

# HOW TO WIN AN ELECTION

BY LENA D'ENTREMONT

Running a successful election campaign requires careful planning by candidates. Strategies include everything from classic gestures to high-tech tactics. Below, we take a look at three tried-and-true strategies.

## KISSING BABIES

For decades, presidential candidates have tried to pursue a “nurturing” image of themselves by kissing babies on campaigns. The first campaign featuring a President smooching a baby was in 1833, by Democrat Andrew Jackson.

It may be a longstanding tradition, but not all presidents are on board with kissing infants. In 1968, Richard Nixon famously stated “I won’t wear a silly hat, or kiss a lady or a baby,” telling Life Magazine that it would make him “look like a jerk.” Nixon surprised the nation’s un-kissed infants, going on to win the ‘68 election.



Pres. Trump prepares to plant one on a baby.

## SPEECHES

Delivering an effective and motivational speech that promises good things for the future will often attract and inspire an audience.

At the 2004 Democratic National Convention, Barack Obama delivered the Keynote Address, instantly rocketing from obscure Illinois senator to heir apparent for the Democratic party.



Pres. Obama is renowned for his inspiring oratory.

## FOCUS GROUPS

In 1937, at Princeton University, focus groups began studying media like war movies. During WWII, the U.S. government used them to see how people felt about war films and what messages made them support the war more.

Nowadays, focus groups help understand why people think, act, and feel certain ways. The 1988 U.S. presidential election provides a notorious case of focus groups being used effectively in a presidential campaign.

When focus groups showed that Mass. Governor Michael Dukakis was vulnerable on the issue of crime, Bush unleashed a damaging ad, “Revolving Door” that is often said to have been the deciding factor in this contest.



A still from Pres. Bush Sr.'s “Revolving Door” ad.