**. These events change the level of the series with a relatively long-lasting influence on opinion. We illustrate one such change during the period of this study in Saddam Hussein's capture.

3) **Short-term cycles brought about by auto-correlation in the series**. These cycles represent carryover in opinion from one time period to another (known as lags). Such autocorrelation could be the result of opinion processes that take time to unfold and that continuously influence responses from one lag to another. Nevertheless, these processes do not change the long-term trend of the series.

4) **Short-term deviations from trends brought about by events**. These deviations do not change the long-term trend but do produce a shift in the series if only for a brief time.

5) **Random components that reflect sampling variation in the underlying distribution of opinion**. These random components, also known in time series terminology as *white noise,* are the residual variation that is uncorrelated between lags. Both auto-correlation and random variation produce deviations from trend but do not significantly alter it[3].

The following two charts illustrate, graphically, how an event can change trend for the long-term versus how an event merely alters trend for a brief period.

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[3] For a full and complete description of Time Series Analysis please see Romer, et. al.,Capturing Campaign Dynamics: The National Annenberg Election Survey

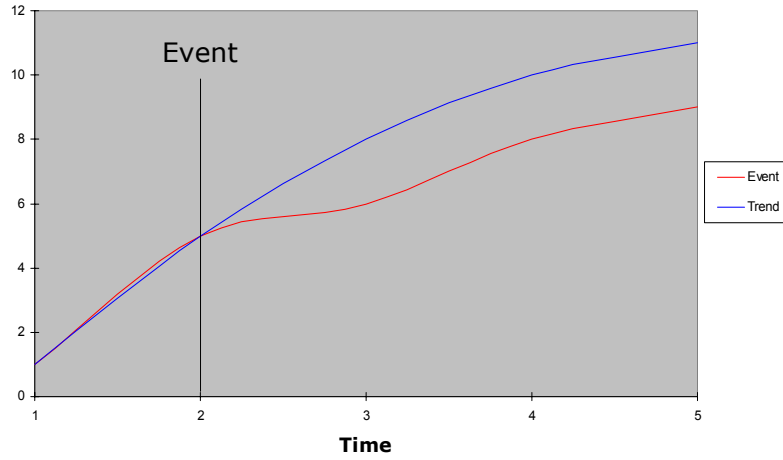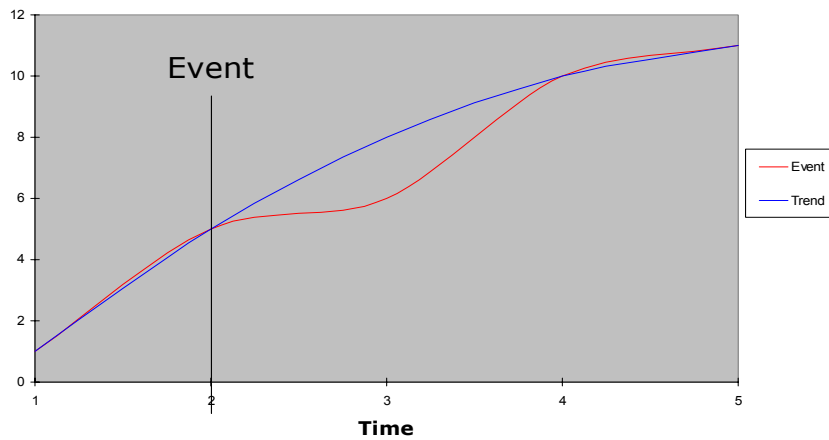# Chart 3: Event that changes trend

Chart 4: Change that reverts to trend

Research Questions

This research examines the following questions:

- What events, if any, impact Bush's approval rating in a way that deviates from the "long-term trend" of his approval?
- Do events have a long-term effect on the trend or are their effects only transitory?
- Are there particular media use subgroups whose change is particularly pronounced?

To answer these questions, this research will examine three Bush approval questions that have been running continuously since the beginning of the survey. These dependent variables are the following:

1) *Do you approve of disapprove the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? IF APPROVE: Is that approve strongly or approve somewhat? IF DISAPPROVE: Is that disapprove strongly or disapprove somewhat? (4 point)*

2) *Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the nation's economy? (2 point)*

3) *Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq? (2 point)*

We have created a daily trend on these items against which we will analyze how events have altered the trend. So many "events" occur locally, nationally, and internationally that it would be impossible to track all of them. However, using the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* as guides, we have been keeping a daily timeline of events since October 7, 2003 (SEE APPENDIX II for a sampling). A number of "events" are significant. We focus on four major events during this time period:

- 11/27/03   President Bush flies to Baghdad to have Thanksgiving Dinner with the troops

- 12/13/03   U.S. forces capture Saddam Hussein
- 1/20/04   Bush gives State of the Union address
- 1/24/04   Bush announces support for constitutional amendment banning same sex marriage

However, there certainly were more events taking place that could impact Bush's ratings. These events listed below comprise what we call the "flow of events":

- Blackhawk helicopter carrying 9 servicemen is shot down in Iraq; mortar attack at U.S. base in Iraq kills 1 injures 33—1/8/04.

- The Democratic primary campaign was in full swing weeks before the first vote was cast at the Iowa caucus—much of the rhetoric and discourse coming out of the campaigns were clearly anti-Bush.

- Kerry winning the Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary, thus emerging as the front runner and subsequently the presumptive party nominee after Super Tuesday on 3/2/04.

Running the Time Series Analysis on Bush Approval

The first step in the time-series is to plot the trend line on the overall Bush approval question. Using OLS polynomial regression, we identified the best fitting overall trend as a function of days during the study period.   Chart 5 below shows a trend that begins rising, then falls into a steady decline, and finally heads toward a recovery, though it is unclear within this time period if the recovery ever occurs.

Chart 5: Bush Approval: 11/17 to 3/8
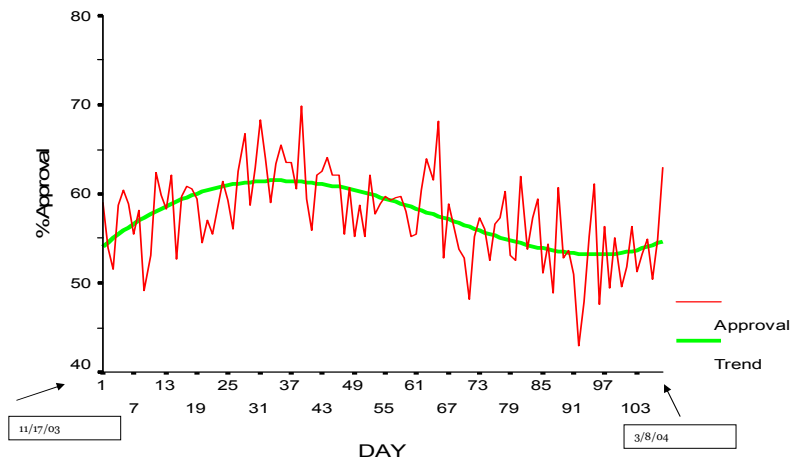
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

In the next step, we tested the long-term and short-term influence of events on the series apart from the long-term trend. "Short-term" was defined as a 5-day period following an event. "Long-term" was defined as a change that was present for the rest of the series. These effects were represented as dummy coded variables that either changed from 0 to 1 on the day after the event (long-term change) or changed from 0 to 1 for five days after the event after which they returned to 0.

Saddam's Capture Alters the Trend on Overall Approval and War Approval; Has no Impact on Economic Approval

The first event we tested was the November 27th trip by President Bush to dine with the troops at Baghdad airport. While Bush's approval ratings increased immediately following the event, this change was already anticipated by the long-term trend in approval, which was rising at this time. Hence, once the trend was controlled, the rise following his trip was not significant.

On the other hand, the capture of Saddam Hussein on December 13, 2003 significantly increased overall presidential approval and approval of Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq. Saddam's capture raised Bush's approval level well beyond the short-term.

Chart 6 shows the immediate impact of Saddam's capture on the overall approval trend. The difference is clear from Day 26 (12/13/03) to Day 27(12/14/03). Bush's approval increased by over 5 points for the duration of the series following the international reporting of this event on Day 26 (December 13).

Chart 6: Influence of Saddam's Capture on Overall Approval

12/13/03 Saddam Captured
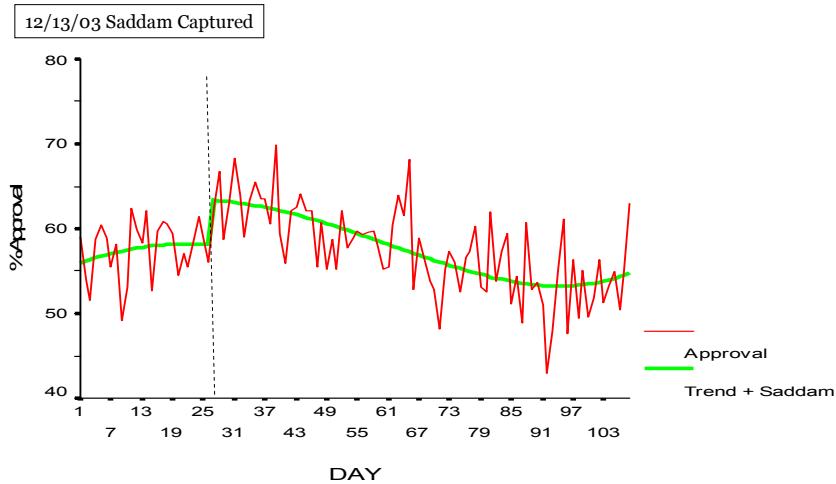
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Chart 7 shows a similar rise after Saddam's capture on the more specific question of how Bush is handling the situation in Iraq.

Chart 7: Influence of Saddam's Capture on Approval of Handling Situation in Iraq

12/13/03 Saddam Captured

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?
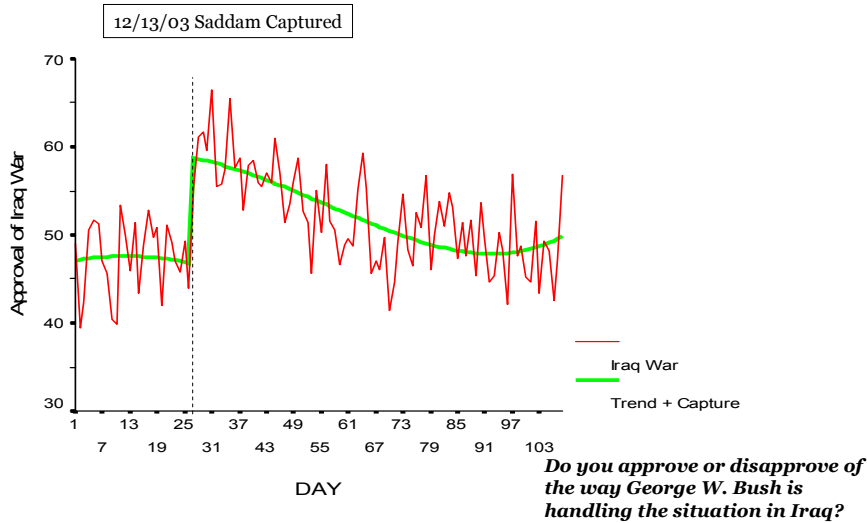
While Saddam's capture also clearly registered on Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq, the impact was not seen on a measure not related to Iraq—Bush's handling of the U.S. economy. The public separated Bush's performance on the economy from his handling of the war in Iraq. The good feelings from Saddam's capture did not translate into high public ratings for the president's handling of the economy (Chart 8).

Chart 8: Influence of Saddam's Capture on Approval of Handling the Economy

12/13/03 Saddam Captured

*Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the nation's economy?*
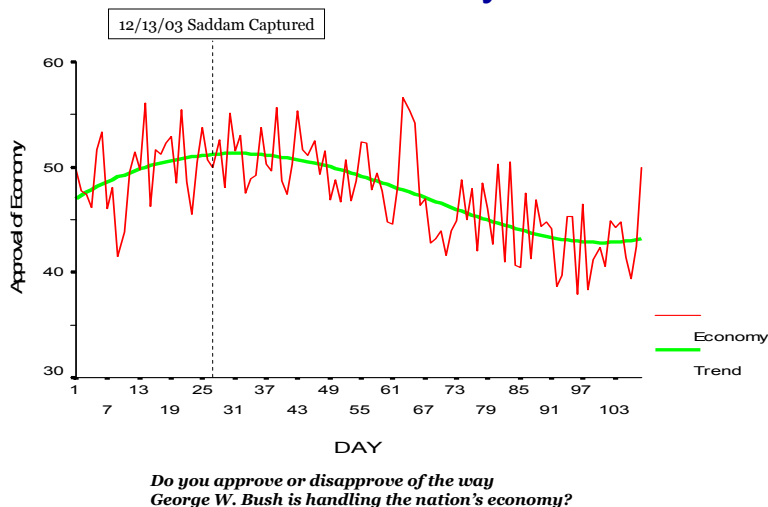
The following chart shows in one graphic the comparison of all three long-term trends for this period including the effect of Saddam's capture. Although all three trends exhibit the same long-term pattern, only the war and Bush's overall approval showed the effect of the capture. Nevertheless, the president's overall approval was strongly tied to both the economy and the situation in Iraq. This is evident in the similarity of the trend lines in the figure. It was also evident in a regression analysis of the residuals (after removing trend from all three series). This analysis indicated that both his handling of the economy and the war were predictive of daily changes in his overall approval. However, the change in the Iraq situation, with the capture of Hussein, had a greater effect on approval than his handling the economy.

Chart 9: Comparison of Trends--
Saddam's Capture
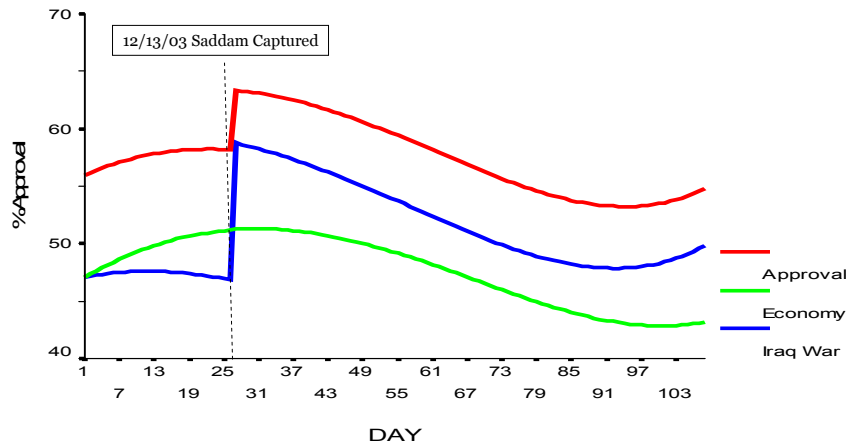
We also tested the presidential approval series for the presence of auto-correlation. This test involves subjecting the residual series (after removing trend) to a correlogram analysis. No significant auto-correlation was observed in the series by this procedure. As seen in Chart 10, the residual series was largely composed of random variation (white noise). Although the series is essentially free of cycles, it could still be influenced by other events. Hence, we turned our attention to the effects of the other significant events during the period of the study.

Chart 10: No Auto-Correlation
in Approval Series
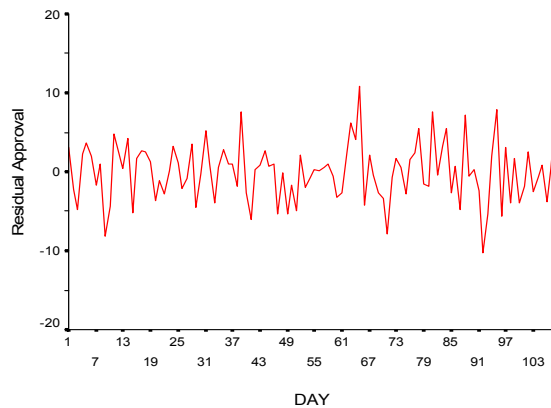
State of the Union Speech May Have Produced Short-Term Boost, But No Significant Long-Term Effect Seen

On January 20, one day following the Iowa caucus, President Bush delivered his State of the Union Speech to Congress and the nation. NAES04 measured a short-term boost in presidential approval over the five days following the speech. However, this boost quickly dissipated and reverted back to trend. While we cannot say for certain why the series shifted back, one could hypothesize that it was the flow of events. For example, Kerry's NH victory (1/27), and former weapons inspector, David Kay, saying that there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq (1/25) are two significant news events that took place in the 5 to 7 days following Bush's speech (Chart 11). These events continued to tell a story about Iraq and the presidential election campaign that were not good news for Bush and the temporary boost from the State of the Union address was not enough to overcome the dynamics of these continuing dramas.

Chart 11: State of the Union and Overall Approval
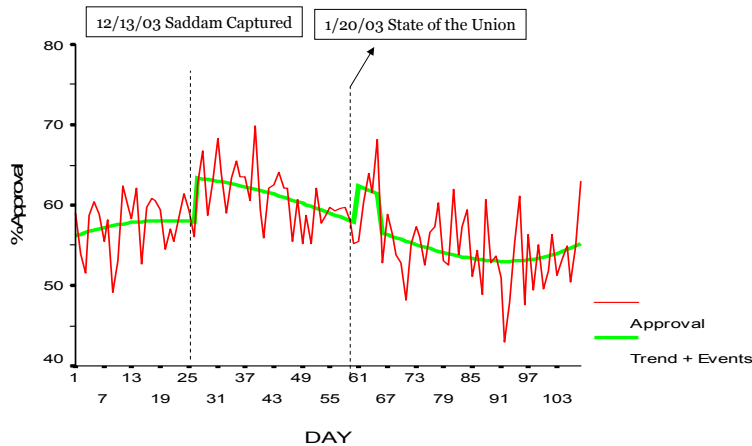
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Bush's speech, which touched on a variety of declarations and proposals, including the economy, Iraq, the War on Terrorism, prescription drugs, and steroid use by athletes, had a greater impact on his approval for his handling of the economy and less so for his handling of Iraq. The change in his handling of the war was small and not statistically significant. In both cases, like overall approval, the numbers reverted back to trend after that same five day period (Charts 12 and 13). Tests of the long-term impact of the speech were non-significant.   It would seem that the speech did not change any policies or introduce any thing new that could lift his approval for the long term.

Chart 12: State of the Union and Approval of Economy

12/13/03 Saddam Captured

1/20/03 State of the Union
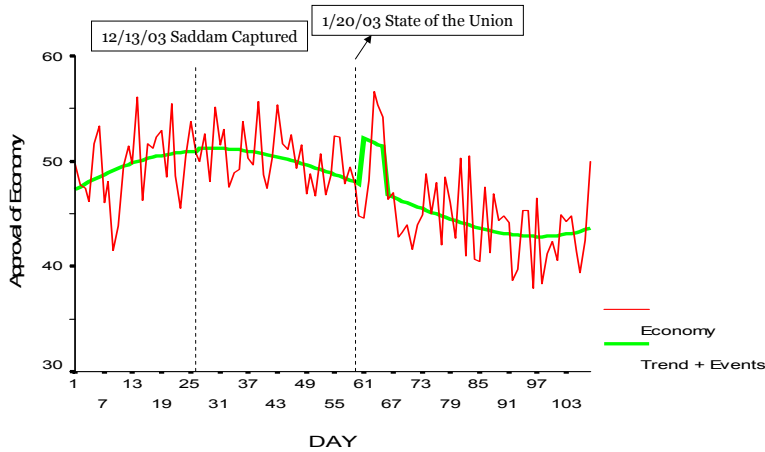
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the nation's economy?

Chart 13: State of the Union and Handling of Situation in Iraq

12/13/03 Saddam Captured

1/20/03 State of the Union
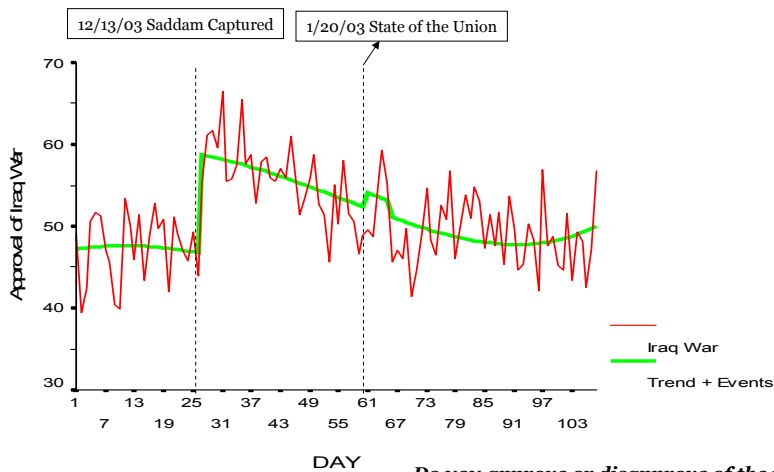
Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?

No Effects Can be Directly Attributed to Other Events

We found no effects on approval based on other events we tested. As mentioned earlier, the analysis found no altering of the trend surrounding Bush's Thanksgiving trip to Baghdad or following Bush's announced support for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (January 24).

High Frequency Newspaper Readers More Sensitive to Events

We examined a number of media variables to determine if attention to one type of media is more associated with sensitivity to events. The group where we found the greatest differences is the high frequency newspaper readers group. High frequency newspaper readers are defined as those who say they read the newspaper 4 or more days in the past week. They comprise 51% of the sample. Low Frequency newspaper readers say they read the newspaper 3 or fewer days in the past week. They comprise 49% of the sample. These high frequency newspaper readers are older, better educated, more affluent, slightly more Democratic, but no different in ideology than low frequency readers (APPENDIX III).

The high frequency news readers show a strong reaction to Saddam's capture. In addition, they show some movement in response to the State of the Union speech (Chart 14).

Chart 14: High Frequency Newspaper Readers More Sensitive to Events
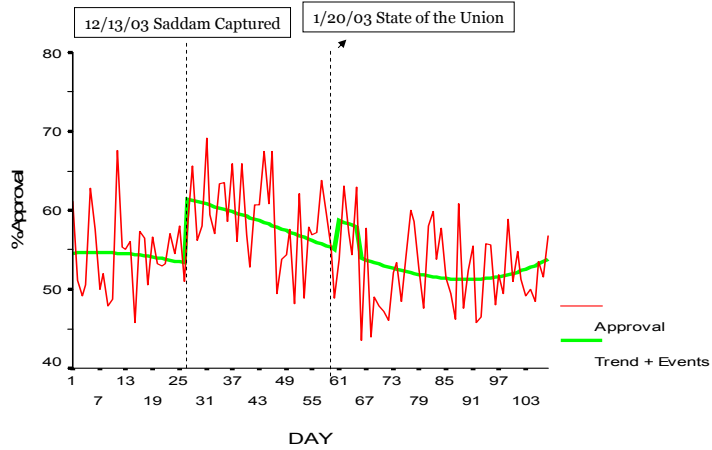
Low Frequency news readers on the other hand, show a less pronounced response to the capture of Saddam. However, they start at a higher point on overall approval than high frequency news readers. Their response to the state of the Union is stronger (Chart 15).

Chart 15: Low Frequency Newspaper Readers are Less Reactive
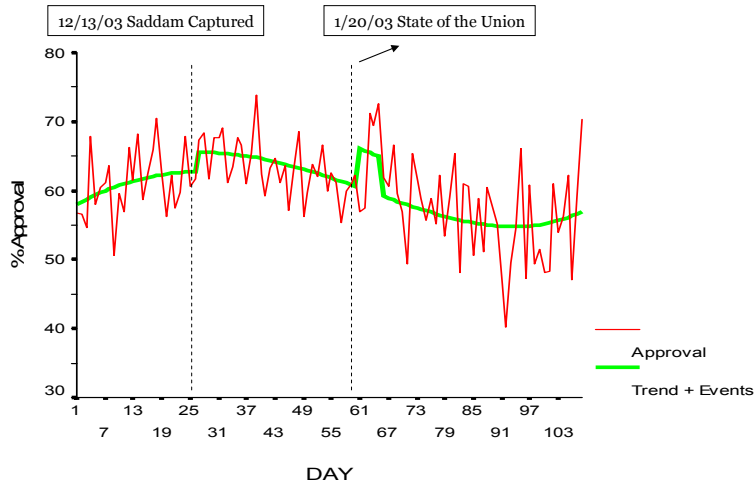
Conclusions

This research shows that time-series analysis can be a very useful tool for diagnosing the effects of events on ongoing election or presidential job performance indicators. Using regression analytic techniques permits statistical tests of both short and long-term event impact controlling for longer term trends. Our analysis also shows that a major event, such as the capture of Saddam Hussein, can have a lasting effect on a president's approval that persists for several weeks (consistent with Dayan and Katz (1992)). Having daily data allows you to look at events as they occur rather than having to look back at an event and polling after the fact and not catching the change as it occurs. Furthermore, it is possible to estimate the size of this effect. It is also possible to show that some events, such as a State of the Union address, will only persist for a few days.

Limitations

There are some limitations to the time-series research that we have conducted. First, we were limited to just 108 days for analysis because of insufficient sample size. Time-series works best with a relatively constant sample size. Second, the events we think are driving the changes may not be the primary or sole cause for such change. However, time series allows researchers to test those events that they hypothesize to be critical.

We will continue tracking Bush approval measures throughout the course of the campaign. As daily sample size increases in May we will continue our analysis of events and Bush's ratings for the remainder of the election year.

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APPENDIX I

NAES04 Daily N: November 18, 2003 through March 8, 2004*

Month	Day	N
NOVEMBER '03	17	237
	18	180
	19	196
	20	182
	21	182
	22	197
	23	202
	24	208
	25	183
	26	196
THANKSGIVING	27	0
	28	210
	29	212
	30	211
DECEMBER '03	1	214
	2	203
	3	184
	4	199
	5	193
	6	185
	7	198
	8	184
	9	220
	10	202
	11	210
	12	199
	13	205
	14	224
	15	226
	16	206
	17	205
	18	161
	19	200
	20	244
	21	186
	22	203
	23	184

CHRISTMAS EVE	24	0
CHRISTMAS DAY	25	0
	26	167
	27	157
	28	176
	29	195
	30	211
NEW YEAR'S EVE	31	0
JANUARY '04	1	0
	2	211
	3	179
	4	184
	5	174
	6	177
	7	144
	8	196
	9	143
	10	172
	11	152
	12	140
	13	173
	14	185
	15	191
	16	155
	17	188
	18	164
	19	174
	20	174
	21	137
	22	164
	23	136
	24	130
	25	157
	26	125
	27	168
	28	215
	29	199
	30	157
	31	168
	1	116
FEBRUARY '04	2	265

	3	207
	4	202
	5	196
	6	183
	7	194
	8	241
	9	192
	10	197
	11	212
	12	206
	13	160
	14	188
	15	206
	16	172
	17	211
	18	214
	19	190
	20	163
	21	186
	22	194
	23	223
	24	203
	25	166
	26	211
	27	172
	28	187
	29	208
MARCH '04	1	195
	2	167
	3	226
	4	201
	5	191
	6	216
	7	231
	8	178
TOTAL		**20439**

*NAES04 conducted no interviewing on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day

APPENDIX II

Timeline of Events

11/17/2003	AARP endorses Republican Medicare Bill
11/18/2003	Massachusetts' Highest Court Orders Legislature to Provide Same-Sex Marriages
11/20/2003	Two blasts in Istanbul hit British targets as Bush visits Blair
11/21/2003	Senate blocks energy bill
11/22/2003	Senate passes medicare bill, sends it to Bush
11/24/2003	Dem Debate Des Moines
11/27/2003	**Bush flies to Iraq**
11/30/2003	US troops kill 46 Iraqi attackers
12/1/2003	US manufacturing at highest level in two decades
12/8/2003	Gore endorses Dean; DNC debate in Durham, NH
12/13/2003	**US Captures Saddam Hussein**
12/21/2003	Threat level raised to HIGH (Orange)
12/24/2003	Mad Cow Case Reported in US
1/4/2004	Dem Debate in IA (Des Moines Register)
1/6/2004	Bill Bradley Endorses Dean
1/6/2004	Dem Debate Des Moines (Radio Debate-NPR)
1/7/2004	Bush announces new immigration status policy
1/8/2004	US Blackhawk helicopter goes down; 9 killed/Mortar attack at base kills 1 injures 33
1/9/2004	Threat level lowered to 'Elevated' (Yellow)
1/11/2004	Dem Debate in IA (Brown and Black Forum)
1/10/2004	Sen. Harkin (IA) endorses Dean
1/11/2004	Des Moines Register endorses Edwards
1/17/2004	Concord Monitor endorses Kerry
1/19/2004	**Kerry wins Iowa caucus; Edwards close 2nd and Dean a disappointing 3rd gives "memorable" Scream Speech**
1/20/2004	Gephardt drops out of the race
1/20/2004	**Bush gives State of the Union speech**
1/22/2004	WMUR NH Debate
1/25/2004	David Kay says case couldn't be made for WMD in Iraq
1/27/2004	**Kerry wins NH Primary; Dean 2nd, Clark 3rd, Edwards, 4th, Lieberman 5th**
2/3/2004	Kerry wins 5 of 7 primaries and caucuses: Missouri, Delaware, Arizona, New Mexico, North Dakota;
	Edwards wins South Carolina and Clark wins Oklahoma. Lieberman drops out.
2/4/2004	Massachusetts' Highest Court Clarifies Order to Legislature to Allow Same-Sex Marriages (Civil Unions not enough)
2/7/2004	Kerry wins Michigan Primary and Washington Caucus
2/8/2004	Bush goes on Meet the Press to defend record AND Military Service; Kerry wins Maine Caucus
2/10/2004	Kerry wins Virginia and Tennessee Primaries; Edwards 2nd in both
2/11/2004	Wesley Clark drops out
2/12/2004	Drudge Report contains item about Kerry intern infidelity
2/14/2004	Kerry wins Nevada and DC caucuses

2/17/2004	Kerry Wins Wisconsin; Edwards a close second
2/18/2004	Dean drops out
2/22/2004	Ralph Nader announces that he's running as an Independent
2/24/2004	**Bush announces support for constitutional amendment banning gay marriage**
2/24/2004	Kerry wins Utah primary and Hawaii and Idaho caucuses
2/25/2004	Alan Greenspan suggests cuts to Social Security and Medicare to reduce deficit
2/26/2004	LA Times/CNN Dem Candidate Debate--LA
2/29/2004	NY Times/CBS News Candidate Debate--NY
3/2/2004	**Kerry Wins 9 of 10 Super Tuesday Contests**
3/3/2004	John Edwards Drops Out; Bush begins ad campaign
3/5/2004	Bush Campaign begins showing ads with 9/11 images

Demographic Breakdown: High Frequency Newspaper Reader/Low Frequency Newspaper Reader

	Low Frequency Newspaper Reader	High Frequency Newspaper Reader
	(N=10,029)	(N=10,404)
AGE		
18-29	**28**	14
30-44	**36**	25
45-64	**27**	37
65+	**9**	**24**
DK/REF		
EDUC		
High School or less	**53**	43
Some college/	**26**	26
Coll grad/post grad	**20**	31
DK/REF		
INCOME		
LT $35k	**40**	30
$35K to lt $75K	**33**	34
$75K or more	**17**	26
DK/REF	**9**	10
GENDER		
Male	**45**	51
Female	**55**	49
IDEOLOGY		
Conservative	**37**	38
Moderate	**36**	38
Liberal	**23**	22
DK/REF	**4**	2
RACE/ETHNICITY		
White	**75**	83
Black	**13**	10
Hispanic	**15**	7
PARTY ID		
Republican	**28**	30
Democrat	**31**	36
Independent	**27**	26
Other	**7**	6
Don't know	**7**	4